

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES, June 14, 2022**

Larry Spencer called the meeting to order at 4:02PM

Roll Call:

Commissioners Present: *Larry Spencer, Anne Packard, April Sargent and Woodie Laverack, Ex Officio*

Not Present: *Bill Nesheim, Ben Amsden, Shelagh Connelly*

Also Present: Lucinda Hannus, Town Land Use Assistant, GZA and Eversource Representatives

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 10, 2022 – *The minutes were approved as written*

MAIL CHECK: Mr. Spencer reviewed the following items with those present.

Landowner workshops and locations
NHDES Water and Groundwater Newsletter
Tree Farm Inspection letter

OLD ITEMS:

- Mr. Spencer asked to defer review of item 1. Steep Slopes application for E115 Transmission Line until other old items are discussed. Commission members present were in agreement.
2. Monitoring – Larry Spencer reiterated the need to complete monitoring prior to the winter season
 3. Transfer Station Japanese Knotweed Project – April Sargent stated that she has sent out a doodle poll via email to all commission members inquiring as to their availability to set a date for work at the transfer station. She also stated that she is seeing additional growth thru out town. Larry Spencer stated he is in possession of a map of the existing identified patches of Knotweed in town and that he would send a copy to members so they could provide updates on sightings of new or enlarged plants
 4. Trails on properties - Bill Nesheim via email stated he is still working on the trail signs, and Larry Spencer stated that he is still working on the Kiosk signs. April Sargent and Anne Packard discussed the need for weed whacking along the road needs to be done.

5. Update on LWCF grant application – The bill for the assessment of the assessment has been submitted and paid by the town. Larry Spencer indicated he has yet to receive a notice of compliance from the state and that he will follow up on the status.

Larry Spencer stated he would be out of town between June 28 and July 6, 2022 and Anne Packard should be contacted for any commission business. Ms. Packard would not be available between July 7 and July 18, 2022. Larry Spencer reminded the members that there will be no regular meetings of the Conservation Commission in July and August and that the next scheduled meeting will be held on September 13, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

Larry Spencer brought the board up to date with the progress at the Holderness School snow making pond and turf fields. The pond is about half full and the material excavated for the turf fields has been stock piled on site.

1. Review Steep Slopes Permit Application E115 Transmission Line Project

Motion: Larry Spencer made a motion to accept the proposal from Eversource for the E115 Transmission Line Project

April Sargent seconded the motion.

Discussion-

Lindsey White from GZA, engineers for the project presented the project summary, handed out aerial maps of the transmission line and explained that the project was to replace the 50 plus year old wooden poles with weathered steel poles and to install Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) along the entire line. Ms. White indicated that the poles will be higher than the existing poles due to new design codes that they must adhere to. There will be multiple temporary wetlands crossings which they will use timber mats for protection during construction and in the uplands, stone and gravel will be used to provide access roads and construction pads. A smaller, approximately 30' x 60' concrete pad will remain as a permanent access pad at each pole location.

Woodie Laverack asked whether they needed to build the access road or could they use equipment that did not need a road?

Sara Hoodlet from Eversource stated that the equipment needed to install these poles is very heavy and there is no ability to use track equipment, thus the need for a constructed gravel road.

Larry Spencer inquired about culverts and erosion controls.

Lindsey White indicated that the details of each were on the plans, that there would be no permanent roads over streams or wetlands, that all crossings would be temporary and removed after construction.

Larry Spencer stated he was concerned that Huckins Hill is very steep and erosion could impact the surrounding wetlands and creeks.

Lindsey White responded that they will follow all the rules associated with BMPs included in the NH DES Stormwater Manual. They have received an Alteration / Terrain permit from DES for the project. The wetlands were delineated in 2020 and will be delineated again prior to construction start up.

Larry Spencer inquired as to whether the roads would be available as hiking trails after the construction.

Lindsey White stated that they were using as much of the existing road "trail" system as possible.

Larry Spencer inquired as to the use of a brush hog for vegetation removal and would the tracks from that disturbance be significant.

Lindsey White stated that vegetation is cleared under the lines on a 4-year cyclical schedule and that no herbicide is used for defoliation.

General discussion about the use of goats or sheep to maintain vegetation growth and how this may not be feasible for a long transmission line such as this, multiple property owners, no containment, etc.

Larry Spencer asked about the height of the pads. Sarah Hoodlet, Eversource responded that they would be level with the surrounding ground. The poles will be directly embedded with no cement.

Woodie Laverack inquired about the crossbar heights. Sarah Hoodlet responded that the static line on top is about 10' above the conductor and that the cross bar will be at the same height as the current cross bar.

Sarah Hoodlet indicated in response to an earlier question regarding trail access, that these properties are not owned by Eversource, that there are multiple property owners involved and that Eversource could not give permission to access the property to others.

Larry Spencer asked if there were any other questions for the applicant. Hearing none Mr. Spencer asked to move the motion to accept the application as presented.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Laverack recused themselves as they are both abutters of the project.

Anne Packard voted to abstain

April Sargent voted in the affirmative.

Motion to accept the application as presented passed.

Anne Packard asked about what areas are more than the 15% slope.

Lindsey White responded that very few actual areas are greater than 15% and are shown on the plans.

Sarah Hoodlet stated that the project is scheduled to commence construction in the 2nd half of July, that they are still choosing a contractor and have yet to determine from which direction the construction will follow, north to south or vice versa. The project should take a year or so to complete.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Lucinda M. Hannus
Land Use Assistant

NEW ITEMS:

1. **Motion:** To fund ½ of the assessment of the assessment costs of the yellow-book assessments done on the oxbow properties. (Note: this cost will be approximately \$2430). The assessment of the assessments is being done by an assessor in Bangor, Maine. The Plymouth Conservation Commission paid for the yellow-book assessments and will pay the other half of the assessment of the assessments.

Ms. Connelly made a motion to move forward with the assessment of the Yellow Book assessments and to pay half of the amount (approximately \$2430.00) contracted by Plymouth Conservation Commission with the Bangor, ME Assessor.

Ms. Sargent seconded the motion.

All members present voted in the affirmative.

Motion passed.

2. **Trail work**-We need to schedule a work party to work on the trails on the Howe Town Forest, particularly to cut the weeds on the northern extension of the perimeter trail. Bill was not in attendance to update commission on this item, Mr. Spencer stated that the north side of the grassy area needs to be weed wacked and that he would send an email to the Squam Lake Association to request assistance
3. **Irving Fuel Station** – Mr. Spencer spoke to the board about the proposed project to change the delivery system from the tanks to the pumps at the Irving gas station on Holderness Road. He was told by station representatives that they wanted to have the fuel station open 24 hours a day and this project would improve the safety of the delivery system. He also stated he had a set of plans for the project and was meeting again with station reps. On May 11, 2022 at 10am to go over the project details. Mr. Capone asked the chairman for the representatives contact information and stated that should the project entail a major modification to the facility it would need site plan review approval from the Planning Board.

UP-COMING MEETINGS: Next regular Commission Meeting, Tuesday, June 14th 2022

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Lucinda M. Hannus
Land Use Assistant