

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Note: Meeting will be held in the Fire Department meeting room

922 US Route 3

4:00 P.M.

Agenda

ROLL CALL:

Larry Spencer, Chairman	Anne Packard	Bill Nesheim
Ben Amsden	Shelagh Connelly	April Sargent
Woodie Laverack, Ex Officio		

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 2022

MAIL CHECK:

OLD ITEMS:

1. Trails on properties
2. Update on LWCF grant application
3. Scheduling of Jim Frohn for hike on conservation property
4. Discussion of NH legislative bills affecting conservation.
5. Area meeting of conservation commissions

NEW ITEMS:

1. Letter to Governor and Holderness Reps concerning H2 and H655—Both bills are associated with changes in licenses for a variety of folks, including wetlands, soils, and foresters. See attached letter for possible response.
2. Preparations for Earth Day
3. On-line and in-person wetlands course offered via NHACC and DES. How is it going?
4. Warrant article concerning White Oak Pond property.
5. Other items as necessary.

UP-COMING MEETINGS:

Saving Special Places—I've sent out the link.

NHACC lunch Zoom meetings—go to NHACC webpage.

ADJOURNMENT:

Honorable Representatives,

I am writing with concerns about both HB 2 and HB 655 which propose to eliminate state licensing for NH Foresters, Soil Scientists and Wetlands Scientists. I know that you do not serve in the Committee that is currently hearing these proposals but as my Representatives am seeking your support in sharing opposition to the sections of these bills specific to the licensures mentioned above.

Requiring professional standards for these occupations is essential to protecting NH residents and local government decisions regarding our most critical natural areas.

Residents and municipal land use boards routinely rely on these three licensed professionals to make informed and accurate land use decisions. It is due to these professional certifications that local boards follow their recommendations with the confidence of knowing these professionals possess training necessary to accurately advise on their field of expertise. Having a state-specific license also ensures they possess a thorough understanding of NH specific regulations.

Removing the standards for professional scientists would be detrimental to this level of confidence land use boards have and could ultimately extend the project review time when land use boards are then forced to verify the accuracy of information presented as part of their decision-making process. This will also likely open up opportunities for "not-in-my-backyard" abutters to use this potential weakness to delay board decisions or influence outcomes.

I understand and share the desire to avoid unnecessary or duplicative red tape from any process. However, I believe without a doubt that these licenses and certifications actually provide for more streamlined project review, assist with sound land use decision-making, and protect our sensitive natural resources and feel repealing them will lead to unnecessary project delays in the review process. I ask for your voice and vote in opposition to these recommendations.

If you have guidance for how I can further extend my voice on this issue please do not hesitate to share your expertise.

Thank you for your service and your time,