

**Conway Conservation Commission Minutes**  
**May 28, 2024, 6:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall, General Purpose Room, 5 Academy Hill Road**

**Present for the Conservation Commission:** Grace Larson, Acting Chair; Louise Beckett, Mary Kay Costello, Brittany Nickerson, Tony Somers

**Others Present:** Edward Stuart and son

Grace convened the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

On a motion from Grace to approve the Minutes of May 14, 2024, Tony seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.

*Financial*

None

*Building Permits/Site Visits/Inquiries*

- Inquiry: 236 Shelburne Falls Rd – RDA form for Knotweed removal
- Inquiry: 268 Shelburne Falls Rd – RDA form for Knotweed removal

Grace has had several inquiries about removal of knotweed on Shelburne Falls Road. This can be approved with an RDA, but because it is primary habitat it also has to go through MESA.

*Forest Cutting Plans*

None

*Updates*

- Shelburne Falls/Emerson Hollow Roads – Culvert replacement completed.
- Eversource Request for Certificate of Completion expected; OOC expires 6/22/2024

*Hearings*

- 6:10 p.m. - Continued – NOI – Old Fields Hill Rd, Lot 416-012

Grace: closed out enforcement order. This part is for the location of the structure. Tony: yes. Separation between pond and ridge line. Sits in a small valley. Seems like it's the least impactful area of the site. Grace: to be a cabin: Edward: o.k. with it. Grace: is this a living space? Edward: Not a living space: more of an artist's studio. Place to visit during the day; not at night. Grace: there would be restrictions if putting in water/septic. Would need to be approved. Tony: as well situated as you're going to get. Grace: gravel? How: Ed: asked to file a separate notice: RDA? Yes - he thought that. Keep it completely separate. Tony: where's the gravel to be? Ed: right of way. Top of Fields hill down to the property line. Existing road. Get it up there using a dump

truck up Fields Hill. Tony: Culvert wouldn't handle it. Grace: separate issue. Is Ward going to help Ed file? Ward said it should be something Ed can do himself. Tony: if we approve the NOI, that doesn't approve anything else: building permits, RDA, etc. May be out of our jurisdiction. We are only permitting a structure placement.

Grace said we should close the hearing and the next hearing will be an order of conditions, which tells Ed what he can or can't do, sent via email. Will be sent preliminary. And if no objections from Ward, he can proceed. On a motion from Grace to close the hearing, Tony seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.

### *Other Business*

- Discussion – Nexamp and Abutters – Site Visit dates

Tony said that if the abutters want to check with a wetland scientist, that's not within the ConCom's jurisdiction. Jaymie Stanton will take a look to see if there's any erosion area we're not aware of. Nexamp is working to replace the inverters. We have an open OoC and have their plan of management. Grace will draft a letter to Ward Smith and Mr. Stuart in regard to the trees. The question was asked if that was because of Nexamp? The ConCom will not do a site visit with the abutters. Grace will send Devlin and Gerry a notice that we will not do a site visit on their property.

- Discussion – CPA and Con Com ideas/priorities

CPA monies are used for historic preservation, open space, and community housing. The Committee takes applications from the community and plans for use of its funds. Does ConCom have any ideas to bring back to the committee? Historically they have not done— a lot with conservation of land: Conserving land costs money for the landowner. Can CPA cover those costs? Yes, but the town needs to have a stake in it. Grace said that the Town should acquire as much land as they can along the river. What about Title 61? Right of first refusal? The town has 60 days to exercise right of first refusal, but it needs to be able to pay. Tony asked if there comes a point where the town takes ownership, what about management? Would that be exceeding the capacity of their ability? Is there a threshold in terms of the amount of land the town can purchase? What about teaming up with a non-profit?

At 6:58 p.m. on a motion from Grace to adjourn, Tony seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Next meeting: June 11, 2024, 6:00 p.m. in Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, General Purpose Room.