

Bartlett Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

11/14/24

Present: Colleen Ryan, Steve Frackleton, Craig Billie, Mike Morin, Chris Fithian

Alec Tarberry, Sheila Duane from the Berry Company

Meeting called to order at 6:00

New business:

Stillings Grant Easement Donation

Two representatives from the Berry Company attended to discuss a proposal to donate a conservation easement to the town in exchange for DEP approval for wetlands impacts associated with planned development in Block G (33 houses). The wetland impacts are from the access road and several driveway stream crossings. Alec noted that DEP requires the developer to lay out the driveways to minimize wetland impacts, so the mitigation is only for minimal required impacts. The alternative to donating this easement would be contributing money to the state-administered Aquatic Resource Mitigation fund. These funds would be used for conservation in Carroll County. Alec said that the Berry Company does not know how much the fee would be.

Proposal is to shift 10 acres from association common land to town conservation land. The common land is not planned for future development, but they are allowed to site infrastructure there. Adding this land to the conservation easement would exclude it from potential infrastructure development. They offered two options for parcels: one along the eastern side of Razor Brook, overlapping with wellhead protection areas and across the brook from the current easement, or on the western edge of Stillings Grant between (currently undeveloped) blocks H and J. The second option adjoins the National Forest to the west.

Chris raised the question of whether the Bartlett Village Water Precinct has an option to connect to the existing wells if future need arises. The Berry Company will ask Horizon to check on what, if any, rights the water precinct has to those wells. Sheila feels that getting to these wells would be cost-prohibitive for the water precinct.

The commission discussed the potential additional liability for the town, which appears to be very low, as the new parcel does not abut existing or proposed homes. The current easement does abut existing development. Current practice is for easement donations to come with a stewardship endowment. The commission discussed the possibility of asking the Berry Company for a donation earmarked for easement stewardship or legal defense to accompany the easement donation.

Stillings Grant Wetland Permit

The commission received a permit by notification for 570 sq. ft. wetland impacts from a driveway in Block F. Chris reviewed it and concluded that it met all requirements.

Cedarcroft

The Cedarcroft development on Thorn Hill Rd. (29 single-family homes and 2 duplexes) has received an approved wetland permit to impact 6000 sq. ft. of wetland and temporary impacts to a perennial stream for bridge construction.

Solar Tax Exemption

Steve learned from his solar installer that many towns, including Jackson and Conway, have property tax exemptions for solar panels. He suggested proposing that the town consider a similar exemption. Steve will do some research on the rationale those towns used to support those exemptions.

Old business:

- The commission never heard back from DEP about the driveway on Ellis River Rd.
- Saco River Headwaters Alliance has passed initial FEMA review on their culvert replacement study. They will keep us posted on progress.
- The commission agreed to publicize its lending library of weed removal tools in the spring. Potential outlets include the town report, the Bartlett column in the Sun, and the ConCom Facebook page. Interested residents should be directed to the commission's email address.
- Dundee Community Forest: Received a grant for Ham House restoration. Colleen asked Steve (who attended the last meeting in Craig's place) if the Community Forest advisory group has expressed any concern about invasives, since someone from the NRCS had approached her to report that the land trust had concerns and wanted to work with the New England Forestry Foundation, which is an abutting landowner (and Colleen's employer). Colleen will reach out to Anne Bennett about coordinating with the land trust and NRCS on invasives work.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Action items are in bold.

Next meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 10 @ 6pm