

Approved: January 14, 2015

**Hanover Conservation Commission
Minutes, December 10, 2014**

Members present: Edwin Chamberlain (chair), James Kennedy, Douglas McIlroy (scribe)
Staff present: Vicki Smith

For lack of a quorum on a snowy evening no votes could be taken. Hence approval of minutes of previous meetings was postponed.

Current business

Rabinovitz presentation. Eric Goldwarg (attorney) and Rod Finley (Engineer) described current thinking about the matter of Class VI roads on the Rabinovitz properties on Elm Road. Jody Perkins (Rabinovitz family) observed. Goldwarg said the new plan responds to concerns expressed about a trail corridor that had been suggested to provide public passage instead of Elm Road. Finley exhibited a map of the revised proposal. The route of Elm Road would be moved farther from the dwelling in lot 5/92, its width defined as 40 feet. The new route would be designated as a Class A trail and discrepant portions of the old public right of way would be given up. A Class A trail in lot 9/60 would extend Wolfeboro Road as necessary to preserve connection. Goldwarg said Lars Richardson, the other landowner on Wolfeboro Road between Elm Road and Dogford Road, was being approached with the suggestion that the entire segment be converted to a Class A trail. Chamberlain pointed out that complete conversion is not critical to the immediate matter.

Smith reported an email communication from Select Board representative Peter Christie saying he approved of this arrangement. Kennedy thought the town should not give up public rights, and the newly designated rights of way should be classified as Class VI roads. McIlroy suggested that in a single action town meeting accept the rights of way as Class VI roads and promptly convert them to Class A trails. This would preserve the right of town meeting to restore Class VI status in the unlikely event of a need to do so. Smith said that laying out of roads is a task of the Select Board, as distinct from town meeting. Thus town meeting would need to address only the second step, plus throwing up any abandoned section of Elm Road. Chamberlain said that this was a good compromise between the original proposal of a pedestrian/bike trail around the wet western edge of lot 5/92 and his preference for a route around the dry eastern edge. Goldwarg had said that Rabinovitz firmly opposed the latter idea; similar opposition to the proposed two-step solution was not expressed.

Taking into account Christie's approval, the Commission delegated Smith to write a letter to the Select Board in favor of laying out the whole Elm Road/Wolfeboro Road right-of-way as Class VI roads, and then by town-meeting vote throwing up the obsoleted section of Elm Road and converting an agreed portion of the roads to Class A trails.

Invasive removal at Mink Brook. Chamberlain and Kennedy visited the School-Street site on town land where Larry Litten sought permission to remove some invasive Norway Maples. Kennedy said the trees were little more than saplings; their removal would have no visual impact. The sense of the meeting was to allow the removal.

Resource stewardship

Logging at Marshall/Pressey preserves. Smith said a firm contract for work this winter was reviewed by the town forester and town counsel. A logging-road permit has been applied for. After expenses, the work should yield about \$30,000 for deposit in the conservation fund.

Balch Hill deer hunt. Chamberlain said a few deer have been taken. Bow season ends December 15.

Committee reports

Open Space. Chamberlain said Peter and Kay Shumway intend to grant the Hanover Conservancy a conservation easement. This would significantly increase the protected area on Moose Mountain.

Trails. McIlroy said the Conservancy had forwarded a draft license agreement to route the Maple Trail across college land on Balch Hill. This initiative of the Balch Hill stewardship committee came as a surprise to the Trails Committee, but makes good sense. The current route, confined to a narrow corridor of town land, runs in sight of houses and passes through a soggy stretch.

Other business

Budget items. Smith said Julia Griffin expects to include improvement of Wilson's Landing as a special item in next year's budget. Kennedy will talk to Peter Kulbacki to firm up cost estimates. He thought an ARM mitigation grant was a possible supplementary source of funds. Chamberlain said another potential item is a second round of mechanical clearance of invasive plants at Hayes Park.