

Meeting
Tilton Conservation Commission
Tilton Town Hall First Floor Meeting Room
April 21, 2025
MINUTES

Present: Jim Cropsey (Secretary Pro Tem), Bob Hardy, Ken Norton, Paul Rushlow, Jon Scanlon, and Helen Hanks (Chair Pro Tem)

Guests: David Jeffers, Ari Pollack, David Gagnon, Leo Leighton, and Brendan Quigley

The chair opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

- 1. Lakes Region Planning Commission** - Mr. Jeffers stated the purview of the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) is advising 9 other commissions and representing 31 different communities with concerns including aquifers, farmland, wetlands, and forests. The TCC's request is for assistance with prioritizing overlay maps following up on the Wildlife Corridor Grant received previously. Mr. Jeffers stated that the LRPC had neither time nor money at this time to assist with these actions, but that he would be sure to build the request for assistance into the schedule for the future. Discussion continued about the Pemigewasset River Corridor Plan – a recent LRPC completed project. Mr. Jeffers explained that an overlay map can have specific items of concern given different weights or priorities with data drawn from multiple state agencies making the process time-consuming and involved. Mr. Norton mentioned that the TCC has been in contact with counterparts in both Sanbornton and Northfield. The DOT repair of 3&11 in downtown Tilton was discussed and the lack of notification for the project given to neighboring Northfield was noted. Mr. Jeffers was pleased with the addition of Laconia and Belmont to the working sessions with Tilton, Sanbornton and Northfield. The LRPC will assist with obtaining funds and grants to assist the TCC from Federal, State, Municipal and Private sources. Mr. Scanlon mentioned assistance with the public education of the value of conservation to a community. Mr. Cropsey mentioned help with planning for high-density housing. Mitigation funds like those received from the Lowes development were mentioned as a possible source for the overlay map funding. In closing Mr. Jeffers mentioned that Hazardous Materials collections will now be performed in multiple locations at different times so that more people would be able to participate.

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- 2. Business Park Drive (Nickerson properties)** – Mr. Pollack explained that the applicant intends to purchase about ten acres at Business Park Drive (Lots R20 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, and 1-11) for a 24/7 distribution center in the industrial district where warehousing is allowed. Mr. Quigley gave a review of his wetlands assessment performed on October 10, 2024. There are two narrow fingers of wetlands between Lots 1-2 and 1-3 as well as between Lots 1-4 and 1-5 which he believes are of modest water quality and groundwater discharge function. The on-site wetland fingers total around 6,900 square feet and are planned to be filled. Town regulations require 20-foot buffers for all wetlands under 40,000 square feet. Also, the adjoining buffers around these wetland fingers are planned to be filled and would equal around 18,000 square feet. The project was reviewed by the Tilton Zoning Board of Adjustment and variances were given. The NH Department of Environmental Services must also approve. In addition, there is a town regulation XIV 14.3.1 that states that 100-foot wide buffers are required on all wetlands over 40,000 square feet. The off-site wetland on Lot R 20 1-1 is characterized by Brendan Quigley of Gove Environmental Services as having over 40,000 square feet and requiring a 100-foot buffer from the proposed project. He spoke of the principal function of this wetland as being groundwater recharge because of its size, the high-water table, and very poorly drained soil. He noted that the off-site wetland likely receives significant runoff from surrounding areas and is a quality habitat. The applicant will be seeking an Alteration of Terrain permit and subsurface stormwater retention structures will be used to allow recharge into the sandy soils upgradient from the large wetland. There is also a Conservation Restriction on Lot 1-1. Oil separators will be placed in each parking lot. Mr. Quigley stated that snow storage, although not indicated on the plans, will be presented at the far east and west sides of the project as well as the far north of the northerly parking lot. Mr. Gagnon mentioned that the retaining wall on the southern slope with the 18-foot drop in grade which impacts the 100-foot buffer zone will have a fence on top. Mr. Quigley confirmed that any topsoil generated on site will remain on site, and that the project will require a net importation of suitable materials to underlay the building and parking lots. There will now be a rain garden on the Sanborn Road side. There will also be an enclosure near the building for trash generated on site.
- 3. Minutes from March** – Ken made a **motion** to accept the minutes as amended regarding the WRTA information. Bob seconded the motion. A majority voted in favor, and the minutes were approved.

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4. Old Business:

- a) WRTA** – Mr. Norton reports that the final decision on the Transportation Alternative grant application rests with NH DOT, and no decision has been made. The state used a different scoring matrix than did LRPC.

Stewardship and environmental justice are critical factors, and the fact that Tilton has the lowest median income in the county was stressed. Mr. Norton indicated He will submit again at the next round.

- b) Salmon Run** – Mr. Norton reported that he opened the gate. Discussion followed about weeding the flower beds for the season. Research will be done to determine the contractor for the prior year and ask them for a proposal for the new year. Mr. Cropsey reported adding wildflower seeds to the westerly portion of the conservation area.
- c) Trash concerns at Nucar** – Mr. Norton spoke about the trash from Nucar on the hillside along the WRTA trail. The former health officer had spoken with them on several occasions. Nucar did a significant spring cleaning. Mr. Scanlon made a **motion** to send a thank you note to Nucar. Mr. Hardy seconded the motion. All were in favor. Ms. Hanks will pen the note.

5. New Business:

- a) The Chaille beach property** - was mentioned as an alternative route for the WRTA to Belmont. Discussion followed that the area was a wetland and the beach proposal was tabled due to the lack of depth to the water adjacent the shore on the town property. The real value of the property is to protect the viewscape and for wildlife purposes and not for high traffic public access.

6. Correspondence:

- a)** Stormwater Management Report for Nickerson Park was received
- b)** Shady Grove Condominium Dredge & Fill Application – reviewed without comment
- c)** Phone call from J. Dominic – no report
- d)** Project Winnie Application – reviewed without comment
- e)** FERC – Ayers Dam report - reviewed without comment
- f)** Mehta Family Trust Standard Dredge & Fill approved - reviewed without comment
- g)** NHDES Email from Jessica Schultz - no report

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Other: Ms. Hanks to write a letter concerning Nickerson Dredge and Fill application to NH DES requesting that the 100-year storm runoff calculations that have been performed be included in the narrative.

Motion was made by Helen to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Mr. Hardy. No dissent, motion passed, and meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM

Respectfully submitted by James Cropsey

Special thanks to Helen Hanks for chairing the meeting and to James Cropsey for the excellent minutes.