



**MILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
**PO BOX 310**  
**MILTON, NH 03851**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 28, 2014**

Members in attendance: Chairman Cynthia Wyatt, David Levin, Charlie Karcher, Steve Panish, Tom Gray and Kimberly Ladisheff Land Use Clerk.

Others in attendance: Leo Lessard, Mike Beaulieu, Elizabeth Dionne, Andy Fast, Emma Carcagno, Larry Brown, John Katwick, Tom Shevelin, Bob Carrier, Virginia Long, Ken Robichaud, Erika Robichaud, Karen Golab, Kat Dalton, Bill Dalton, Kathy Lancey, Craig Lancey, Sandy Horton, Gail Augustus, Jason Augustus, Mike Horton, Richard Lover, Judi Lover, Jorgene Wiggin, Marty Conant, Lyford Dore, Ellen Prang, Bob Naeger, Kathy Moses, Kari Lygren, Jeff LeClair and Ron Fortier.

The Milton Conservation Commission and the Board of Selectmen held an informational meeting regarding the establishment of Milton's first Town Forest.

Cynthia welcomed everyone in attendance and gave a brief history and description of the town owned property where the town forest would be established. She explained The MCC's goal is to balance growth and development with open space. To put this property as a town forest it will have to be put on a warrant article. She then introduced Leo Lessard who is moderating the meeting, Andy Fast, County Forester with UNH Cooperative Extension, Emma Carcagno, also with UNH as a land and water field specialist and Keith Fletcher who works for two land trusts, Moose Mountain Regional Greenways and Maine Coast Heritage Trust.

Andy Fast explained what a cooperative extension was and stated they provide unbiased information to residents, towns and municipalities, as well as natural resource professionals, such as loggers and foresters to help them make informed decisions about forestry, wildlife management and conservation. He stated when we think about natural resource management there are really two philosophies, one being preservation where people feel the land should be set aside and let nature do its thing by leaving the land alone. Another school of thinking is conservation where the management of the land can be used in multiple different ways to meet various economic and societal benefits. He then discussed the four RSA's that govern a town forest.

Conservation Commissioner Steve Panish asked what limitations there were as far as what cannot be done. Andy stated there really aren't any restrictions, but there are benefits and drawbacks.

One potential drawback would be if the town was going to sell the land it could be developed. A benefit from an economic standpoint would be diversifying the town's portfolio and timber cutting. In theory the value of timber is an infinite rate of return as trees keep growing. Turning this property into a town forest could have maximizing economic and social benefits to the town.

Marty Conant asked about motorized vehicles. Andy stated that would be up to the town as to what would be allowed.

Craig Lancey brought up a selective cut that has already been done in that area. He then discussed the wetlands, the moss bed and the wildlife that would be displaced. He stated he is not opposed to cutting trees but there are certain areas that if you open it to public use he's really concerned with the slow growth, existing size of the trees, the canopy and moss cover. He stated if you selective cut that raises the temperature and every one of the animals living out there rely on this balanced ecosystem.

Andy stated when he's talking about cutting he thinks just part of the RSA says something about it being managed for timber, then there's flexibility within that framework. Usually a town will hire a private consulting forester. Once a forest committee is formed they will look at this property to understand soils, timber, wetlands, wildlife attributes, recreational resources, etc., and develop a management plan that would address all of those things.

Judy Lover stated in the wintertime there are a lot of deer. There has been a lot of clear cutting around their neighborhood so the deer have concentrated in that region. Her concern is if there are any winter yards for the deer. Sandy Horton also spoke concerning the deer in the neighborhood and mentioned people seeing bears also. Andy stated a forester can see if the deer are bedding down and that probably varies from year to year. He then stated all input is good and if the town moves forward all this should be documented and those resources can be identified.

There was a lengthy discussion and many residents asked questions and voiced their concerns such as access, parking, and motorized vehicles. Another resident asked about forests in other towns. Emma Carcagno stated there is a diversity of things happening such as some town forests are managed with wildlife in mind, some with recreation.

Chairman Wyatt stated access can be controlled with signs and gates. She said this is the kind of input they want to hear and depending on the interest of this project the committee will be empowered.

Keith Fletcher stated he works with conservation easements and would urge the town to consider placing an easement on this property. He explained this is a way to remove certain uses on the land forever and typically brings a third party into the picture. Whoever the easement holder is it would be their job to make sure the easement gets enforced. An easement is a tool to put certain protections on the land that last's to perpetuity.

Virginia Long asked about how the committee will come about. Selectmen Tom Gray stated there would be a committee with 3-5 people appointed by the Select Board. For those who are interested they can submit a letter of interest to the BOS and the MCC. Tom said they would look for a diverse group so they get an overall view that would represent all aspects.

It was suggested by many residents that they were in favor of forming a committee. Leo Lessard stated the numbers show there is substantial interest in this and encouraged people to send in a letter of interest.

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Chairman Wyatt stated this is a complicated process and there are many issues that would need to be discussed. She thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting ended at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Ladisheff  
Land Use Clerk