

## Minutes Natural Resources Sub-Committee of the Master Plan

Meeting: Wednesday June 13<sup>th</sup> 5:00 PM Great Hall

Members Present: Joyce Davis, Suzanne Ryan, Patti Burns, Carl Crosley, Steve Durgan

Absent: Chris Franson, Dave Senecal, Dan Coons

### Agenda:

- 1) Meeting started at 5:05 PM.
- 2) A discussion of the goals of the Committee were discussed relating to giving direction to the Select Board for the next ten years. While the Natural Resources Inventory will remain as written, important updates will be added as addenda.
- 3) Section 13 of the Natural Resources Inventory was discussed. Points of discussion are out lined below and were related to where the committee felt that there would possibly be recommendations for the master plan.
- 4) The Minutes of the May. 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting were accepted unanimously.
- 5) The next meeting will deal with the document relating to forum comments, committee comments and previous recommendations to the master plan.
- 6) The meeting was adjourned at 6:30

Peter Goodwin – Minute Recorder

### Discussion Points from Sections 13 of the Natural Resources Inventory

Comments were made about the enforcement of present regulations with regard to checklists for approval of permits. This would help ensure that all issues were considered such as wetlands, steep slopes, highly erodible soils, etc.

Comments were made about whether the particulars of the permits issued related to conservation issues were properly enforced after the permits were issued.

The regulations that protect the natural resources were discussed in general terms. The State and the Town have regulations that delineate how new projects proceed and while small changes may be appropriate, they seem to cover the problem areas.

The wastewater treatment system was discussed and addenda should be added about the present situation. At the same time, this is related to the Town's infrastructure so is being dealt with by another committee.

A discussion about further regulations to protect wildlife touched on the larger tracts of land and also the fact that much of the protection of wildlife is done by Fish and Game or the regulations related to wetlands.

It should be noted that there is now protection for vernal pools in the Town's regulations.

It was suggested that facilities supporting our natural resources should be encouraged. For instance, the new pavilion at Foss Field allows better use of that resource and similar projects might be found in the future.

The Conservation Commission and the Town should work to provide permanent access to our natural resources so that private landowners don't shut off access. This can be done through easement or purchase. It was noted that this kind of access should not infringe on adjacent landowners rights.

The discussion on Agriculture using the Forum comments, committee comments and past recommendations included the following:

- a) The format seems to be useful for discussion purposes so it will be used in the future.
- b) Education seemed to be key to how to help people protect the natural resources and also get the most out of them. Knowing how to farm using Best Management Practices helps both the environment and the farmer.
- c) We need to develop an updated map of where the farms are and where they might be.
- d) If development occurs on this kind of land, find ways to encourage the developers to keep at least some of the land able to produce agricultural products by having common space that could, for example, be used for communal gardens.
- e) Work with existing soil surveys to make proper use of the land.
- f) We need to use all resources for educating people including local land trusts, conservation organizations, DES, etc.
- g) We need to try to involve students as much as possible so that they understand why Best Practices are useful.
- h)

Comments from committee members outside of the meeting:

- a) It was noted that we are not dealing with Historic Resources in our Committee so this area was not discussed. While it is part of the Inventory as written, this committee is not working on this area. A note should be made in the addenda to the Inventory to this effect.
- b) In relation to our Natural resources included in the inventory, it was noted that we need to indicate which of these resources are public vs. private.
- c) We also need to add recreational resources to the table. Suggestions are: Sewall woods, Fernald Station, Whiteface, Cotton Mt. Trail, and Wentworth Park.
- d) Updates maps for present conserved lands and conservation easements. Also, consideration should occur of other access for recreation such as Batson's pond.
- e) Consider adopting something similar to the Lakes Region Conservation Plan as updated in 2018 and/or the Moose Mountain Regional Greenways Conservation Action Plan of 2018.
- f) The town should consider collaborating with local land trusts to conserve land.