

Frank Lombardi called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m.

**Members Present:** Frank Lombardi-Chairman, Don LaPlante-Vice Chair, Marsha Lombardi, Valerie Yelton and Tina Wright-Secretary.

**Members Absent:** Edith Worcester, Ken Jordan

**Educational Article in Caledonian/Littleton Record update**

The Conservation Commission read and then talked about an article (see attached) that was printed in the January 15, 2019 Caledonian Record newspaper.

Frank said he did receive an anonymous phone call on the article. The caller was inquiring about the railway beds. The caller had told him that this coming year the bureau of rails will be negotiating again on pulling up the railway beds with the state.

The board discussed maybe reaching out to the bureau of rails on this.

Frank is going to set up with the Caledonian Record to have another article be printed in the paper a week before Town Meeting about the Town Forest.

Steve Agius emailed Frank on February 5th, in reference to the parking issue on Hazen Road to access the rail trail and Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge, that he had not been able to meet with the selectmen yet due to the government shutdown.

**Casellas Landfill**

Frank said the Whitefield Planning Board had a meeting the night before (February 12th) the board was told Casella's has a five year lease with the property in Dalton, Littleton and Bethlehem if it goes well it become a 20 year lease.

**Natural Resources Inventory**

The Conservation Commission discussed updating the Towns NRI (Natural Resources Inventory) There is a website, [nhnriguide.org](http://nhnriguide.org) that helps set up and create or update your NRI. Everyone agreed that this is something they all need to sit down and spend some time on together.

**Other Business:**

The commission reviewed what documents they wanted to have available for the people the night of the Town Meeting to show them the benefits of having a Town Forest.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. at the Whitefield Town Office.

**Correspondence:**

The Conservation Commission reviewed the following forms from NHDES.

1. Received from NHDES a Wetlands Minimum Impact Forestry Notification for Joe Mercieri Tax Map 253 Lot 001.
2. Received from NHDES a "After the fact approval" Shoreland Permit Application for 25 Whispering Pines, Tax Map 219 Lot 009
3. Received from NHDES a notice of request for more information on a shoreland permit application for 10 Shoreline Drive, Tax Map 241 Lot 54
4. Received from NHDES a Wetlands Permit Application for Route 116, Whitefield, Tax Map #ROW, Lot # ROW

**A motion was made by Don LaPlante to approve the minutes as amended from the January 9, 2019 meeting. Seconded by, Marsha Lombardi no further discussion, all in favor, motion carries.**

**Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Don LaPlante to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m., seconded by Valerie Yelton, meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Tina L. Wright-Secretary

  
Frank Lombardi-Chairman

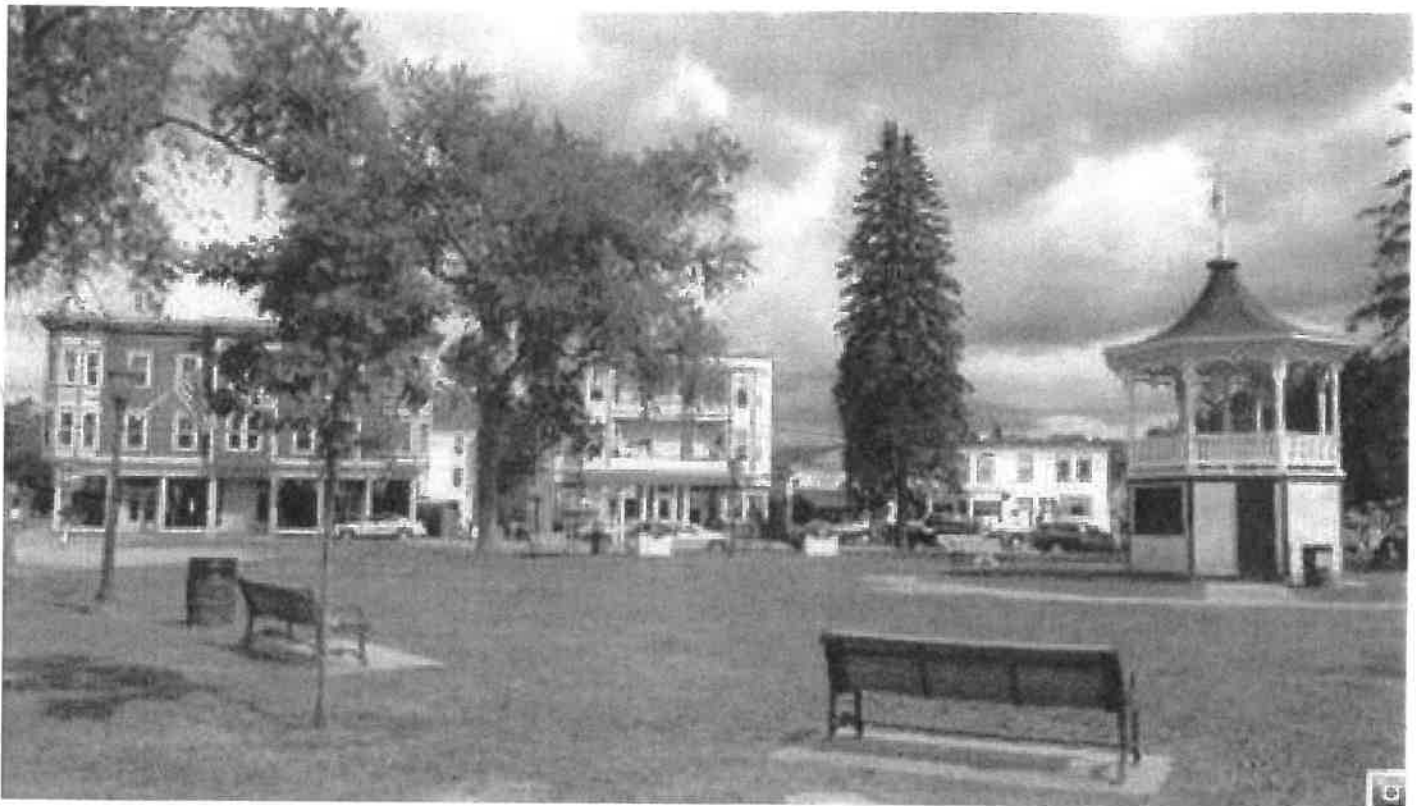


At NVRH, we want the NEK *Choosing Health*  
to be the healthiest region in the state.

[https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/local/reformed-conservation-commission-in-whitefield-looking-at-a-town-forest/article\\_4ba6192c-dc34-55bc-ae05-c3b90eba9905.html](https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/local/reformed-conservation-commission-in-whitefield-looking-at-a-town-forest/article_4ba6192c-dc34-55bc-ae05-c3b90eba9905.html)

## Reformed Conservation Commission In Whitefield Looking At A Town Forest

Robert Blechl Jan 15, 2019



King's Square in Whitefield, N.H. is pictured in this August 2018 file photo. A reformed conservation commission is seeking to establish a town forest in Whitefield. (Courtesy photo)

As 2019 gets underway, the Whitefield Conservation Commission, recently reformed with new members, is seeking to establish something Whitefield doesn't have - a town forest.

"Our board had their first meeting Aug. 8," said WCC Chairman Frank Lombardi. "The commission was not in existence for several years. Our goal is to educate and continue to conserve contiguous tracts of land for wildlife and recreational activities. One of our focuses is to propose the benefits of town forests to the communities in the area."

The commission highlighted neighboring communities that have a town forest - Bethlehem's 78.5 acres of town forest, Errol's 5,300-acre town forest in the 13-Mile Woods, Randolph's Community Forest of more than 10,000 acres that is self-sustained through timber harvesting that pays for road and other maintenance, the 1,400-acre Milan Town Forest, and the 4,000-acre Gorham Town Forest that could see another 2,000 acres added.

"Many towns are already doing this, but we want to better inform people about what it exactly is," said Lombardi.

In a report on their education effort, WCC members defined a town forest as generally being a contiguous tract of municipally owned land, though it could be connected to other parts by corridors, that is dominated by trees of various ages and species and a diverse wildlife population.

"It is a 'multiple use' forest that is managed to provide people with recreational opportunities such as hiking, birding, photography, and cross-country skiing, to protect watersheds and wildlife, to educate users about nature and the forest environment, and it may be selectively harvested for timber and fuel wood," they said.

More than just scenic landmarks, town forests promote community vitality and carry public benefits such as forest products, outdoor classrooms, outdoor forest-based education, and neighborhood gathering places, they said.

Benefits go beyond open space for recreation and conservation of wildlife habitat, and include natural outdoor classrooms through partnerships with local schools and revenue generation from timber and other forest products, such as Christmas trees, apple orchards, or maple sugaring, said the WCC members.

"Town forests serve as community gathering places, a place where residents connect with each other and the land," they said. "Engaging residents in planning and stewardship decisions fosters a deep connection with the land, and importantly to the community as a whole."

Town forests strengthen local economies, said the WCC, which cited a University of Vermont study that estimates the Barre Town Forest and trail system has an annual economic benefit of \$640,000 from visitor spending and supports some 20 local jobs.

On Monday, WCC Vice-Chairman Don LaPlante said a large part of the WCC's long-term plan is to take steps where it's reasonable "to protect the natural resources we have in the area for future generations."

In partnering with local schools for educational efforts, LaPlante, as an educator who spent many years in the local school district, said he knows there are teachers who are excited to take advantage of those opportunities and work it into their curriculum.

Another long-term goal is more regional and involves the possible locating, documenting and making into hiking trails the long-defunct railway beds that climbed the hills of Whitefield, Lancaster, Jefferson and Dalton during the lumbering days, he said.

"There were a lot of small railroads that ran into the mountains, and some vestiges are still visible," he said.

Of the newly reformed WCC, LaPlante said, "It's a good group and people seem to be interested in those kinds of things. We will take our time and try to do things right and we hope to have a lot of fun."