

Whitefield Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2019

Page 1 of 2

Frank Lombardi called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

**Members Present:** Frank Lombardi- Chairman, Don LaPlante-Vice Chair, Edith Worcester, Marsha Lombardi, and Tina Wright-Secretary

**Members Absent:** Ken Jordan and Valerie Yelton

**Petition Warrant Article update**

Frank and Marsha brought in their petition articles they both have enough signatures to turn in now. Frank wrote up a informational packet about What a Town Forest is and read it to the members (see attached ) Everyone on the commission agreed that it should go in the local newspaper .

Don is going to call Barbara Richter and have her join the next meeting via phone conference.

**Next Meetings:**

The February meeting will be held on Wednesday the 13th at 4:30 p.m. and the March meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 6th at 4:30 p.m.

**Correspondence:**

Sara Doucette had reached out to Frank wanting to know if we had sent a letter to the Dalton Conservation Commission about the landfill. Secretary Wright mailed out three letters on November 26, 2018. One to Dalton Selectmen, Dalton Planning Board and the Dalton Conservation Commission. Secretary Wright said she will reach out Dalton Conservation Commission Chairman Corey St Cyr to make sure he received the letter.

Reviewed a few notices from DES

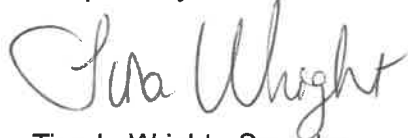
1. A shoreland permit application was submitted to DES for 25 Whispering Pines, Tax Map # 219 Lot # 009. There are a couple of items the resident needs to supply to DES before it can be reviewed.
2. A shoreland permit application was submitted to DES for 10 Shoreline Drive, Tax Map 241 Lot #54 and a possible violation for a demolition.
3. An Emergency Authorization to replace an 18 in x 225 ft culvert on Rte 3 in Whitefield.
4. A Wetlands Utility Maintenance Notification for Eversource Energy.

A motion was made by Don LaPlante to approve the minutes as is from the December 13, 2018 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 5:45 p.m., seconded by Edith Worcester. Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tina Wright".

Tina L. Wright - Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frank Lombardi".

Frank Lombardi - Chairman

# A Community Education Effort by the Whitefield Conservation Commission

## What is a Town Forest:

### Town Forests

"A town is saved...by the woods and swamps that surround it." (Henry David Thoreau)

### What Is A Town Forest?

Located within the limits of a town, suburb or city, a Town Forest is distinct from a "park." A Town Forest is generally a contiguous tract of municipally owned land (it may be connected to other forest "islands" by conservation "corridors") that is dominated by trees, often of various ages and species. It usually contains a diverse wildlife population with woody and herbaceous vegetation forming the understory. It is a "multiple use" forest; that is, it 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 fuelwood.

### What Are The Benefits Of A Town Forest?

Town Forests are more than just scenic landmarks. They also promote community vitality and provide priceless public benefits like watershed protection, wildlife habitat, forest products, outdoor classrooms, and neighborhood gathering places. One major benefit of Town Forests, outdoor forest-based recreation, offers both great opportunities and growing challenges.

The first Town Forest in the U.S. was established in New Hampshire in 1711, but Europeans have been managing and protecting their Town Forests since the Middle Ages. The following are some local towns that have successfully managed their own Town Forest:

- **Bethlehem** currently has **78.5 acres** of Town Forest in the central western part of town.
- **Errol** was only a town of 282 people when they decided to take on preserving the **5,300 acres** in the 13 Mile Woods.
- **Randolph's** Community Forest is **over 10,000 acres** and is completely self sustaining. Timber harvesting money is used for road maintenance, culverts, keeping some fields open for wildlife, etc. They also have an annual Forest Day event the first Sat in August that consistently draws 40-50 people to see what is being done.
- **Milan's** Town Forest is **1,400 acres**.
- **Gorham's** Town Forest is currently **4,000 acres** and they are now campaigning to add another **2,000**.
- **Whitefield's proposed Town Forest will be a total of 105.65 acres if voted in at Town Meeting.**

# A Community Education Effort by the Whitefield Conservation Commission

A **Town Forest** would provide a wide array of benefits to residents:

- **Open space for recreation**
- **Natural outdoor classrooms**, partnering with the **local schools**.
- **Revenue** generation from timber and other forest products (such as possible Christmas Tree Farm, Apple Orchard, Maple Sugaring, etc. to be determined by Conservation Commission and forester)

*NH "Town forests . . . generate \$146 million dollars in economic value a year."*

*(Ropeik A., NHPR.org, 2019)*

Public values derived from these community assets range from environmental and ecological to economic. These values include:

- **Education:** In many New Hampshire communities, Town Forests serve as outdoor classrooms for students both young and old; a place where model forest management can be demonstrated for private landowners.
- **Community Engagement and Sense of Place:** Town forests serve as community gathering places; a place where residents connect with each other and the land. Engaging residents in planning and stewardship decisions fosters a deeper connection with the land, and importantly to the community as a whole.
- **Water Quality Protection:** Historically, many of New Hampshire's Town Forests were created to protect public drinking water supplies. Today, these properties continue to serve this important role in watershed protection.
- **Forest Products:** Timber harvesting in Town Forests provide revenue for stewardship activities and/or raw materials for community projects.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** Town forests serve as crucial habitat for wildlife, such as deer-wintering areas or breeding habitat for neo-tropical migrants, and are often included in landscape-level conservation planning.
- **Public Recreation Opportunities:** With an increasing number of landowners posting their property as private, Town Forests offer residents a place to continue to enjoy outdoor recreational activities, such as hunting, walking, and mountain biking.
- **Economic Development:** Town forests play an important role in strengthening the local economy. For example, a recent economic analysis by the Gund Institute at the University of Vermont estimates that the Barre Town Forest and trail system will result in an annual economic benefit of \$640,000 from visitor spending and support 20 local jobs.