

**Andover Conservation Commission**  
**April 10, 2024**  
**Final Minutes**

Present from the Andover Conservation Commission (ACC): Nancy Robart, Jesse Schust, Nancy Teach, Sooze Hodgson, Jerry Hersey, Lee Wells

Route 4 At Eagle Pond Property: Nathan Cole (land owner), Kathy Kraysler (neighbor concerned about environmental impact), Mary Lynn Ray and Laurie Zimmerman (At Eagle Pond, Inc), Les Fenton, Andrew Merzi (abutter), Mary Howe (neighbor, concerned about property and environmental pressure on the river), Bob Newman (Wilmot Conservation Commission (WCC), Ken Kessler (WCC), Sandy Rock (WCC), Geoff Harris (WCC and Camp Manager), Don Moyer (Friends of the Northern Rail Trail), Daryl Furtkamp, Devin Muzdiere, John Hodgson (Andover Historical Society). Andy Deegan, Stewardship Manager and Interim Director of Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT), Liz Kirby, President of the Wilmot Historical Society. Bill Hoffman (Andover Historical Society)

Miranda Dawalga: Hub's Earth Day Program and working with ACC.

**Route 4 property:**

7 lots – two on back on the river side of Rail Trail (RT), and 6 along route 4.

Nancy R circulated a map of the site.

25.2 acres – back lots abutting Frazer Brook/Blackwater River 14 acres on route 4 roughly 11 acres. Right of Way across the rail trail to access back section already approved by State. There is an existing right of way in the deed. All driveways are permitted.

Abutters' public hearing in two weeks/April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00pm, the application has been deemed complete.

Plan for historical/environmental impact waived. Any building plans will go before the planning board. 10 acres in Wilmot Nate will keep for himself.

Some confusion about what historical and natural features mean – some interpreted it to be just the view of the mountain, the At Eagle Pond group considers the entire view, which the At Eagle Pond group feels will be compromised by any construction that can be seen directly from farm. 149, 6 159

Asking prices for land: \$89,000 for first three lots, \$129,000 for 4<sup>th</sup>, \$149,000 for 5<sup>th</sup>, \$159,00 for 6<sup>th</sup> Back lot one \$249,000.

Different price for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> if put into Conservation Easement, \$125,000 for 6. – fee ownership – \$200,000 for riverside back lot for fee ownership.

Nate bought property in November – on the market for 18 months before that.

Suggestion/comment: What is the cost of entire parcel – perhaps making it an experimental farm?

There is no approval to put these lots on the market yet – Nate hasn't received permission for subdivision from state. Nothing will happen for at least a month.

Funding sources?: Andy Deegan (ASLPT): big and small sources. LCHIP (Land and Community Heritage Investment Program) is very competitive – they gave 5 million last year, but there were 7.2 million dollars in request. ARM grants (from wetland impacts fines) no money went into the pot for the route 4 particular watershed. Source water grant program – for drinking water – the 14-acre riverside parcel is part of an aquifer – could fund up to half the assessments on land and purchase price. The Conservation Fund: they step in in a situation like this – help with funding. They bought Sawyer Brook Headwaters with ASLPT – needs to be paid back – if not, land goes back on the market.

Conservation Loan – will have interest to pay – and land goes back on market if not paid back.

ASLPT cannot do a Fee Ownership purchase above appraised value – the back riverside 14 acre need to be appraised.

Andy doesn't have experience with Historical Grant funding knowledge.

Conservation buyer is another possibility – an individual or group buys the property giving ASLPT time to fund raise to buy the property – there are risks - ie if appraisal comes in lower than the Conservation buyer's purchase price from the owner the conservation buyers will take a loss when the property is finally purchased by ASLPT at the appraised value. Conservation buyer(s) may have to hold the property and pay taxes for a year or two while ASLPT or other conservation entity raises funds for a fee ownership. Some conservation buyers are willing to take this risk.

If a group of individuals has an agreement with the land-owner independently from the land trust, they may pay the difference between the assessed value and what the land-owner is asking for.

At Eagle Pond is applying for LCHIP money to pay for repairs that need to be done at the farm. They must raise matching funds, the application is due in June, and they will not have an answer from LCHIP until November.

Why wasn't the land purchased in the time when it was on the market? We can't ask Nate to not be a businessman. We (Wilmot/Andover CC) need to be more aware of what is coming on the market.

Someone in town was interested in purchasing this land, at that time the seller wasn't interested. So it was on the radar then.

This is Nate's first venture at this (partner has done many). Nate grew up in Danbury – he understands the small town issues.

Biggest source of funding is LCHIP, but those funds are so competitive to get. The first thing the grant funder looks at is how involved the town is. Some towns try to have money set aside and town votes on it every year (Sunapee does this), so if something comes up, they are good to go. Andy encourages that we do this as well.

Attendees welcome to come to the Planning Board meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

William Clarke, WCC, raised the issue of an Andover/Wilmot forest.

Bill Hoffman recommended that the ACC summarize its concerns and send this summary memo to the Planning Board. This may help the Planning Board understand the ACC's concerns and position about the land on Rte 4.

### **Regular Meeting:**

Sooze moved to approve minutes as amended, seconded by Nancy T: all in favor

Earth Day (Miranda) – Saturday April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 12 at Hub – The ACC will have a table at the Hub with information about the Andover Conservation Commission. Activities at the Hub: Harvey Best and Wyman Ordway will do bird house Building. There also will be a Bug House building workshop. The Andover Garden Club will have activities too (outdoors if the weather is good). There will be door prizes – hopefully for everyone who helped with the clean-up. Nancy T will be there with Garden Club. Nancy R will staff the ACC table.

Bradley Road Lake property – we can't do anything until the abutter's land is surveyed. The ACC will consider going to the Planning Board for a non-binding consultation. A possible land swap between the abutter and the town for part of the town owned property does not yet seem to be on the Select Board's radar. Jesse will let the abutter know that we want to meet with him before going to the Select Board. The abutter will be invited to the May 8<sup>th</sup> ACC meeting. ASLPT request for membership \$150 and for extra gift of \$150. for annual fund. Motion made by Nancy R, seconded by Nancy T: all in favor.

Reimbursement: moved to cover cost of banner (\$83). Moved and seconded.

Possible project: Couple approached Jesse and Nancy R – asked about mission of Conservation Commission – protecting lady slippers, etc. Nancy R looked into it, and that is part of our purview. Consulted Nancy T (Garden Club) and Steve D (NRT) about creating a nature walk with signs. Rail Trail Bureau is very helpful – just let them know ahead of time. Miranda can help us with identifying native plants. Gisela Darling may be able to help too.

Election of new officers: The ACC had a ballot election at this meeting. Nancy R and Jesse S were voted in to continue as co- chairs. Nancy T was voted in to be ACC CFO.

CFO – Chief Financial Officer – Cristy pays bills, gives us balance. Need to keep issue of land coming out of current use funds up so we should get 50% of those funds. Nancy T ready to do this.

3 positions voted and approved: Nancy Robart and Jesse Schust: co-chairs, Nancy T - CFO

Other: Highland Lake – Nancy R asked Donna Baker-Hartwell about milfoil, and lake hosting. Need to talk to Earl Davis – Nancy R will try to call him. Other towns pay their lake hosts – we can ask other towns how they fund it. Kezar lake pays some of hosts, others are volunteers.

Other items – April 26<sup>th</sup> ASLPT commission chairs – Jesse and Nancy R will attend.

Our annual budget stays the same (\$1800) for us and \$2500 for Beaver Deceiver maintenance.

We should do a walk about with Kevin at Transfer Station and at Highway garage – Nancy R will call him to arrange this.

Sooze: suggested that the ACC pay for the appraisal for Route 4 land (far side of Rail Trail) to help ASLPT with a conservation plan for this land. Knowing the appraised value soon will help the ACC look for Conservation Buyer(s).

Motion made by Sooze: That the ACC use reserve funds from ACC, with a \$2500 cap, for appraisal of lot 6 and the west side riverside lot which abuts the river - seconded by Nancy T: all in favor. Nancy R will let Andy Deegan know about this – so we can get going with the appraisal.

Jesse and Nancy R will work on memo for Planning Board as Bill Hoffman recommended.

Nancy R asked Barbara Richter if there is a packet of info to inform Select Board of the work of Conservation Commission – she sent a packet – will use Fenvale monitoring report (which includes wetlands) as an example of what we do.

Task Force: about At Eagle Pond property – Jesse will be the point person and coordinator.

Motion made to close the meeting made by Jesse, seconded by Lee: all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45.