

## **WESTMORELAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

### **UNAPPROVED MINUTES 12-11-2025**

#### **In attendance:**

- Commission Members: Perry Sawyer, Anson Burt, Jean Rudolph, April Ferguson, Joy Fletcher
- Guest: Ben Wallace, Land Protection Lead, The Nature Conservancy-NH

**Meeting called to order by Perry Sawyer at 7:02PM.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Perry.**

#### **Previous Meeting Minutes**

- April made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes as recorded. Seconded by Anson. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **The Nature Conservancy - NH**

- Presentation by Ben Wallace on TNC's current land protection priorities and how they touch down in the Westmoreland, NH area.
- Westmoreland has been identified by TNC as having land that's important for wildlife corridors and fresh water resources.
- Purchases of land, conservation easements, and helping with funding and transactions, are all ways that TNC is working towards land protection in this area.
- Farmland could remain farmland if it became protected land.
- Most TNC protected lands are actively managed for forestry and wildlife, including active habitat restoration.
- TNC is looking to mobilize funding for protecting lands - grant availability is competitive but provides funds related to transactional costs which can be helpful. Also has provided support for staff members and occasionally provides funds for stewardship endowments.
- The Commission used to send notes out to landowners with large parcels of land in town asking if they'd be interested in conserving their land, but it didn't gain any traction.
- Discussion ensued about the ethos of the town being more in favor of protecting "working lands" rather than recreational land.
- There was discussion on the results of the town's master plan survey that related to conservation questions. TNC would be willing to support planning commissions to help with conservation data gathering.

**Board of Selectmen update on process for Commission member recruitment and exit**

- Board of Selectmen needs to approve new members.
- To exit, a letter of resignation may need to be submitted. Perry will follow up.

**Proposed Town Forum on Japanese Knotweed**

- The more opinions that are represented in a forum, the more impactful it will be.
- Forum should be informational - what is knotweed, how does it spread, what are the treatment methods, etc.
- April heard of the use of rollers for flattening knotweed prior to spraying to reduce the level of overspray
- April shared about an acquaintance she knows that has a goat herd that's used for landscaping, and in VT has been using the herd for Japanese knotweed mitigation. After the herd grazes, it is sprayed with Grazon. Her company is called Slippery Slope Goats. She has volunteered to come and speak with the Commission about this option for knotweed mitigation. April will invite her, potentially for the January meeting.
- The Commission would like to continue inviting knowledgeable parties to meetings (State Invasives Coordinator, licensed herbicide applicator, Harrisville Cons Com member - Joy to reach out to Harrisville).

**New Business**

- Perry shared about a FERC memo he read related to adding solar panels (ground array) to Ag land (a corn field) in Vernon. The town is looking to take the farmland out of the FERC easement area and keep this as active farmland. Good to keep an eye out for this kind of potential in our area.
- Anson is interested in discussing salt use on the roads at a future Commission meeting. We will plan to discuss this in January.

**April made a motion to adjourn at 8:38PM, seconded by Anson. Motion was passed unanimously.**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 8th at 7pm at the Westmoreland Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Fletcher