

TOWN OF BEDFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
June 23, 2020

A meeting of the Bedford Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 via the Zoom meeting platform.

Present: James Drake (Vice Chair), Bill Carter (Town Council), Maggie Wachs, Bob MacPherson, Gregory Schain (Alternate), Patricia Grogan (Alternate), Stephanie Jones (Alternate), Karin Elmer (Planner I), Rebecca Hebert (Planning Director).

Absent: Beth Evarts, Denise Ricciardi (Town Council Alternate), Mac McMahan.

7:00 PM Call to Order

Acting Chairman Mr. Drake called the Bedford Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Members of the commission introduced themselves via roll call and all indicated they were alone in the room during this online meeting.

Ms. Elmer read a statement:

- *Due to the Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Conservation Commission is authorized to meet electronically.*
- *This meeting is being conducted using the Zoom platform. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate with each other during the meeting, and the public has access to listen and participate by dialing 929-205-6099 and entering the Meeting ID # 935-4594-4975 and the meeting Password 937669. Instructions regarding remote access to the meeting have been published in advance and are available on the Conservation Commission agenda, which is posted on the Town website.*
- *There is no physical location for the meeting, which is permissible pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. Town of Bedford is providing public access to the Zoom meeting by telephone, and the meeting will also be broadcast live on BCTV's Channel 22.*
- *Members of the public may email staff at planning@bedfordnh.org to ask questions during the meeting or notify us of technical issues. If you have joined the meeting using Zoom, you may also ask questions when the Chair opens the hearing for public comment through your phone connection.*
- *All votes will be taken as a roll call vote.*
- *If there are technological issues during the meeting, the Chair will recess the meeting and we will try to correct the problem. If the issue continues, the application will be postponed, and the meeting will be adjourned.*

Ms. Elmer read the agenda for the evening's meeting.

Mr. Drake read the Conservation Commission Mission Statement.

Approval of Minutes:

- January 28, 2020 and May 26, 2020 Conservation Commission Minutes –

MOTION by Mr. Carter to approve the January 28, 2020 minutes as written. Seconded by Maggie Wachs. Roll call vote: Acting Chairman Drake, approved, Mr. MacPherson, approved, Ms. Wachs, approved, Ms. Grogan, approved, Mr. Carter, approved. Mr. MacPherson, abstained, Ms. Jones, abstained. – Motion passed.

At this time, Mr. Drake asked for clarification about the Circle Drive application which was heard at the May 26, 2020 Conservation Commission meeting. He asked for confirmation that the Commission tabled the Circle Drive application at that meeting, but the applicant changed their plan after that meeting and submitted changed plans to DES and got approved, even though the Conservation Commission never saw the changed plans. Ms. Elmer replied yes. He asked if that is following protocol. Ms. Elmer stated the Commission is only advisory, the applicant reduced the impact in the new plan and they will be coming back to the Commission for review of a variance request to fill a vernal pool at the project site. Mr. Drake then acknowledged a letter from DES that stated the application would be reconsidered if the plan changes again. He stated he is concerned about that application because they tabled it and lost their chance to comment on it.

MOTION by Mr. Carter to approve the May 26, 2020 minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. MacPherson. Roll call vote: Acting Chairman Drake, approved, Mr. MacPherson, approved, Ms. Wachs, approved, Mr. Carter, approved, Ms. Grogan, approved. Mr. Schain, abstained, Ms. Jones, abstained.– Motion passed.

Dredge and Fill Applications: None

New Business:

- **Ron Klemarczyk – Update on Pulpit Rock Conservation Area trail improvements:**

Mr. Klemarczyk, a consultant forester with FORECO, a company based out of Maine, introduced himself and stated that he was by himself and in his office during this electronic meeting. He has been working with the Town of Bedford for about 3 years now, the first involvement was with the Pulpit Rock trail project. At the time, with a state grant, there was a grant for trail work from the trail head at Pulpit Rock to the Gages Mill site to the construction of the bridge. He state we fixed up all of the bad spots and came in a little under budget for the grant, so now the portions that looked good now looked bad. It was suggested that we use the

rest of the grant money to fix up the rest of the trail. The trail from the Pulpit Road trail head to the bridge below the Gages Mill sawmill was smoothed out with ledge pack.

Mr. Klemarczyk said he is using the same logging company as the project continues. The company lost a good employee that has done work in Bedford in the past, but they have hired someone new and should be available sometime after the fourth of July. Another phase has started on the Campbell trail, there was an expansion of the trail system. Portions were in very poor condition, and after conversations with Rich Moore, Becky and the trails people, we decided to take the rickety bridge out, and work on some of the connecting trails. It is now safer. When we took the decking off of the old bridge the logs fell apart and into the brook. Rich Moore put together a new trails map, and it reflects the new trail system and is easy to follow. With work on the Campbell trail and Tufts trail, we installed two bridges. The changes eliminated the need to cross the streams. With the amount of trail use, you need a dry stream crossing. The trail use has increased since covid-19 pandemic hit, so our timing was good. There have not been any complaints brought to my attention, so I am assuming the trail relocations and the bridge replacements have not caused any problems. That aspect of the trails project is done. All that is left is putting down more ledge pack on the trails where we left off two years ago. He then stated that was all he had for a trails update and asked if there were any questions.

Mr. MacPherson asked Ron how he transports the ledge pack into the trails. Mr. Klemarczyk responded that what we did, is use a construction road into the detention pond area, then we used a skid steer and a wagon. Using a temporary bridge you moved the ledge pack with either the skid steer or a mini excavator etc. It worked quite effectively. The ledge pack is much closer to the detention pond this time and should be a lot easier. Mr. MacPherson asked how many tons of material did you use. He answered 21 loads of pack and stone and due to a wash out, they put in stone and perforated pipes and then the ledge pack. He said he didn't know how many tons they used. Mr. MacPherson's second question was regarding donated materials. He asked if he was able to take advantage of donated materials for the bridge replacements. Mr. Klemarczyk responded no, we were not able to, because wood needed to be cut and assembled on site. He does all of the pre-fab work at his house. However, when he did an inventory, he found that there are additional bridges in Bedford that need repair or replacement and that they could use the donated materials. He mentioned that right now there is a shortage of pressure treated lumber because of the stay at home order, and people building decks and landscaping etc. If that offer is still available, replacing bridges further up toward Pulpit Rock would be a good use for that donated lumber. Mr. MacPherson asked when you would need that. Becky Hebert stated she could coordinate this with Ron, and it would not be part of the grant.

Mr. Richard Moore stated that he wanted to make a correction. He did not create the trail map, it was created by a Town employee, a GIS expert, Brandon Boisvert from DPW. Mr. Boisvert used the GPS to find the rerouted trails and marked them in. Mr. Moore printed the updated maps, encased them in plastic at the trail heads for people to see and use. He said they need to be printed larger, but they wanted them up to show the changes. It needs to go up on the website also. Mr. Moore wants to give Mr. Boisvert credit for the updated trail maps creation. Ms. Elmer mentioned that the maps Mr. Moore is referring to were in the Commissions packets.

Mr. Drake asked if we could bring one of those trail maps up, so that when the Eagle Scout does his presentation we will know where he will be working. Ms. Elmer mentioned we will try and do that but not until after the next agenda item. Mr. Drake then asked if this was the most current trail map, does it include all of the trail changes that were made. Mr. Moore stated pretty much. The Tufts trail for example just got sketched in. There may be a slight change once GPS coordinates are added to the maps. Mr. Klemarczyk stated the sketched in areas of the trails are very close to what is out there.

Mr. Drake then said he is very happy that this project got done and that there were so many improvements made to the trail systems. It obviously started as one project and became something that made many improvements. He then asked Ms. Elmer, as a recap, how much was the entire grant and funding. Karin said she does not have that information with her. She, Ron and Becky walked the trail system this morning to put together a final punch list for the grant. Ms. Elmer mentioned Erik Feldbaum who works for the state, and administers the grant. The State wants the Town to spend down the entire amount of the grant and he gave staff a few ideas on other projects the grant money could be used for. Ms. Elmer stated she will be going over the final punch list, review the full amount of the grant and the costs associated with Mr. Klemarczyk's work to see where they are at with the trails project to date. Mr. Drake said awesome and asked if anyone on the Commission had any more questions for Mr. Klemarczyk regarding the trails project. There were no more questions so Mr. Drake asked Mr. Klemarczyk to begin his next presentation about the Pulpit Rock Forest Stewardship plan.

- **Ron Klemarczyk – Update on Pulpit Rock Forest Stewardship Plan:**

Ms. Elmer made a comment at this time, asking people who are watching the meeting using the ZOOM platform to raise their hand if they want to speak, or send an email to planning@bedfordnh.org. She read instructions for full participation and checked with Ms. Hebert to see if there were any emails at this point and there were none. Staff is monitoring comments and questions as the meeting is progressing.

Mr. Drake introduced the second order of business, a presentation by Ron Klemarczyk regarding the Pulpit Rock Forest Stewardship Plan.

Mr. Klemarczyk asked Ms. Elmer to put up the Forest type map for viewers to see while he gives his presentation. He stated he picked up the approval to do the Forest Stewardship plan last fall. He wanted to do the inventory before the snow fell. He did it around Thanksgiving of last year. It involved putting markers and a string box, which would tell him the distance he was marking. If anyone saw string out there that is what it was for. Also, he made inventory points and numbered it. He got the data processed, but there was a back log in the Rumney home office for the back work to get the map completed. He didn't get around to making the map until January or February, then the virus hit. That is why it is taking so long to complete the Stewardship plan.

I had done an inventory back in 1990 of the original Pulpit Rock tract. Some of the information is still good, the Pulpit Rock Conservation Area has greatly increased in size since the last

inventory was completed. It was written in the past for staff and recreation and that there would not be any timber harvesting. The inventory, values and volumes are not as critical, but it is nice to know what is out there for wildlife habitat purposes etc. The big thing did not come up when I started my forestry career was for salvaging purposes. Since 1998 I have been involved with many salvaging projects including when the tornado hit in New Hampshire. If there is a natural disaster, I have a salvaging plan in place. As an example, 400 acres of clear cutting was to be done where the tornado hit and it became a fire hazard. It was very important to clean up many of the trails that were affected by the tornado. Also, there was an infestation of the hemlock woolly adelgid. I did not find any evidence of that in November. I walked up the gorge trail and didn't find any. The Hampton Town Forest and the Kingston Town forest, they have a severe infestation of the woolly adelgid. Trees are dying off. You guys lucked out. I think it is because of the topography. You were able to get the frigid air running down through there where the other communities down near the seacoast did not get that.

So, as a result of the inventory, the first thing is that I did not find any of the woolly adelgid. It has not been forested in a long time. Secondly, the trails were heavily used in the fall, and much more this spring due to the virus. I did notice a heavy deer population, but will not say specifically where that was. Part of it is due to the heavy acorn crop and part due to no hunting allowed in the area. The deer know where they are safe and they migrate around there, but I did find a deer stand. I left a note to the owner of the deer stand that it is a natural area where you would need permission to hunt there. Apparently it was taken down. I did find plant invasives, mostly along a field along Indian Rock Road, where there are several fields there. That is where I found most of the invasives along that field. Bittersweet etc., birds are attracted to these old field areas and their droppings contain seeds from elsewhere, so that is why you have the potential for infestation. Also, down in the big detention pond, it can become attractive, and you could get some invasives there. Just to the Southeast of the detention pond, there is already some bittersweet. You can get the vines out of the canopy, and that is something else I will be putting in the Stewardship plan, taking care of the bittersweet vines. Unfortunately and a lot of people don't like this, but the only effective way to deal with the heavy infestation of some of the invasives is to use herbicides, and I will provide you with a company that can take care of that type of thing.

We started doing that with the City of Concord, so that they did not become overwhelmed, especially with *herba rosa*, a plant that grows around trails, it's viney and has barbs/thorns that contain a bacteria. I got cut and had to go on antibiotics for quite a while. That is something had that not happened to me, I wouldn't have been so concerned but it is becoming a bigger and bigger problem. The sooner you catch it the better off you are. So that is the general review. Continuing, Mr. Klemarczyk asked the Commission to look at the Forest type map that was up on the screen. He stated, if you look at the map, there are seven different stands of timber, all labeled on the map. I will start with stand 1. That is the largest stand with hemlock, white pine and red maple etc.. Most of the trees are mature or almost mature state. It contains vernal pools, ledge crops and most of your hiking trails are in that forest type. Again, without a harvest, I would normally set up buffer zones, and wouldn't even try to cut. If there were to be any work to be done in there, it is to remove hazardous trees. When I was out there doing the inventory, a crew from the Town came in to take down trees that were leaning over the trail. Trees are living

things and get old. Bedford already has a policy to take down some of these dangerous trees and that should be kept up. You need to watch for over-use of the trails, resulting in root exposure. It needs to be kept monitored. I noticed a lot of dogs, some with negative interaction with hikers, other dogs and wildlife. In Concord we are having a problem with this issue also. I am not sure what the policy is about dogs, but it is something to think about moving forward. Lastly for that stand, where it is most visible and has the most trails, it is constantly being monitored for the woolly adelgid. A two week cold snap in the winter can kill off that insect, but they are still moving north. They have been reported around Lake Winnepesaukee in hemlock trees that were brought in for landscaping and it is not common in all of New Hampshire. Bedford lucked out, but they still need to be monitored.

Stand number 2, is on the East side of Rachel's Way. It is similar to stand 1, but it had been logged. It is a mixed forest of red oak, white pine, hemlock, red maple but not as heavily stocked. It had been thinned out of hemlock and red maple. There are some skidder trails, and the emergency lane that was part of the subdivision. It is starting to grow in and pick up some invasive species. It is like a long skinny field where birds like to be. It needs to be checked occasionally. You have some backyards on Rachel's Way and Pulpit Road, and there are some impacts out there including a donkey. There is an intermittent stream that flows out there that would make access difficult. On this stand, for recommendations, I suggest maintaining the emergency access, and connector trails.

Mr. Klemarczyk continued with his description of Stand 3. It is the southeast of stand 2. It is a sugar bush area that was once used for agricultural products. There are several sugar bushes near the trail head. There was also one near stand 6. It is evidence of past agricultural use. In sugar bush management, you have your maples and your non maples. The trick is to remove the non-maples. If you want to maintain the area as an old sugar bush site, you may want to cut down any of the remaining non maples. You try to drop trees and lopping them to the ground and protect the sugar maples. There would be a cost, but it is a historic site.

Stand number 4, sits below 3, there is quite a few stone walls, old fields along eastern boundary. Mostly white pine and a good growing site. It is bisected by streams, and the scouting way, that goes out to Pulpit Road, used to be an old logging and access road to the colonial home sites in the area. I will talk about that a little later. Stand 4 is probably the best growing site for timber, on the forest, other than the wet area by the stream that bisects the lot. In an 1892 Hillsborough county map it is shown as a logging road.

Continuing, Mr. Klemarczyk discussed stand number 5. That was probably a pine clear cut that came back and is almost all red oak. It's sloped, but a good growing site for oak. That area was used for agriculture, and it is good site and still developing.

Stand number 6, it is way down in the southwest corner of the map near the hayfield. It contains a sugar bush, and sugar maple. He explained what the key was on the map at this time. There are some very old sugar maples that are getting crowded. Pines are in there now. Most of the ash that grew in the wetter area has been affected by the ash bore and many of it is dying off. Ironically, it is thinning out the non-maples and giving the sugar maples more room to grow. The marked trail ends up in that hayfield. I don't know if there has been any trouble, and if

people just get to the hayfield and turn around. If it is a dead-end trail it should be posted, so people do not wander into people's yards. There could be some concerns from the abutters. There is a great big sugar bush in Amherst near stand 6 and may be active. There is not a lot going on with stand 6, but to watch the ash bore and sugar bush.

Lastly, stand 7 which is on the southeast corner of the property, it was probably the last piece of farmland to be part of the forest on Pulpit Road. Gage's Mill trail goes through and there is an old hay cutter machine out in the area. It's kind of a pure pine stand, which happens when a hay field is abandoned. I counted the pine rings limbs, wondering how old it was and counted 62, it is 62 years old. He found a forest younger than himself. It is over-stocked. A lot of trees have fallen across the trails out there, but it is thinning itself out. There is intermittent drainage, and the more dominant healthy trees will survive. At the junction of the Gage's Mill trail and the Pulpit Brook trail there is a little hill, it doesn't show up on the map, on the southwest side someone had tapped into it for gravel. It's a nice source of gravel that could be used for the trail. It is an interesting geologic feature. That's it for the various forest types.

I am also looking into the historical and cultural features and trails. For the natural features you have the Pulpit Rock and two large boulders. Actually three. East of the Gage's sawmill site has a boulder with an odd shape. Looking at it today, someone vandalized it. Directly south there is an even larger boulder and a stone wall that is picked up on the survey. There is a fault zone that runs down there from Rochester to the Mass line, it passes through the Bedford forest area near the Gage's Mill sawmill site or a bit north. I will be putting together a geologic section in the plan, working off my 1990 work plan for the Town. It will be revised and I will have Rich Moore review it and make recommendations. The area has been heavily impacted between a glacier and tectonics.

The historic and cultural features include the mill site that is the most prominent one. I found an historic summer home in stand 7, where there is a cellar hole. The northern one still has the stone hearth from the fireplace. They are very small and did not show up the 1858 county map. The one on the trail people have explored. I did a little more research and there is a map of the proprietor's lot in the Town Office. There are several stone walls that run east-west, parallel to the Bedford, Amherst line. When they laid out the town of Bedford, the surveyors were hired, there were three complete lots in the Town forest and several smaller ones. It appears that those cellar holes are in different proprietors lots, so I am assuming that those cellar holes go back to the original settlement of Bedford. People would take these lots, settle them for five years, and then eventually own them. Then the land would be incorporated and the proprietors could sell these lots. You don't want to publicize these cellar holes too much, so they don't get damaged. A historical review could be done at the cellar holes to perhaps find pottery or glass etc. It is not often that you find these small cellar holes. People that originally owned the lots would often find they cannot make a living in the area, then they would sell the timber from the lot and move on. The people were coming from England with nothing, but many found the land at the Pulpit Rock area was not like the land in southern England. The Town could do a little more historical research in this area. The range way running between Bedford and Amherst could be researched also. The other thing found with the inventory for the trails, we are finding that the trails are impacting wildlife. Fish and Game has been researching the topic. Bedford has plenty of trails,

and I do not recommend that you put in any more trails. You should fix up the trails you have for water quality, and move them away from the brook a bit. There is a habitat map that can be used. Mr. Klemarczyk stated he saw quite a few deer in the area as mentioned earlier. Bridges need to be maintained to remain structurally sound. If you are hiking on a trail the state has established liability, but if you are on a bridge, and it becomes hazardous due to lack of maintenance, there is the possibility of the Town to be held negligent if someone is injured. Plank walks and bridges need to be well maintained, especially as use picks up.

Continuing, Mr. Klemarczyk stated the only other concern that I have with a trail is right below the New Boston Road trailhead where it crosses near a big swamp. That trail could be made to go around that marsh area instead of through it. It is a high impact area. You would still need to cross a drainage bridge from the highway, but it is still something to think about.

I will be writing this plan as more of a recreational area, but will try and set it up to show how it could be logged if a salvage situation is needed. There are a lot of areas that are hard to access. One of the things to discuss is how to get in there. You wouldn't want to run trucks down the new trails. The tricky thing will be how would there be access if a salvage situation was needed. The biggest issue is access. Hopefully the town will not have to worry about that. If trees are blown down during the summer, you have very little time to salvage the wood before insects move in. If tree are blown down in the winter, they can hang around a bit before removal. Insects can cause a problem. If too many trees go down, you can close a trail and call it a natural area.

Another thing, Indian Rock Road and the houses along Pulpit, when they are all put in, there will be a significant impact to the trail system. A lot of people like to make their own connector trails to the main Town trails. Boundaries are blazed from the detention pond to Indian Rock Road. I recommend blazing and painting those lines before the houses are built, so new homeowners will know where their property lines are. So that another set of issues that happened at Greenfield Farms, where contractors extended lawns into conservation land and landowners did not know that this had happened. If boundaries are clearly blazed, marked and painted it is a great deterrent to property owners extending their yards further than they should.

A lot of the Town and City forests are getting rogue trails from mountain bikers etc., but not always. It may be helpful to have something in your ordinance about cutting trees for trail networks without permission. That gives the police something better to enforce. Addressing Rogue trails in the ordinance would be very helpful.

The last issue, nothing critical, but on the Bedford Amherst town line, that section of boundary running east-west, when they did the Pulpit Rock road development, the Preserve of West Bedford they used that stone wall as the town line. It was found that the surveyor used for that development and other town property, actually found that the Town boundary is about 22 feet from the stone wall, that the developers used for the Preserve at West Bedford development. Where that stone wall ends, the two town lines don't line up. There has been all sorts of discussions with surveyors about the issue. Technically, you have to see what your deed says. Again, I believe some of that land is protected land, but it is something you may want to talk to

the Town of Amherst about. What brought this on, was the advent of GPS usage. A lot of these issues, especially with stonewalls have been coming up. This is not critical but be aware of it.

That is kind of my summary, of my forest inventory and stewardship plan. So now I am just wondering if anyone has suggestions or concerns about something I may have missed. The timber volumes, you end up with just over 4 million board feet of salt logs, 2800 cords of softwood pulp and 3100 cords of hard wood. There is a volume there, and it is a very nice place to hike. The trees are old and there are not a lot of them left in southern New Hampshire. It is nice to set these areas aside as natural areas when possible. Mr. Klemarczyk then asked if there were any suggestions or concerns.

At this time, Ms. Elmer asked acting chairman Drake to do a roll call vote to see if anyone has questions, then public comment can be opened up to the subcommittee members.

Mr. Drake state he has some questions, and wanted to thank Mr. Klemarczyk for the comprehensive presentation. He hopes it will open up people's eyes to the resources we have in Bedford and said he is looking forward to seeing all of this written down into a report for everyone to look at including graphics. Also, to keep track of it. Mr. Klemarczyk stated he will be giving a copy of the plan to the county also. Mr. Drake then stated he would go through the roll call and open the meeting to Commission member comments.

Ms. Wachs said she had no questions, but wanted to thank Ron for all of the hard work and for the great presentation.

Mr. MacPherson stated that the presentation was very thorough and comprehensive, and he thanked Ron for all of the work.

Mr. Carter, stated it was a very comprehensive presentation and he said Ron always does a great job and he thanked him for the report.

Ms. Grogan, said thank you.

Ms. Jones had no questions.

Mr. Drake continued, he said thank you to Ron, and said it was very comprehensive. He has one question and that is we have vernal pools listed and is that from your judgement or were wetland scientists used to verify they were vernal pools? Mr. Klemarczyk stated no, those were ones I encountered. I have worked with a lot of wetlands professionals, but as a forester I need to take a lot of continuing education. Through my work with the Boy Scouts I had the opportunity to work with individuals who were some of the first to recognize the importance of vernal pools. At the time when one of the county foresters was telling me to drain vernal pools, the biologists were very strong in their beliefs that these pools were very important to the habitat. This was in the 1970's. It has become very apparent as to how important they are. Whenever I came across anything that looked like a good vernal pool, I did pick them up and put on the map. I did not mark everything, but the ones I put on the map are legitimate vernal pools.

Mr. Drake then asked Mr. Klemarczyk about mentioning a lot of steep slopes in the forest. What is the importance of that and what should we be considering? Mr. Klemarczyk stated that for one, if we do logging, it is good to know where on the map the steep slopes are, especially for salvage issues, which I hope to never have to do. Also, if you are looking at an area for another trail, it gives you a good idea where you should not put one. And sometimes south facing slopes are very important, because they are the first to thaw and it is important for habitat to get acorns etc. Bedford has a lot of cold forest, not much south facing slope. The general exposure is south, southwest and it would make the ground difficult to do anything with. Generally with timber harvesting, it is good to know where these slopes are so they are added to my maps.

Continuing, Mr. Drake mentioned black lines on the maps and asked if they signified bridges over water bodies. Mr. Klemarczyk responded yes, those are foot bridges that I encountered. Mr. Drake then asked if in his inventory, would there be a section identifying those foot bridges and the condition of each one, and backing it up with recommendations including should we replace them? Mr. Klemarczyk answered I did not pick up that specific information, but I did pick up that there were a few near pulpit rock that need a little bit of work. Also, there was one on the Tufts trail that needs attention. It would not take much for me to go out there and put that kind of list together. We could make an inventory of some sort and add it to the list of the lumber that will be needed for the rest of the projects. Mr. Drake then stated he had no additional questions.

At this time, Ms. Elmer mentioned to acting chairman Drake, that he should open comments and questions to Mr. Klemarczyk to the subcommittee members in attendance. She said she could call on them and Mr. Drake agreed.

Mr. Price thanked Mr. Klemarczyk for the report and he said I got to tell you I have been on that Pulpit Rock many times in 40 years, and I have learned more tonight than ever before. Thank you again.

RitaCarroll - what a great interesting report. She stated she had two questions. When you talk about looking at the access if a harvest was ever needed, or something like that, what about access for fire protection? Is that something that we should look at in case there was ever a fire out there? Mr. Klemarczyk stated yes, that was a concern. When we were doing the new bridge on Gage's Mill, that road down to the detention pond provides pretty good access into that area of Gage's Mill sawmill area. I had the fire department go down and take a look at that access, so there is access down that way for emergency purposes. The Pulpit area, south, where there is the potential for some problems, again, there is that old woods road on that scouting way. It is in pretty good condition in stand 4 where it ties into the Campbell trail. You could upgrade that section between Scouting Way and Campbell trail and that would make access for an ATV or a gator type vehicle possible. Not a truck or car. So that would be another thought of mine about emergency access. If there is a fire in that area, pulpit brook has water running most of the year in that area to suppress a fire. The only other area I would recommend upgrading for ATV or a gator would be that Scouting Way area to the Campbell trail and tie into the original access road into pulpit rock.

Ms. Carroll had a second question. She asked if there was any evidence of the elongated scale? Mr. Klemarczyk stated that you could see where the hemlock trees had been thinned by the earlier infestation of the adelgid, but I did not see any scale that caught my eye in November. More damage would be found in the summer months. I think because it is a cold area, you have more protection against the adelgid and scale. She thanked him.

Jeannine said I would like to echo that it is a great idea to have an ordinance that there is no cutting trees without permission, because we had a problem with an abutter cutting down trees on the Joppa Hill conservation land. Also, the other thing is that it is true, that there are no boundary signs on the eastern portion where the Anagnost development is. There are not boundary signs over there, because when the Bedford Land Trust was doing the monitoring for that area, we had difficulty finding the boundary over there. I think the idea was that when the lots were sold, a survey should be done for all of the lots by either the developer or the homeowner and we will have that information. I think it is important to put up the boundary signs, and people are not tempted to make their own access into conservation land and they are not dumping or doing other things that they shouldn't be doing.

Mr. Ewing echoes the importance of getting those boundaries marked, and does not think the Town should wait for homeowners to establish those boundary lines. He then asked what is the feeling about the historical significance of the sugar bush maple lots that was mentioned in the presentation? Should we thin those areas out? I am curious to what others think. If we do not thin them out they will be overgrown by other species. Ms. Elmer stated that this is the first time people have seen this, and once everyone has time to digest it, the topic can be added to an agenda for discussion. Mr. Ewing stated it is just something to keep in mind. Ms. Hebert stated that it would be great if Mr. Klemarczyk could add in his report recommendations on how to maintain the sugar lots. Mr. Klemarczyk stated yes, it will be included.

Mr. Drake mentioned the two issues Mr. Klemarczyk looked at with the hemlock trees, did we coordinate with the Bedford Land Trust to find the exact locations to make sure it was gone? We identified specific locations. Mr. Klemarczyk stated he talked with the State and them new about it, and he searched high and low for it. If there is a specific location that was not near my inventory line, or the Pulpit Gorge area, I may have missed it. If it is in one area it spreads around pretty quick. I can take another look for it when I am back on the trails, and that would be no problem. Mr. Drake stated it would be beneficial to coordinate that. He then mentioned Jeanine and Bill's comments about surveying and marking out our boundaries. I think that is one of our initiatives we are trying to complete with all of our properties. At Pulpit etc., and we are trying to address that. Mr. Klemarczyk stated that the lots along Indian Rock Road have been surveyed, and the corners have been set. There will be no more surveying done out there with the corners set. Unfortunately they did not place a boundary line, but they did flag and some of them are easy to follow. It is easier to do that in the fall. The sooner you do it the better. It is something that should be looked at.

Mr. Ewing stated I can give you some feedback on the location of the woolly adelgid and scale. It was primarily along Gage's Mill trail and then back into the gorge. There was a map created

that I could pass along if it is not readily apparent. Also I would like to echo that in 5 years of walking the boundaries and the trails, Mr. Klemarczyk has picked up on a lot of good information.

Mr. Moore made the comment that it was interesting that I have been learning about the Pulpit for years and I am still learning. Thanks a lot.

Mr. Soderberg thanked Mr. Klemarczyk and said it was interesting learning about the old English settlers. I have the same concern about the woolly adelgid and want to take proactive steps on reducing the impact of the insects. It sounds like our hemlocks are eventually going away and we need to decide what trees to keep once the hemlocks succumb to the woolly Adelgid. Mr. Klemarczyk answered that Bedford is fortunate in that most of the hemlock areas are mixed and contain other species, as opposed to a place like Kingston that has pure hemlock areas. Unfortunately there is a lot of hemlock near the Pulpit Rock and the Gorge. You will lose your shading down along the brook. You lose the hemlock and lose the character of the area for a while. In the last few years watching the Ash disappear and a type of pine disappear, eventually we will continue to get invasives to move up as climate changes etc. In my political actions, I am always supporting those that recognize that climate change is a real issue. As a forester, we never had Lyme disease etc.

Ms. Elmer asked Ms. Hebert if they had received any email comments during the meeting.

Ms. Elmer recognized Jeanine had another comment or question. She asked if the grant money that you still have would be used for some new signage out at the pulpit. A couple of years ago, Mr. Nolan with the Town of Bedford permission, posted some yellow signs that stated no hunting, and I think those may want to be redone. Also, you may want to add no wheeled vehicles allowed. I have been out there and there are a lot of people coming in through Amherst from that trail on Joppa Hill, on bikes. People say the sign says no motorized vehicles, and it should say no wheeled vehicles. On the easement sign it says no wheeled vehicles. The riders say we did not see that sign. Ms. Elmer responded that Becky, Ron and I were out on the trails this morning and that was one of the things that we added to our list. Jeanine stated the problem there is that when the Bedford Land Trust wrote the easement, we didn't want bikes in there because they pack down the trail and have problems with erosion etc. Ms. Hebert stated that you have to be careful because the Town is obligated to allow wheeled apparatus to accommodate physical disabilities. You cannot just limit that to wheel chairs. The Town has to be compliant with the ADA trail accessibility rules. We can develop better signage. Mr. Klemarczyk stated there was an ATV out there recently and it's from a homeowner that lives on Pulpit Road. I think when we did one of the site walks that homeowner was approached. When those houses on Indian Rock Road go in, that should stop some of the ATV use out there. You want to make sure that the people buying the houses out on Indian Rock Road are aware. People have purchased ATV equipment for their kids not realizing the equipment is not allowed on some trails. Getting the boundary lines up and signage up will help with these issues. Once homeowners get into a habit of using trails for bikes etc., even when not allowed, they are habits that are hard to break.

Signs are usually put up on the boundaries, not haphazardly through the woods. The police like when there is a blazed line on the trails with signage, it makes it hard for people to say they didn't see the markings or rules.

At this time, Acting Chairman Drake asked if that was all of the questions from the public and Ms. Elmer answered yes. He then stated that he wanted everyone to remember that the Town of Bedford owns a piece of land over the Amherst line, which was connected to Pulpit Rock at one point. He asked Ms. Elmer if we did still own it. Mr. Moore answered we do. Mr. Drake stated I don't know how we take care of that too, or are we kind of deeding that back to Amherst? He then stated it was a pretty nice piece of property. Mr. Klemarczyk asked where that piece was, and Mr. Drake stated he believed it was connected to the trail system south. Mr. Moore stated the piece was on Amherst Conservation land, just east of it. Mr. Klemarczyk mentioned that perhaps a land swap could take place with Amherst to give them that piece of property in exchange for property on the Bedford line. That is just a thought. Mr. Drake stated the piece of land in question does abut the Amherst conservation land. It's also to our advantage to hold on to that because it is a block to future development in the area further west. It is just something to consider. Mr. Drake thanked Mr. Klemarczyk for the comprehensive presentations and stated the Commission looks forward to receiving the report. He asked if there was any idea as to when they may receive the report. Mr. Klemarczyk stated that right now my focus is to getting the trail done and, I have a project in Salem I need to finish. So, I'm thinking I will get started on in in 3-4 weeks. Mr. Drake said great and thanks for your presentation. Mr. Klemarczyk thanked everyone.

- **William Girard – Review of Eagle Scout Proposal - New Bridge at Pulpit Rock Conservation Area:**

Mr. Drake introduced William, who would be presenting an Eagle Scout project that will be on the Landry trail. Ms. Elmer mentioned to Ms. Hebert that there was a graphic to go along with the presentation. Mr. Moore then mentioned that the map from Mr. Klemarczyk that was being shown could be used to point out where this project was going to go also. It was mentioned that the trail map was good too. Ms. Hebert started with the trail map for the viewers to see and orient people watching.

William Girard was introduced and welcomed to begin his presentation. He introduced himself as a boy scout from Troop 5 in Bedford New Hampshire. My proposal is to remove the existing bridge on the Landry trail and replace that with a new bridge that I would be constructing with a team of scouts. It is a bridge made with 1" x 6"s, and two 6" x 12"s that are pressure treated. There will be beams and the ends will be capped. Mr. Girard continued to describe the materials and construction method for the proposed bridge at this time. He then stated that the bridge would be a copy of the newly constructed bridge on the Red trail. Mr. Girard then asked the Commission if they had any questions. Mr. Drake thanked William for the presentation and for his patience waiting to give it. He then stated the Commission thanks the boy scouts for their help and projects done on the trails and with the bridges. He then began a roll call of the Commission members to see if they had any questions for Mr. Girard.

Ms. Wachs: she thanked Mr. Girard for going over the project with them and asked when he was planning on doing the work and when did he think it would be completed. Mr. Girard answered as soon as possible. As soon as my project is approved, I need to complete badges first. Mr. Drake asked as a follow up, how will you fund raise for the project? Mr. Girard stated his fundraising would be through donations or through Facebook or a corporate/private donation to proceed. Also, bake sales may be done for fund raising.

Mr. MacPherson: He had a follow up question and asked Mr. Girard if he had a cost estimate drawn up for the project. Mr. Girard stated that it would be approximately \$350.00. Mr. MacPherson stated that is reasonable and all of my other questions were answered. He then thanked Mr. Girard.

Mr. Carter: He wanted to echo earlier thoughts that it is nice to see the people in this town take action in our town forest. He thanked Mr. Girard for the work that will be done.

Ms. Grogan: She thanked William and stated it was a great project.

Ms. Jones: She had no questions and thanked Mr. Girard for the presentation.

Ms. Elmer stated at this time, that Mr. Moore has volunteered to monitor this project and I think Mr. Girard's Scout leader is also here in this electronic meeting. She stated that she didn't know if Brian or Richard wanted to talk about the project.

Brian Sevigny, William Girard's Eagle coach introduced himself. He stated that he will support him and guide him through this process. He mentioned that this is William's project to lead and I am just here as a resource to guide and assist him along the way. Mr. Drake thanked Mr. Sevigny. Mr. Moore stated that he is willing to take the lead in terms of watching the progress and making sure from the Town's perspective that the project is done right. Mr. Drake thanked him and asked Ms. Elmer if there was anyone else on the phone wishing to speak to this proposal. Ms. Elmer answered no. Ms. Hebert stated that there were no emails either, and told Mr. Girard she thought he has a great project. You can see that the Pulpit Rock trails are a focus in the Town right now and getting a lot of use. It is the most popular area to hike in Bedford and this is an important project. It takes little bits of maintenance to keep the whole system working, and your contributions are much appreciated. Mr. Girard said thank you. Mr. Girard closed by stating he hopes to get this project completed as soon as possible. Mr. Drake and Ms. Elmer thanked him.

Old Business:

- **Update on bridge replacement at Van Loan Preserve:**

Mr. Drake opened the meeting to an update on the bridge replacement at the Van Loan Preserve. Ms. Elmer stated that she had no update to give at this time. Hopefully there will be a good update at next month's meeting. Mr. Drake asked if we are just trying to get an expedited permit or something or are we still assessing? Ms. Elmer answered we are still doing research. Mr.

Macpherson asked if the Commission had funding in place for that. Ms. Elmer stated no. Mr. Drake mentioned we would have to vote on that. Ms. Hebert stated that the project was much more expensive than originally anticipated, perhaps 2 to 3 times more expensive. We are looking into seeing if the expense was due to the stream assessment and additional permitting. We are looking into other options. Mr. Drake stated he looked at the RTG grant and they extended the deadline to June 30th, but I don't believe they would pay for the permitting because that is part of permitting and design. Ms. Elmer recognized Rita who wanted to speak at this time. She asked why if there are two, if you are planning on placing supports in the brook, when the bridge was constructed and because there were two foundations on the bank, cement footings, then the logs were strung across there the only permit I needed was a notification because there was no work that was going to be done on the bank or within the brook. Is it because the plan is to do work in the brook, is that why? Ms. Elmer stated we had a new bridge designed by an engineering firm, and their recommendation was to, instead of felling trees on the site that was done on the original, was to use engineered lumber. And to do that, and because it was such a long way to get the lumber into the bridge, they couldn't do full span lengths, they had to do half span lengths. This means putting a support in the middle of the brook, which then means extremely expensive permitting. We are now looking at different alternatives, maybe checking with other engineering firms to see if we can get a lower estimate. Ms. Elmer said she may be in contact with Carroll in the future about this issue at another time.

- **Review of proposed revisions to the Rules of Procedure:**

At this time Mr. Drake opened the meeting to discuss the revisions to the Rules of Procedure for the Conservation Commission. Ms. Elmer stated it has been a long time since you have looked at this since your workshop. She stated she hopes everyone had a chance to look it over and give her comments, suggestions, edits etc. She suggested that Mr. Drake go through a roll call to see if anyone had anything.

Ms. Wachs: No comments or changes.

Mr. MacPherson: Yes, I did review it and it looks accurate. We previously agreed upon it so I am good with this.

Mr. Carter: I reviewed it and I think we are good with what we have here and follow the line we discussed at our workshop.

Ms. Grogan: I reviewed it and it looks fine to me.

Ms. Jones: I reviewed it and I do not have any questions or comments at this time. It was very interesting to read.

Acting Chairman Drake thanked the Commission members and asked Ms. Elmer what the next step was with this. She answered you are all set. You need to vote to approve the changes as presented and then at the next available meeting we would all together sign the approval page and I will edit, take out the red and make a new black line copy. It will go out to all of you

Board members and the website and then we will be all set. Mr. Drake asked if there is a public hearing for this, and Ms. Elmer stated this is it. He then asked if we should ask the public if anyone has any comments on this, officially. Ms. Elmer asked Ms. Hebert if they got any emails from the public and Ms. Hebert answered no.

Acting Chairman Drake asked to entertain a motion to adopt, as discussed.

MOTION: Mr. MacPherson made a motion to adopt the revisions that were discussed this evening. Mr. Carter seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Drake, approve, Ms. Wachs, approve, Mr. MacPherson, approve, Mr. Carter, approve, Ms. Grogan, approve, Ms. Jones, approve. All in favor – motion carries.

Mr. Drake mentioned that the motion is approved to make this the formal set of modifications to the new Rules and Procedures for the Conservation Commission. He then stated that the Commission will somehow sign this for staff. Ms. Elmer stated we may do the signatures electronically for now, and officially sign when the Commission gets together again. Ms. Hebert mentioned that like for the Planning Board, if members are comfortable coming into the Town Office building, staff can set up the sheet for members to stop by and sign. If you would rather, we can mail it to each of you individually to sign and return. Staff will contact you.

Other Business:

- **Update on previously reviewed permits and ZBA actions.**

At this time, Acting Chairman Drake asked for an update on previously approved permits and ZBA actions. Ms. Elmer stated that last month the Commission reviewed a Dredge & Fill permit for the Town of Bedford to create a new road in Bedford, off Technology Drive, called Foster Place. DES did approve that permit. The Board also reviewed two separate variance applications, one was for a pool, the Casey's. They came to you with a smaller pool than the one that they presented to the ZBA. The ZBA approved that smaller pool with the condition that the applicant follow the suggestion from the Conservation Commission and pull the pool further away from the wetland. The Board also reviewed a replacement shed for Mr. Miville that was rotting. The Conservation Commission recommended that a French drain be dug along the roof edge. The ZBA did approve that shed with your recommendations. Acting Chairman Drake thanked Ms. Elmer for the updates.

Acting Chairman Drake asked about the non-public session. He stated that he knows the Commission had an initiative for that item. Would we be going back to that at some point? Ms. Elmer answered, yes. He asked if the Commission can do a non-public on ZOOM or do we have to wait? Ms. Hebert answered I think you could. I just think we just need to figure out how to do it. Probably turn off BCTV and the banner up on the screen etc. Acting Chairman Drake stated yes, because that was a good initiative, I would hate to lose any momentum we had on that considering the current situation with the virus. Ms. Hebert asked if any of the Commission members had any updates about the initiatives that were discussed. If you have any, it would be helpful to me if you could email me any of your updates. We could then set up another non-

public to discuss. The non-publics are usually land transactions that are discussed in non-public sessions. Acting Chairman Drake thanked Ms. Hebert for her input.

- **Election of Officers for 2020-2021:**

At this time, Acting Chairman Drake opened the meeting to election of officers. He asked Ms. Elmer how to proceed. Do I only need to ask the Commission for a nomination for Chair? Ms. Elmer answered yes. He said that is easy. Mr. MacPherson stated that he would like to nominate Mr. Drake as Chair. Mr. Drake thanked Mr. MacPherson but politely declined, to let someone new or someone that has been on the Commission for a long time to assume that position. Ms. Elmer stated that considering who has been on the Commission for a long time, Maggie, Bob? Mr. Drake mentioned that a new member could also be Chair, like Mr. Carter. Mr. Carter said he would put his name in for Vice-Chair. As the Council rep, I find it not prudent to be the Chair of a Commission, but I could be Vice-Chair. Mr. MacPherson then stated if Mr. Drake needs to decline, I would like to nominate Maggie Wachs. Ms. Elmer asked if Ms. Wachs had any comment. Ms. Wachs stated she did not know if she had the extra time in my schedule to be Chair. She asked what being the Chair of this committee would entail. Acting Chairman Drake stated just running these meetings. Ms. Elmer stated, as much time as you want to give. There is no minimum or laundry list of things you need to do. Usually staff will communicate with you when we set the agendas to see if there is anything else you want to add. If you want to take on a pet project feel free. You don't have to. We will try and customize the position for you. Acting Chairman Drake then stated, in theory, the Chair would lead the initiatives and there would be a subcommittee to follow up on the initiatives. Ms. Wachs asked for more time to think about it. Ms. Hebert said you sure do. The Commission can postpone this matter until the next meeting, and right now all of the officers will continue in their default positions until replacements are appointed. Ms. Wachs asked if we were missing some members tonight and Ms. Elmer answered we are. So if everyone is more comfortable we can postpone until the next meeting. Ms. Wachs stated she would be more comfortable with that, unless there is someone else that would like to volunteer. Acting Chairman Drake asked Ms. Jones, who just joined the Commission. She stated she would say no at this point, where she is just getting used to being a member, and appreciates it. Ms. Elmer asked Ms. Hebert if they needed a motion to table the nomination of officers. Ms. Hebert replied that the Chair can just make that announcement. Acting Chairman Drake stated I am going to table this item until the next meeting. Ms. Hebert then stated that in the meantime, we are happy to answer any questions about the position that any of the Commission members may have, and give you some information on time commitment etc. Chair and Vice-Chair your main job is to run the meetings and try to guide those discussions. Ms. Wachs said okay then asked if those were the only two officer positions that we will be filling, and the answer was yes.

At this time Acting Chairman Drake asked if there were any comments, questions, ideas, initiatives from the Commission members. There were none.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Carter to adjourn. Acting Chairman Drake seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Drake, approve, Ms. Wachs, approve, Mr. MacPherson, approve, Mr. Carter, approve, Ms. Grogan, approve, Ms. Jones, approve. Vote taken – motion passed.

Acting Chairman Drake thanked the Commission members and members of the public watching the Conservation Commission meeting for their participation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 PM.

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission will be July 28, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Szostak