

TEMPLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Special Meeting Minutes, April 19, 2023
Location: Town Hall

Attendees: Scott Hecker, Mike Madden, Cathy Joly, Clay Lennartz, Marie Lennartz, Sean Radcliffe

Absent: Russell Wilson, Adie Krulis, Lincoln Geiger

Guest: Camilla Lockwood

Meeting started at 6:10 pm

Conservation Strategy:

Roughly 22% of Temple's land base is currently conserved, and the NH Forest Society recommends a goal of 25%. Results from town surveys show that residents want to protect open areas, agricultural land, and recreational opportunities. We discussed possible focus areas to support these goals:

1. * Expanding existing conserved land.
2. * Protecting wildlife corridors, especially along streams.
3. * 1 and 2 enable connecting trails for humans.
4. Helping farmers conserve farmland. At some point we may need to return to feeding ourselves locally.
5. Protecting watersheds that provide our drinking water.
6. Other: is there anything to conserve from a historical perspective? prime habitat for birds?

How do we help residents who want to conserve their land?

- How do we reach residents with the message that we can help with conservation easements? We sent a general mailer to all residents and shared this message; we've heard that some people were interested but still didn't reach out. What can we do differently? We can identify properties that fall into the above categories, with "*" categories being the highest priority, and reach out directly to landowners. We'll continue to bring maps to town festivals showing conserved land, important areas, plus properties that we've identified.

- We can help pay for the survey that's part of the easement process. The first step is to host a public hearing, then the Conservation Commission (CC) will vote on spending the funds, then the Select Board must approve it. According to Barbara Richter of NHACC, if the CC provides any funding then the CC must have an executory interest in the easement; the only way to avoid this is for the town to pass the "Optional Powers" (RSA 36-A:4-a). Estimating the value of development rights is complex and needs to be done by a local land trust appraiser.
- One of the maps in the updated Natural Resource Inventory report shows the highest priority properties for wildlife habitat. *Sean will ask if Jeff has vector images of the maps that we can print out in large format.*

The group adjourned at 7:57 pm. The next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 6:00 PM in the Annex.

Minutes submitted by Cathy Joly.

Italics above indicate tasks to be done.