



TOWN OF HUDSON

Conservation Commission



Carl Murphy, Chairman Dave Morin, Selectmen Liaison

12 School Street • Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 • Tel: 603-886-6008 • Fax: 603-816-1291

DATE: March 10, 2025

MEETING MINUTES: Below is a listing of minutes for the Hudson Conservation Commission. Minutes are not a verbatim record of each meeting, but rather represent a summary of the discussion and actions taken at the meeting. All Conservation Commission meetings are televised live and repeated during the following week on HCTV, cable television channel 22. Official copies of the minutes are available to read and copy at the Town Engineer's Office during regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.).

Should you have any questions concerning these minutes or wish to see the original recording, please contact the Town Engineer's Office at 603-886-6008.

In attendance = X Alternates Seated = S Partial Attendance = P Excused Absence = E

Carl Murphy Chairman <u> X </u>	Ken Dickinson Vice-Chair <u> X </u>	Christopher Cameron Clerk <u> X </u>	
John Walter Member <u> X </u>	Linda Krisciunas Alternate <u> E </u>	David Morin Selectman Rep <u> X </u>	Elvis Dhima Town Engineer <u> X </u>

CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRPERSON AT 07:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

SEATING OF ALTERNATES: N.A.

Public Input Related to Non-Agenda Items: None

I. New Business

a. Raymond Park Rail Trail – Pelham/Hudson

John Picard and James Bishop from the Pelham Trails Committee requested permission from the Hudson Conservation Commission to clear and reopen this trail corridor on an abandoned railroad

bed, that runs from Mammoth Rd in Pelham to Gibson Rd in Hudson. The rail bed once ran much further as well but some sections have been impacted by development in the area. Approximately 600 feet of the section in question, which totals about 3,500 feet, is within the town of Hudson, with the rest being in Pelham. The corridor is very overgrown and has some erosion, as well as a bridge that is missing a deck. No Japanese knotweed has been observed, however it is expected that there is some bittersweet and possibly some other invasive species along the corridor.

Mr. Cameron asked if there is a public right-of-way for this trail and Mr. Picard & Mr. Bishop indicated that there is. He also asked if the Pelham Trails Committee would like help with the work, if approved – the Pelham members indicated that the likely would appreciate help.

Mr. Morin confirmed that no action was needed by the Conservation Commission to allow this work to occur, however it was noted that the members of the Pelham Trails Committee should obtain the proper insurance if working on trails in Hudson.

II. Old Business

a. Conditional Use Permit/Site Plan Review – 256 Lowell Rd (T-Bones)

Mr. Walter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cameron, to go out of the regular order of business and review the updates on the site plan and conditional use permit application for the prospective T-Bones restaurant development at 256 Lowell Rd. No discussion. Motion carried 4-0-0.

Introduction:

The applicant, Tom Boucher, co-owner and CEO of T-Bones Restaurant, gave a brief overview of his background and the history of the restaurant, including his ties to Hudson and the reasons for moving from the current site, along with the desire to keep the restaurant in Hudson. Sam Foisie, Engineer for Meridian Land Services, Inc., presented the updates to the site plan for the proposed development at 256 Lowell Rd, in response to comments received from the Conservation Commission at the monthly meeting on 2/10/2025 and at the subsequent site walk on 2/12/2025, as well as comments from the Planning Board meeting on 2/26/2025.

Changes presented:

-Updated the wetland buffer to the current 75 foot offset, which resulted in increased wetland buffer impacts from those previously shown.

-Increased the exterior sideslopes of the stormwater retention pond and provided details for a proposed U-Wall (universal wall) retaining wall system.

-Added right-turn lane into the driveway from Lowell Rd, which increased wetland buffer impacts to 20,648 square-feet (SF) (approximately 0.47 acres)

-Proposing native plantings, including high bush blueberry, holly, and pine, to re-establish some of the vegetation within the wetland buffer area impacted by construction. Invasive species to be removed from within the wetlands and within the 100 foot residential buffer, as well as within the rest of the site, without impacting non-invasive plants and trees outside of the limits of clearing on the site plan (pending approval).

Discussion:

Mr. Foisie: Regarding placing some of the stormwater treatment areas beneath the parking lot, the only feasible location would be beneath the western portion of the parking area and the upper part of the driveway from Lowell Rd, however this location is problematic. Mr. Dhima indicated that there is a thinner guardrail type for constrained areas that is still crashworthy for up to 50-55 mph – to provide specifications for this product to the designer. Mr. Foisie addressed the recommendation on reducing the parking lot aisle widths and mentioned that it does not align with the applicant’s business model and priorities of making the site easy to access and prioritize safety, including emergency response. Provision of approximately 5.5 feet of separation between the edge of the parking lot and the stormwater basins to accommodate guardrail where needed – guardrail to be provided along any altered slope with a 4+ foot vertical drop.

Comments:

Mr. Cameron expressed continued concern with the overall size of the parking lot and driveway area, which was not reduced at all from the last submittal as requested, as well as the need for, and location of, the proposed driveway from Lowell Rd. He expressed that there were concerns raised at the planning board meeting regarding visual and noise impacts to abutters and that consideration should be given to providing a fence and/or plantings along the parking lot where it abuts the 100 foot residential buffer, however the site plan does not leave any room for anything beyond the parking lot limits that does not encroach on the buffer. Removing trees from within the buffer to install anything would be counter-productive to conservation efforts.

Mr. Cameron pointed out that reducing the number of parking spaces, reducing the parking lot aisle widths, and/or making the parking lot aisles one-way would reduce the overall footprint, allow the parking area and stormwater pond to be moved away from the wetland buffer and residential buffer, reducing impacts and also allowing for plants/trees/fencing to be provided along the edge of the parking lot. Reducing the footprint would also reduce overall wetland buffer impacts and associated required mitigation.

Mr. Boucher indicated strong opposition to reducing the aisle widths or making them one-way, referencing safety concerns and emergency response as justification. A café in Bedford was specifically mentioned as an example of a “disaster” where drivers do not follow the one-way restrictions and there is general confusion and recurring collisions. Mr. Foisie mentioned that the one

location where one-way aisles might work would be the outer-most aisles, however they were not recommended there due to the locations of the driveways and overall traffic flow. Additionally, Mr. Cameron suggested that the applicant could look into placing some of the parking beneath the building. Mr. Boucher countered that it would be prohibitively expensive to place parking below and referenced condos being constructed in Laconia as an example. Mr. Cameron suggested that some alternative solutions for reducing the footprint of the parking lot could include counting the same parking spaces for both seasonal patio use and snow storage, as these uses would not occur during the same times of year as they are factored in to the total required number of parking spaces. Mr. Boucher reiterated the need for snow storage and acknowledged this, however did not offer to re-evaluate the number of parking spaces requested.

Mr. Cameron also expressed concern with the driveway location from Lowell Rd and asked for clarification for this being required. Mr. Foisie replied that it was required as a stipulation from Walmart in order to approve the permit to share their primary access driveway. The location was dictated by the slope and also by the NHDOT general preference that driveways not be located within a turn lane. It was suggested that having the driveway opening within the turn lane might actually be safer than having it located so close to the taper to the turn lane. Mr. Cameron asked Mr. Dhima if he thought NHDOT would ask the applicant to connect the driveway exit from T-Bones onto Lowell Rd to the right-turn lane into Walmart. Mr. Dhima replied that they might but that any significant increase to wetland buffer impacts would require the applicant to return to the commission for re-approval. Mr. Cameron followed up to ask how that would impact the wetland buffer, and verified on the plans that it would increase wetland buffer impacts slightly due to the location of the driveway opening as shown on the plan.

Mr. Morin indicated that the conservation commission comments should be focused on the wetland buffer impacts and other concerns should be raised by the planning board. Mr. Cameron countered that the overall footprint of the driveways and parking lots is directly related to the wetland buffer impact. Mr. Dhima recommended that the commission determine if the applicant has made sufficient efforts to address their concerns and provide the best possible plan given the economic and geometric constraints.

Mr. Dickinson recognized the need for the right turn lane from Lowell Rd but indicated concern with the tight (15 foot) turning radius into the driveway but was otherwise prepared to make a favorable recommendation on the conditional use permit application.

There was discussion on the culvert across the driveway from Lowell Rd and the fact that all water drains away from the upper (eastern) part of the site, closer to the adjacent residential areas, toward Lowell Rd and the River. Mr. Murphy asked about the sheet flow from the Lowell Rd driveway and Mr. Foisie indicated the driveway is not curbed and that the water would sheet flow from the driveway equally into the stormwater basin and into the swale area along Lowell Rd that would then drain through a large culvert across Lowell Rd.

Mr. Dhima asked for the final amount of the permanent wetland buffer impact area from the revised conditional use permit. Mr. Foisie provided the updated value of 20,648 square feet. It was indicated that a recently approved conditional use permit had significantly higher wetland buffer impact.

Motion:

Mr. Dickinson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to recommend to the Planning Board the approval of the conditional use permit for the construction of driveway access and stormwater control related to the proposed construction at 256 Lowell Rd with the following stipulations:

1. During construction and restoration erosion control barriers shall be installed and maintained to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer.
2. Construction and restoration shall comply with “Best Management Practices to Control Non-Point-Source Pollution: A Guide for Citizens and Town Officials” (NH Department of Environmental Services – Current Issue).
3. It is recommended that the applicant create and implement a wetland buffer restoration plan for the disturbed buffer area as part of the site plan approval. The details and implementation of said restoration plan shall be added to the “General Notes and Legend” found on sheet 2 of 23 of the plan set.
4. It is recommended to have the applicant install approved “do not cut/do not disturb” town conservation markers along the conservation district boundaries. Furthermore, post & rail fence sections could be erected and maintained to aid in delineating the wetland buffer boundary as is typical on other accepted developments. If this recommendation is accepted by the Planning Board, details of the “do not cut/do not disturb” markers and post & rail fencing shall be added to the “General Notes and Legend” found on sheet 2 of 23 of the plan set.
5. It is recommended that the applicant shall not store any snow in or on the detention basin(s) during winter operations, to minimize salt pollution.

Discussion:

Mr. Cameron asked if the language should indicate that the “do not cut/do not disturb” markers should be placed all along the approved limits of clearing. Another large “unnamed” recent project was referenced where a number of trees were cut beyond the approved limits of clearing. It was indicated that the stipulations from the Conservation Commission should focus on the wetland buffer area impacts specifically, so the language in the stipulations was correct.

Vote:

The motion carried 4-0-0.

The Chairman called for a 5 minute recess.

After a brief recess, Mr. Cameron made a motion, seconded by Mr. Walter, to return to the regular order of business. The motion carried 4-0-0.

b. Hudson Hikers Volunteer Stewardship Program

Mr. Walter presented a display board that he made with various maps, trail information, trail history, and hiking-related items. He suggested giving a presentation at the Hudson Senior Center, adjacent to Benson Park, on a date to be determined. It was decided to try to hold this presentation on 4/8/2025, with 4/22/2025 as an alternate date. Kathy ? was in attendance and suggested that the program could promote the Field Maps GIS mobile app and social media to try to engage with a younger demographic as well.

c. Gumpus Pond Bridge Update

Discussion on the need for coordination with Pelham Conservation Commission and Pelham Trails Committee. No response received to date but will follow up.

d. Open Space Report (2012) – Update Table 2, Page 13 (Prioritized list of properties)

Mr. Cameron mentioned that he had created a Google spreadsheet of potential properties to be conserved, based on the Hudson town GIS map, focusing on sizable properties that are either undeveloped or only partially developed. The list has been partially populated but will require additional time and effort to fully populate. It would also need to be updated according to the list from the Open Space Report and vice-versa. The prioritized list(s) should be updated to indicate which properties have been developed or approved for development and which have already been conserved.

III. Other Business

a. Trail Work Day for March and April

Dates: Sat 3/22 at 8am at Robinson Pond boat ramp, Sat 4/12 at 8am at Musquash Pond trailhead.

Work items: Fallen trees at Coburn, Kimball Hill Town Forest, Pelham Rd Town Forest, and at Robinson Pond; marking a potential new trail at the Tiger Rd property; re-blazing the recently marked trails in the eastern part of the Musquash property with the correct colors to correspond with the map colors.

IV. Financial Status

a. Current Report

No discussion to note.

V. Correspondence

a. Forest Society

Thank-you letter from Society for the Protection of NH Forests (Forest Society) for the recently received donation

b. NH Lakes Quarterly publication

c. Industrial Drive Park (Proposed)

Letter from the Town Engineer regarding a proposed park at the formerly contaminated town-owned site on Industrial Drive. Mr. Dhima read the letter and gave an overview of the site, along with its history and the proposed plan.

One parcel of the site is paved and is proposed to be used as a training area for truck drivers. Another adjacent parcel is a flat, grassy field, capped site of asbestos contamination so no activities or construction can occur on that parcel that penetrate the ground (digging, fence posts, foundations, etc.) but it is capped with a foot of soil and is completely safe as long as the ground is not penetrated by a foot or more. That parcel could be used in the future for a community garden with raised beds or another use that doesn't require digging into the ground. The third parcel abuts a small pond and wooded area and it is not contaminated. A conceptual plan was prepared for the third parcel that includes pickleball courts and a small basketball court. In the future the plan would hopefully be expanded to include tennis courts, a splash pad, and other desired uses. This parcel could also include shade trees, and possibly bathrooms in the future, depending on need and available funding. It was mentioned that the site already has convenient access to town water and electricity. Warrant articles could potentially be used to fund incremental improvements to the park year by year.

d. Letter from Zookeeper

Mr. Dhima to ask if the zookeeper could attend the next meeting to provide overview of the ongoing work. Discussion on the assessment being performed of wildlife in the area. Mr. Dickinson mentioned projects being undertaken in surrounding communities such as parks and other recreational facilities.

VI. Approval of Minutes

- a.** Motion made by Mr. Dickinson, seconded by Mr. Walter, to accept the minutes from the 2/10/2025 meeting and the 2/12/2025 meeting. The motion carried 4-0-0.

VII. Chairman Comments

- a. Discussion on the upcoming warrant article for the proposed Robinson Pond improvements.

VIII. Motion to Adjourn

- a. Mr. Cameron made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:36pm. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, April 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Cameron", written in a cursive style.

Christopher Cameron, Clerk