Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Conservation Commission Meeting
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH
Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2025

Note: Minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Commission. Review, correction, and approval of minutes generally occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Swanzey Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair Cheri Domina at 4 p.m. Committee members present: Chair Domina, Jay Ward, Bob Goodrich, Nancy Karlson, Bud Winsor and Mark Scalera, and alternate Wally Smith. Assistant Planner Stephon Mehu. Chair seated Wally Smith for Bonnie Hart.

ABSENT

Bonnie Hart, Jane Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT

MINUTES

- The commission members considered the meeting minutes for May 5, 2025. There was a **motion** by Scalera to approve the Minutes as presented. There was a second to the motion by Smith and no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

PUBLIC INPUT

Ward discussed a citizen who wants to donate his land on Partridgeberry Lane (abutting Mt. Caesar) to the town upon his passing, including homes. He leaves for five months in summer though, and we wanted to meet with him last year, but couldn't get together in warmer weather. Ward said he will talk to the Town Admin. to see if the town would be at all interested in such a donation before we proceed.

NEW BUSINESS

Review for Planning Board / ZBA / Town (S. Mehu)

Fire Station, Rte. 32 (PB)—Discussed Fire Station plans. The pond there is man-made so not technically a wetland. Ward felt the stormwater management plan was good. He noted the project will cost $800,000 less than estimated using town resources to do site work. Conservation Commission had no concerns.

Minor subdivision, Rte. 32 @ Swanzey Lake Rd. (PB)—Discussed the lot size and zones they are in, and distance to Martin Brook. Because it's on 32 it's in the Residence Zone and the smaller lot size is allowed. They are in the Shoreland Zone due to proximity to Martin Brook, so development would have to take setback into account, and wetlands in rear of the lot. But there is room to build. Conservation Commission had no concerns.

Update on Wilson Pond ZBA request—Project was denied by the ZBA, and they've asked for a rehearing.

Memorial Bench at Swanzey Lake boat launch—Winsor noted that a GoFundMe page had raised excess funds for a granite bench in memory of Bill Stetson, "keeper of the dam." Discussed easement, and Domina noted it seemed that it would be allowed. Winsor & Domina have been in touch with LCHIP seeking permission from NH Fish & Game to place the bench, as they hold the easement.

- Scalera made a motion to approve placing the granite bench near the boat launch. Ward seconded. No further discussion; all in favor (Winsor abstaining). ***Motion passed.***

DRAFT

Old Home Day, July 19—Domina asked who could help with a booth at the event, which she will apply for. Winsor, Ward, Scalera and Karlson can potentially take shifts. We can talk about our proposed wetland ordinance, and focus on this year's statewide turtle initiatives. Can we find some turtle shells to display? Karlson will ask about that and the furs from F&G. Winsor will ask Deb Gode about any rescue turtles to loan. Can we also have a new map of Mt. Cresson ready?

OLD BUSINESS

Wetland Conservation District amendments—Joint meeting with the Planning Board will be June 26 to discuss. The Planning Board already has copies to review. Scalera asked about an amendment to Section E—can we add more prohibited uses? Concerned about treated vs. untreated snow and ice dumps in WCD. Decided we will bring up at the joint meeting.

Forestry & trails at Mt. Cresson—Domina and Winsor reported that the field day May 14 to walk the trail Meadowsend flagged was partially successful, with about half the route walked. Domina, Winsor, Jeanne Thieme, Bob McClure and Karen Sielke attended. Parts of it, the "New Down Trail" and the link to the rail trail, seemed quite steep. Need to go back and review the second half of the loop. Domina will ask Hart to reschedule. Questions for Jeremy Turner from ME: How will the trail be constructed – by hand or machine? How long will it take? Will there be sidehilling in steep areas? Once we settle on a path, we'll get a cost estimate.

Summer Programs—Monadnock Bird and Nature Club is doing a number of good programs in the area (Nate Marchessault lives in Swanzey and works at Harris Center). We can promote what they're doing and perhaps work with them in future.

Gomarlo land / North Winchester St. update—Domina said she visited the N. Winchester field but couldn't find the culvert discussed. Perhaps that's just where new culvert will go? Still hasn't done memo—needs to talk to Gomarlo again and do a site visit.

Swanzey Lake Watershed Management plan update—Winsor said the work group walked E. and W. Shore Roads last month and looked at improvements over past year. A lot has been done to repair and mitigate erosion, though Talbot Hill Road is still an issue. Have also been discussing septic issues and how to tackle. Working with SWRPC on getting grant money this fall. Mehu asked about water testing, and Winsor said they are about to start. Ward said Wilson Pond will start testing next week.
Mehu said he's getting his Septic Evaluation license in a week. He's health officer now, and can fail a septic system if necessary, or close the town beach for E. Coli. Needs more training. Tanks should be pumped every 3-4 years, he said. Ward asked if he could consult on septic education and evaluation around town, and he said yes. Mehu is also getting certified as a floodplain manager.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting: July 7, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Scalera to adjourn, second by Winsor, without further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 5:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Cheri Domina, Chair

DRAFT