

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes  
Cape Elizabeth Town Hall  
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 23, 2025

Present: Corinne Ketcham, Chair, Michelle Boyer, Emily Helliesen Day, Matthew Grymak, Bruce Moore, Mitch Wacksman.

Staff: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

1. Call to Order. Chair Ketcham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Public Comment. No one wished to comment.
3. Minutes. Mr. Moore made a motion to approved the August 12, 2025 minutes, seconded by Mr. Wacksman, and the motion passed 6-0.
4. Winnick Woods Invasive plants removal RFP.

The committee reviewed a draft RFP to retain services for 2 days of mechanical invasive plant removal in Winnick Woods. The project is funded with a \$2,000 donation matched with \$2,000 from the Greenbelt Trails budget. The target area is the east side main trail before reaching the Meadow and around the parking lot. The committee recommended that the due date be moved to October 13<sup>th</sup>, so that the Conservation Committee would be able to review the proposals at the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Day made a motion to recommend the RFP, seconded by Chair Ketcham, and the motion passed 6-0.

The Conservation Committee also considered an application from Andrea Southworth to volunteer to remove invasives in Winnick Woods adjacent to the Olde Christmas Tree Farm to the west of the main trail. Mr. Moore described the best access is on the tree farm road and that we should get the work done before the tree farm opens for the season. He said the plants are all barberry, where ticks lay their eggs. It is about 1/3 to 1/2 acre and it would be great for volunteers to help with this. Mr. Moore made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Wacksman, and the motion passed 6-0.

5. Greenbelt Management Projects

*Animal Release.* The committee considered a request by Cathy Dragoni on behalf of the Saco River Wildlife Center, to release rehabilitated wildlife, specifically 1-2 groundhogs per season at the Town Farm. The committee noted an email received from the Community Garden group opposed to the release and observed that the Town Farm already has wildlife. CELT releases wildlife at Runaway Farms. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to allow release on the marsh side of the Town Farm, seconded by Mr. Moore, and the motion passed 6-0.

*Stonegate wood chipper.* Jim Kerney has cleared trees fallen on the greenbelt trail at Stonegate and has asked for \$350 to rent a chipper to clean up the fallen debris on his land. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to recommend \$350 for a chipper rental, seconded by Mr. Moore, and the motion passed 6-0.

*Sawyer Rd project.* Ms. O'Meara provided a status update on the project.

*Dyer Woods boardwalk improvements.* Mr. Grymek commented on the improvements to boardwalk in Dyer Woods, which were completed by Eagle Scout candidate Finnegan Ketcham.

*Trees.* Committee members noted trees adjacent to greenbelt trails that need to be removed. They agreed to send a pic and map screenshot to Ms. O'Meara and she will arrange for removal.

*Gull Crest Trail Survey/Trail relocation.* The committee reviewed the boundary survey work done by Statewide Surveys, which documents there is room to relocate the trail upland and remain on town property. Ms. Day asked about the existing boardwalk and Mr. Wacksman said it can be left in place. Chair Ketcham made a motion to move the trail, seconded by Ms. Day and the motion passed 6-0.

*Lumber piles.* Mr. Wacksman noted that lumber piles adjacent to the trail (Stonegate and Gull Crest) should be collected for use elsewhere.

*Stonegate.* Ms. Day and other members noted that there are rotten boards in Stonegate that need to be replaced. The committee discussed how to get this work done. Staff will pursue options.

*Trail permitting.* The committee reviewed the materials prepared for seeking state and local permitting for the remaining projects from the FB 2020 Assessment.

6. Next meeting. The next meeting of the committee will be held on October 14, 2025. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.