

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Cape Elizabeth Town Hall
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Present: Corinne Ketcham, Chair, Michelle Boyer, Emily Helliesen Day, Matthew Grymek, Bruce Moore.

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 speak.
3. Minutes. Mr. Moore made a motion to accept the November 13, 2025 minutes, seconded by Ms. Day, and the motion passed 5-0.
4. 14 Strout Rd project. Ms. O'Meara explained that when the 14 Strout Road project is submitted to the Planning Board for review, the Conservation Committee will be asked to provide advice on the open space proposed. Mr. Cox would like to provide a preview and receive comments from the committee in advance of the formal process.

Jay Cox said that he is partnering with Skip Murray and Bill Royale to purchase the Strout property and an additional 12 acres of the abutting Jordan property. Donna Larson is also here tonight, and will be preparing the Community Impact Statement. Mr. Cox displayed a project plan showing the open space layout, much of which will be habitat projection, and also greenbelt connections.

Mr. Grymek asked about recent clearing and Mr. Cox said he will do some logging before the project commences. Ms. Boyer asked if logging will occur in proposed open space and Mr. Cox said it would be lightly harvested.

Ms. Day asked about a sidewalk on Spurwink Ave and Mr. Cox said that is not proposed and would encounter ledge, right-of-way limits, etc.

Chair Ketcham encouraged Mr. Cox to locate trails on higher ground to avoid the need for boardwalks.

5. Greenbelt Management.

Winnick Woods Invasives project. The committee received an update on the completed project and Andrea Southworth would like to talk to the committee about next steps. The committee noted Tammara did a good job and that big trees were getting pulled down by invasives. Mr. Moore noted the committee has given Ms. Southworth permission to remove barberry at Gull Crest abutting the Olde Christmas Tree Farm.

Ardath Dixon, CELT, mentioned the work done by CELT contracted to Vegetation Control Services at the Sawyer Marsh, Trout Brook/Stephenson St. Ms. Day noted the small abutting parcel owned by the town on Stephenson St.

Chair Ketcham added that we are supportive of volunteers, subject to funding on a case by case basis.

Ms. Dixon said CELT is focusing its invasives efforts on small properties before invasives take over.

Trail Permitting. Ms. O'Meara said the local permit has been granted and the state permit is in process.

Volunteer request for lumber. A volunteer has offered to make repairs and would like additional lumber purchased that is dimensioned to match existing boardwalks. Chair Ketcham made a motion to recommend up to \$1,000 in lumber purchase, seconded by Mr. Moore, and the motion passed 5-0. Ms. Boyer would like an update on what he repairs and Ms. Day offered to meet him onsite.

Other trail work.

- Chair Ketcham said another eagle scout candidate will be seeking a project. Ms. O'Meara will update and share the priority project list.
- Committee members should think about priorities for the next budget year and the committee will need to make a recommendation at the January, 2026 meeting. Ms. Day remind the committee about potentially seeking a part-time employee to help with boardwalk repairs. Another option is to contract with a local business for off-season repair work.
- Ms. Dixon reported that 2 trail connections have been created from Davis Woods.

Gazette. The committee suggested expressing appreciation for committee members who are leaving, and a reminder to preserve grooming on Nordic trails.

6. Next meeting.

The next meeting will be January 13, 2026. Chair Ketcham made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Moore, and the meeting ended at 7:50 p.m.