

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Cape Elizabeth Town Hall
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Present: Corinne Ketcham, Chair, Emily Helliesen Day, Stacy Dietsch, 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. Citizen comments

Carrie McCusker, 5 Poplar Ln – She uses the Cross Hill trails and although there were some problem spots, the trail was usable before the machine built trail project. The trail project included turnpiking, grade reversal and he's doing that, but there is more work than anticipated. He has ruined the power line trail, replacing sections with mineral soils that are now muddy. The trail is severely damaged and not executed properly. The bridge floated away due to the packed dirt and best practices have not been used. She wants the project stopped.

Tom Brady, 5 Poplar Ln – The goal was to smooth a trail that was rocky and rooty, but otherwise passable. It is double the problem now.

3. Minutes. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to approve the April 8, 2025 minutes, seconded by Mr. Moore and the minutes were approved 5-0.
4. Greenbelt Management.

Village Green tree. The committee considered the request to plant a tree in the village green in memory of a school department employee. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to grant permission, seconded by Chair Ketcham, and the motion passed 5-0.

Cross Hill machine built trail. Ms. Day noted that there has been some damage done to the Cross Hill Loop trail, due to the freeze/thaw cycle and the project is not finished. Mr. Cyr has noted he will be returning to some areas to make repairs. The committee agreed with this summary.

1-99 Cross Hill trail section. Mr. Cyr has proposed constructing a 50' long bridge/boardwalk. Ms. O'Meara suggested that installation of a Great Northern Docks

(GND) type bridge will minimize the structure sitting in water. Mr. Wacksman does not want to use the GND system because it is hard to repair and expensive. He prefers wood construction and the gap over the water is not long and can be spanned by 3 2" x 12' boards, plus construction on each side for access. Ms. O'Meara said we only have permitting for 22' and it may be time to pursue more permitting.

The committee reviewed current status of greenbelt funding and supports FY 2026 funding, including funding already committed and expected expenditures through FY 2025.

The committee noted Mr. Cyr has proposed building a 50' long crossing for \$3,000.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wacksman, to start supplemental permitting for remaining greenbelt projects in the FB Environmental Study, plus revisions to the existing permitting, and the motion passed 5-0. Ms. O'Meara recommended that permitting be sought for 150% of the recommended lengths in the FB study and the committee agreed, based on wear and tear on the trails and weather.

The committee was satisfied with the proposed cost, and agreed to ask Mr. Cyr to revise his design to build a 3' wide, 22' long bridge, with additional to be constructed after permitting has been obtained. Ms. Ketcham made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wacksman and the motion passed 6-0.

The committee agreed to schedule a site visit at 1-99 for May 29th, 4:30 p.m. and to invite Mr. Cyr.

Invasives. Mr. Moore offered to work with Jeff Tarling, Tree Warden, to set up a site visit to scope out an invasives removal project at Winnick Woods. Other CC members will join them. They will tag what to save in green, what to remove in red, then we can look at contracting in compliance with procurement procedures. Andrea Southworth will also be invited.

Fields Management Policy. The committee reviewed the draft policy revisions. Mr. Wacksman made a motion to adopt the policy, seconded by Mr. Moore and the motion passed 5-0.

Cross Hill Encroachments. Ardath Dixon, CELT Stewardship Manager, updated the committee that most of her contacts had responded well. We still need to send a letter from the town. The Committee agreed that no letter would be sent to property owners who agreed to address the encroachment. Ardath will send the updated list to Maureen and the approved letter dates will be updated.

Outer Loop Trail. Mr. Wacksman proposed relocating a portion of the Outer Loop Trail at Gull Crest upland instead of rebuilding the boardwalk.



Ms. O'Meara explained that there is no information where the town property boundary is located, which should be done before the trail is moved to avoid encroaching onto private property. The committee agreed to ask for a proposal to locate the boundary near the trail relocation (1-44 and 1-42).

5. Resilient Yard request.

The committee reviewed a request from Eliza Matheson to initiate a resilient yard program similar to what is operating in South Portland. The committee generally agreed that this is not within the Conservation Committee's purview.

6. Planning Board review. No items require committee review.

7. Gazette. The committee suggested including a request asking for help with trail work, and the Town Farm Trail relocation.

8. Next meeting. The next meeting is June 10th. Chair Ketcham will not be available for the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.