

Bartlett Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

12/10/24

Present: Colleen Ryan, Steve Frackleton, Craig Billie, Mike Morin, Chris Fithian

Alec Tarberry, Sheila Duane from the Berry Company

Mike Penny from Verdantas and Dan Flores of SFC Engineering

Mark Dindorf and others from the Saco-Swift River Local Advisory Committee and Trout Unlimited

Meeting called to order at 6:02

New business:

Proposed bank stabilization work at Jellystone Campground in Glen

Colleen asked what authority or role the Conservation Commission has in this type of permitting. Chris responded that the Commission has an advisory role to NH DES and the Bartlett Select Board. If and when there's a permit application, the Commission will have an opportunity to comment on it, as will other advisory groups like the Saco-Swift Local Advisory Committee.

Mike Penny presented on the proposed bank stabilization project. He described the issue with rivers in steep terrain that are subject to strong forces during flood events.

Last December's flood increased the elevation of the inside of that bend about 4 feet (by depositing cobbles and boulders. It also dislodged most of the cabins (moved them off their foundations, but not into the river). The entire bank is armored, but the armoring is of different ages. The older armoring especially was affected by the flood. There was scouring and undermining of the bank that was previously armored, so they are proposing to fill in those deep channels with some big boulders. They want to repair/rebuild the whole stretch that was previously armored (about 1000 feet).

The engineers were asked about impacts to the opposite bank and responded that the opposite bank is bedrock and will not erode. A neighboring landowner noted that there has been substantial erosion on his property further downstream on the opposite bank.

The campground has already lost up to 31 feet of land since 2018, and they would like to prevent further loss.

The campground would like to repair/replace all of the damaged infrastructure (cabins, roads, conduits) in their current locations. This includes sewage pipes that pump sewage to several holding tanks

Proposal is to armor the bank with uneven riprap, but not elevate the bank.

Mike asked the engineers if this campground is in a uniquely bad spot. The engineers said yes. This will be an ongoing maintenance issue. At some point, the river will move far enough that it will threaten to go behind the armored bank. They clarified that they are not looking to prevent the campground from flooding; they are only trying to prevent the land from eroding.

Mark Dindorf recommended that the cabins be moved back to allow space for a buffer of (ideally native) riparian vegetation be installed along the bank. Dan noted that there's now less room for the cabins to be moved back because of the past erosion. There is room for planting between the cabins. They also noted

that the amount of energy the water has in this location will make it challenging for most plants to survive.

Mark Dindorf also asked about the possibility of bioengineered armoring (e.g., logs that are secured) instead of riprap. They did consider this, but they were concerned about creating eddies or strainers that could trap swimmers.

They consider the 2023 flooding a 50-year flooding event. They are designing for that level of storm.

What has happened since Dec 2023 storm? Nothing. The campground owners did not get permission for any temporary stabilization, so they have not been using the cabins and sites in the most affected areas.

Mark Dindorf and Colleen Ryan also noted the impacts on the river and downstream property owners when there are repeated floods. Although it's not directly relevant to this proposed activity, Mark noted that it would be helpful for the campground to have a plan for when flooding is predicted.

Mark Dindorf requested that the engineers present to the Saco-Swift LAC once the permit is filed, to allow them to ask questions. Their next quarterly meeting is Feb. 18. The design consultants agreed to come either to that meeting or to a Con Comm meeting and said they would ask a representative from the campground to join in.

Wetlands Permit for 150 Rolling Ridge Rd.

5-acre home site: driveway would cross two streams, one with a standard culvert, one with a semi-buried culvert. The Commission had no major concerns.

Old business:

Stillings Grant Easement Donation

Alec Tarberry and Sheila Duane reported back on their research into potential issues with the proposed conservation easement donation. They and their lawyer could not find any reference to a right of the Bartlett Village Water Precinct to access the Stillings Grant wells.

Mike moved to make a recommendation to the select board to work with Berry Company to agree on language to accept a conservation easement on the 10 acres of land indicated in the plan they presented at the November meeting.

Colleen seconded the motion.

Passed 5-0.

Stillings Grant Driveway Permit

The Commission received notice that the driveway permit reviewed at the November meeting was approved by DES.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm

Next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 14 @ 6pm