

DRAFT MINUTES
CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2015

PRESENT: Bob Boynton, Chairman, David McTigue, Jack Messe, Dixie Blease, Matt Oliveira, Joanne Meshna, Lori Rautiola

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Office.

Mr. Sean Radcliffe of the Temple Conservation Commission had submitted a letter to be sent to Governor Hassan, Senators Shaheen and Ayotte, Representatives Kuster and Guinta, and Mr. Norman Bay, Chairman of FERC, from a group of concerned conservation commissions in southern New Hampshire enumerating their worries about potential environmental damage that could be caused by the Kinder Morgan. He was requesting that the New Ipswich Conservation Commission also sign the letter.

Bob explained the Commission had taken an inventory of the Town's natural resources and saw minimal impact from the pipeline because of the co-location of the pipeline. He stated that if the Commission opposed the pipeline and then had to review wetland applications, Kinder Morgan could say the Commission opposed the pipeline from day one which could lead to a legal problem.

Mr. Radcliffe stated a number of conservation commissions met to discuss and became obsessed with the pipeline and began discussing what everyone was doing, what the perspectives were, etc. The potential risk because of the size of the project, the potential for air pollution not just through the compressor station, etc. was a risk that had little value to the towns and the conservation commissions are looking to protect natural resources. Everyone found the pipeline was putting too many natural resources at risk. Bob asked what natural resources were at risk. Mr. Radcliffe responded that the compressor station is going to be pumping out a huge amount of exhaust. There is a gas that comes out of the blow downs. There is not a lot of details about the pipeline but there are a lot of hills and ledge it will be going through which will involve blasting, and surface wetlands and hydric soil areas will be effected. Bob asked if these items would not be addressed by the wetland permitting process. Mr. Radcliffe stated that was not a guarantee. Bob added he had checked with the State of NH to find out what permits would be required, and the response was that all permits are going to be required just like any other development.

Mr. Radcliffe stated in a normal State project a project could be stopped but that will not happen in this one. The lack of control for this project is where they feel they do not know what is going to happen. Bob noted the petition implies they do know what is going to happen and Mr. Radcliffe responded it is all a matter of risk and risk to the natural resources. Bob stated if you defang all the boards in Town, you are playing into the hands of Kinder Morgan. Comments made by the Boards could be disregarded because the Boards have been against the pipeline from the beginning. The permits will be null and void. Also, the State does not have a lot of personnel and rely on the local conservation commissions to go into the field and inspect for the wetlands applications.

Bob asked if Mr. Radcliffe was aware Southwest Region Planning Commission was interviewing towns and going to submit a finding from the towns. Mr. Radcliffe responded he was aware. Bob added their findings will probably carry more weight than the individual towns.

Mr. Radcliffe stated it was helpful to understand New Ipswich Commission's position. Bob noted the Commission is doing what they feel is best for the Town. The Commission voted previously and were not in favor of taking a stand. Mr. Radcliffe stated it was his understanding that by the Commission being neutral they would be more powerful in negotiations when it comes to wetlands permits. Bob added the Commission will be able to handle an application as it always has been done. Boards and commissions should remain neutral because otherwise they hurt the chances of the Town controlling the construction of the pipeline. Mr. Radcliffe then asked about the other elements of the project such as the gases from the compressor station. Bob noted from research he had done there were 1,089 conservation lands in 17 towns and 34 will be impacted. The area where the pipeline will go through is the public utility right-of-way and already resource baron. Fragmentation is not going to be increased. There will be little impact because of colocation. There is not as much impact as the petition implies.

Mr. Radcliffe stated the compressor station is the unusual element to the area. Bob responded it will have the same permitting process as the pipeline. The Commission does not have the expertise to analyze the effects of the compressor. Most of the easements are on private property which supersedes conservation easements. Air quality cannot be monitored by individual towns and is monitored by the State. Bob noted he had given a presentation to the Selectmen and the land that the pipeline is going across is private property and the Conservation Commission has no jurisdiction unless there is a State permit.

Mr. Radcliffe summarized by stating the Conservation Commission wants to be seen as neutral when it comes to the wetlands permitting. Bob corrected the statement by saying when it comes to the responsibilities of the Conservation Commission.

Committee Reports:

Communications: Brenna presented three different versions of the logo to the members. Members settled on one version and Brenna will send it to Bob.

Lands: Bob reported he had received an email from NHACC regarding a request they had received from the Russell Farm and the Mount Grace Land Trust for their help and the New Ipswich Conservation Commission's help with a 75 acre parcel of land in New Ipswich. Bob stated the Commission has never done an agricultural easement. The parcel was not identified and it was expected they will contact Bob later. Bob added the Town would need to hold an executory easement.

Bob also reported there was a group trying to raise money to purchase the Green Crow property. Bob suggested the Conservation Commission may donate \$100,000 for that purpose but did not commit to it. Approximately \$520,000 is to be raised for the purchase.

Old Business: Members discussed the proposed pipeline. Matt left during the discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Meshna, Secretary