

**TOWN OF EATON
PLANNING BOARD
April 17, 2024**

The Planning Board held their regular meeting at the Eaton Town Hall on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. Present were Chairman Dennis Sullivan, Judy Wilson, Kevin Conklin, John Hedden and Selectmen's Representative Greg Grinnell. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

Review of Minutes

The Board reviewed the Minutes of February 21, 2024. ***Judy Wilson made a motion, seconded by Kevin Conklin, to adopt the Minutes as written. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.***

The Board reviewed the Minutes of March 20, 2024. ***Kevin Conklin made a motion, seconded by Judy Wilson, to adopt the Minutes as written. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.***

Conservation Commission

Chairman Sullivan gave an update on the Commission and noted that they are reviewing the Master Plan. Chairman Sullivan suggested holding a joint meeting in July to review the questionnaire. Chairman Sullivan gave an overview of the NRI update. Dick Fortin noted that the Commission discussed a potential cell tower as there is interest in the possible placement of a tower on the Bloise lot on Towle Hill Road.

Public Hearing – Scenic Road
Town of Eaton

At 6:15 pm, Chairman Sullivan opened the Public Hearing on an application from the Town of Eaton to remove dead and hazard trees along two Scenic Roads pursuant to RSA 231:158. Chairman Sullivan explained the process for the Public Hearing.

All notices have been posted and abutters notified. No correspondence was received. Kevin Conklin stated that he lives on Stewart Road but that no trees are on his property. Chairman Sullivan stated that he lives on Foss Mountain Road but has no opinion on the trees to be removed. ***John Hedden made a motion, seconded by Judy Wilson, to accept the application for consideration. Motion unanimously carried.***

Selectmen Dick Fortin gave an overview of the six trees marked on Stewart and Foss Mountain Roads and noted that four are dead and two are hollow. Dick Fortin stated that the birch tree is a clump of three and requested that permission be granted to cut

the entire tree. Dick Fortin stated that there are a total of 15 trees on Potter Road, 12 dead and 3 dying. Kevin Conklin stated that he walked Potter Road and that the marked trees are definitely dead.

At 6:25 pm, Chairman Sullivan opened the hearing for public comment. Chairman Sullivan read a letter from Marnie Cobbs requesting that the two maple trees not be cut. Road Agent Heath stated that those two trees are dead but there are other trees in the area that are still healthy and noted that with the wind in that area, he wants to protect vehicles from potential damage if a limb comes down. Dick Fortin stated that some trees are losing integrity after the last storm.

There being no further public comment, Chairman Sullivan closed the public hearing at 6:28 pm. Greg Grinnell stated that safety is an issue if there is any potential for damage, the trees should be taken down. Kevin Conklin stated that a lot of trees fell during the last storm.

Kevin Conklin made a motion, seconded by John Hedden, to approve the request to remove trees as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote, with Chairman Sullivan abstaining.

Public Hearing - Eversource

At 6:33 pm, Chairman Sullivan opened the Public Hearing for Eversource Energy to trim and remove trees along two designated Scenic Roads pursuant to RSA 231:158.

All notices have been posted and abutters notified. No correspondence was received. ***John Hedden made a motion, seconded by Judy Wilson, to accept the application for consideration. Motion unanimously carried.***

Robert Bernier of Eversource explained that maintenance trimming takes place every four to five years to reduce power outages and that selective cutting will take place along the Scenic Roads. Judy Wilson questioned who determines if a tree is dead. Robert Bernier stated that a tree expert is hired to review the trees.

At 6:37 pm, Chairman Sullivan opened the hearing for public comment. Dick Fortin asked whether any of the trees to be removed are close to the third bridge on Potter Road and questioned whether removal of those trees would further impact the banking. Road Agent Heath stated that as long as the stump remains intact, there would be no issues.

Lindsay Kafka stated that there are trees on Potter Road that have been marked for quite a while and have not been removed. Robert Bernier explained the process and noted that if a property owner does not permit the cutting, the tree remains. Lindsay Kafka stated that there is value to the tree canopy and noted that there are leaning trees that are not marked.

David Lovequist questioned whether the tree removal is for maintenance and to remove hazard trees or whether the power line will be extended. Robert Bernier stated that he is not aware of any extension of service. Steve Farrell questioned how tree cutting on non-scenic roads occurs. Robert Bernier stated that those trees will most likely be cut during the same time frame and that property owners will be notified.

Paul Hennigan stated that the notification system by Eversource works well. Lindsay Kafka questioned whether Eversource will walk the road to discuss the proposal with abutters in Eaton and Conway and proposed a site visit to understand the impact. Robert Bernier noted that it is not normal procedure to conduct site visits.

There being no further public comment, Chairman Sullivan closed the public hearing at 6:50 pm.

Kevin Conklin noted that 63 trees to be removed seems like a lot of trees. Robert Bernier explained that the trees are dead or leaning and pose a threat and are within the road right-of-way. Judy Wilson questioned if this is the first time that trees are being cut on Potter Road. Chairman Sullivan noted that trimming has occurred but no trees cut in the past except for the area at the first bridge during construction. William Heath noted that during this past storm, more than a dozen pine trees fell on Potter Road. John Hedden noted that the marked trees on Potter Road appear to be expendable for the scenic qualities.

Kevin Conklin made a motion, seconded by Judy Wilson, to approve the cutting of trees on the Scenic Roads as shown on the plans. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.

Election of Officers

Kevin Conklin made a motion to elect Dennis Sullivan as Chair, seconded by Greg Grinnell. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.

Dennis Sullivan made a motion to elect Kevin Conklin as Vice Chair, seconded by John Hedden. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.

Master Plan

Chapter 3: John Hedden noted that maintenance costs for the roads should be discussed within this Chapter. John Hedden stated that the Board should discuss the issue of GPS and navigation tools bringing more traffic through Town. John Hedden questioned whether the Board wants to discuss electric vehicles and whether the Town should have charging stations.

Chapter 2: The Board discussed the possibility of designating additional roads as scenic and will further discuss when the questionnaire is being developed. The Board reviewed and amended the draft version of Chapter 2.

The Board will continue reviewing the Master Plan for updates and begin developing the questionnaire to be sent to all property owners. Chairman Sullivan asked whether the questionnaire should ask if the residents are comfortable with the recent Zoning Ordinance amendments. Chairman Sullivan suggested giving information on possible amendments to be proposed, such as the wetland buffer. It was noted that the Board will put together a draft questionnaire to be reviewed at a joint meeting with the Conservation Commission and Selectmen in July.

The Board suggested reviewing the Hazard Mitigation Plan to determine if any issues should be covered in the Master Plan. John Hedden questioned how many generators are in Town and the percentage of homes in a flood risk area.

John Hedden made a motion, seconded by Kevin Conklin, to adjourn the meeting. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lianne Boelzner

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