



CONSERVATION COMMISSION
AGENDA

Monday, October 20, 2025

5:00 PM

**Room 22, Recreation
Center**

Commission Members

Councilor Andrew Madison, Chair
Councilor Robert Williams, Vice Chair
Katie Kinsella
Art Walker
Barbara Richter
Steven Bill
Gary Flaherty

Bob Milliken, Alternate
Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate
Alexander Von Plinsky, Alternate
Kenneth Bergman, Alternate

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 21, 2025

3. Report-outs:

- a) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee
- b) Invasive Plant Species
- c) Land Conservation / easement monitoring
- d) Pollinator Updates

4. Discussion Items:

- a) Master Plan Update
- b) Correspondence:
 - i) Thank you letter from the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition
 - ii) Letter from Paul Hebert re: invasive plant management on City-owned land
- c) NHACC 55th Annual Meeting and Conference – Nov. 1, 2025
- e) Outreach

5. New or Other Business

6. Adjourn – Next meeting date: Monday, November 17, 2025

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 21, 2025

5:00 PM

**2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Councilor Andrew Madison, Chair
Art Walker
Steven Bill
Barbara Richter
Gary Flaherty
Katie Kinsella
Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Alternate
Ken Bergman, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

Councilor Robert Williams, Vice Chair
Bob Milliken, Alternate
Thomas Haynes, Alternate

1) Call to Order

Chair Madison called the meeting to order at 5:08 PM.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 16, 2025

A motion by Mr. Flaherty to adopt the June 16, 2025 minutes was duly seconded by Ms. Richter and the motion carried unanimously.

3) Referrals:

A) Planning Board – Eversource T198 Project – Surface Water Conditional Use Permit

Chair Madison welcomed the applicants, Elizabeth Oliver of Normandeau Associates and Jeremy Fennell of Eversource Energy, representing the T198 Eversource line structure replacement project. Ms. Oliver explained that Eversource proposed to replace 12 of the current utility structures in the existing and regularly maintained T198 utility right-of-way in the City of Keene. Access points for this work in Keene included Rt-101 and Krif Road near the Keene State College athletic facilities. Permanent impacts for the proposed project include excavation for the proposed pole replacements. All other proposed impacts would be temporary, consisting

of temporary timber matting for access routes and work pads in wetlands, the 75-foot wetland buffer, and in uplands for all portions of the project area. Ms. Oliver said Eversource would follow the standard set of best management practices outlined in the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) Manual for Utility Maintenance in and adjacent to wetlands and water bodies, as well as the NH Stormwater Manual to avoid impacts to areas outside of the project disturbance footprint. For specific impact figures, Ms. Oliver referred Commissioners to the project construction plans and Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit application provided.

Ms. Oliver explained that the overall project was planned in a phased manner, with completion of certain upland structure replacements in fall 2024, and completion of the remainder of work starting in fall 2026. To date, the project had completed all required coordination with NH Natural Heritage Bureau, the NH Division of Historic Resources, NH Fish and Game, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee had an opportunity to review the project and confirmed they had no concerns with it as proposed. Applications for the Federal Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Permit and NH Alteration of Terrain and Standard Dredge and Fill Permits were under review at this time. Ms. Oliver added that an application for coverage under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Construction General Permit was planned for late summer/early fall 2025. No applications for Shoreland Permits were required for this project in Keene because all impacts in Keene would be outside of the 250-foot buffer of the Ashuelot River's ordinary high-water mark based on delineations completed by Normandeau Associates during 2024's field season. Other applications required the City of Keene included a Floodplain Development Permit and Excavation Permit, both of which Mr. Fennell said would likely be submitted to the Public Works Department the day after this meeting.

Ms. Oliver concluded that in accordance with Article 11 of the Keene Land Development Code, the applicant was applying for a Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Board for those impacts within the Surface Water Overlay Protection District that were not already covered under the jurisdiction of NH DES—primarily impacts to the 75-foot wetland buffer, which are upland areas.

Mr. Bill asked about the footings for the towers. Ms. Oliver said the tower footings would be metal caissons filled with gravel that the weathered steel footings would be seated in. Mr. Bill asked if they would be fairly small. Mr. Fennell said they were usually 4 feet in diameter. Mr. Bill asked if they would be taking soil to some other location after the footings were installed. Ms. Oliver stated that this was described in more detail in the Flood Permit submitted to Mike Hagan (City of Keene Floodplain Administrator/Code Enforcement Officer). Ms. Oliver explained the proposal to excavate soils to make space for the caissons for replacement structures; the pole butts of the existing wooden structures would be removed and that soil would be put into caisson holes. Ms. Oliver stated that any excess soil from that process would be taken off site and not deposited anywhere within the floodplain. Mr. Bill asked if the gravel being imported would be checked for invasive species. Ms. Oliver said yes, everything associated with the project would be clean—gravel, mats, etc. Mr. Bill asked if it would then be monitored. Ms. Oliver said yes, explaining that construction monitors would complete (minimum) weekly site

inspections to ensure everything is clean as a part of the Stormwater Protection Plan as a requirement for the EPA Construction General Permit.

Mr. Bergman referred to Site 144 on the detail map near Rt-101, where Ms. Oliver agreed there were four sets of lines depicted. He asked if the applicant had worked on one of them previously. Mr. Bergman presumed the proposal was to work on the one closest to the Rail Trail. Mr. Fennell confirmed that they will be working on the middle one; they had already completed the line on the right in 22. Mr. Bergman said he had forgotten how far the four parallel lines went down and the two on the H-bars continued. Mr. Fennell explained that they branched off from where the Rail Trail crossed Ashuelot River; he demonstrated where certain lines went from there (e.g., toward the Airport or through the floodplain). Mr. Bergman noted that Eversource accessed these utilities at the Airport by the first utility road (with riprap) off Airport Road that goes over to the river by the oxbow. Ms. Oliver said yes, and she and Mr. Bergman agreed that access was right on the border with Swanze.

Ms. Brunner asked if any impacts were proposed to the Rail Trail or only adjoined to it. Ms. Oliver said no impacts were proposed to the Rail Trail. While the Rail Trail crosses Krif Road, there was no anticipated need to close the Rail Trail or impact traffic along it. There might be construction equipment occasionally on Krif Road but not on the actual Rail Trail.

Mr. Bill recommended using a pollinator friendly seed mixes whenever possible, as is the Commission's custom. Ms. Oliver said their standard is a wetland restoration mix from New England Wetland Plants or something comparable. She called it a great mix that includes plants suitable for pollinator species. Mr. Fennell thought this had been included in motions for prior applications.

Mr. Flaherty made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Mr. Walker. On a vote of 6-0, the Conservation Commission referred the Eversource T198 Project – Surface Water Conditional Use Permit – back to the Planning Board with the recommendation that pollinator friendly seed mixes be used and that any material brought onto the site be checked for invasive species.

B) NH Dept. of Environmental Services – 0 Ashuelot St. Drainage Project – Expedited Minimum Impact Wetlands Permit

Chair Madison welcomed the applicant, Liza Sargent of SVE Associates, representing the Monadnock Conservancy's 0 Ashuelot Street drainage project. Ms. Sargent explained that this property was the former overflow parking for the Colony Mill. The property was donated, with the lawn space going to the Conservancy for its new Headquarters and the balance going to the City. As a part of the agreement, the Conservancy would be replacing the storm drain on site for the City. Ms. Sargent displayed a map of the City's storm drainage system, stating that the contractor did not initially propose to impact wetlands, but wanted more space to complete their work. So, she showed a 237-square foot area of wetland where the applicant proposed timber mats, which was the reason for this NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) Expedited Minimum Impact Wetlands Permit Application. Once the work is completed, Ms. Sargent said

the area would be restored, stating that she noted the Commission's preference for New England Wetland Mix to vegetate if necessary.

Mr. Bergman asked the location of the new Headquarters building and the proposed swale on the property. Ms. Sargent pointed to the building on the map, also showing the proposed temporary wetland impacts and City storm drain that would be replaced partially with a riparian swale. So, Mr. Bergman said the Headquarters would be near Ashuelot Street and Ms. Sargent said yes. Discussion ensued about the location of the City of Keene property line (this work was not on JRR Properties' parcel). SVE Associates had permission for the temporary impacts on the Monadnock Affordable Housing Corporation property just adjacent.

Chair Madison asked about the impacts in proximity to the Jonathan Daniels Trail, but Ms. Sargent was not familiar with the location. Discussion ensued about the area and the Commission pointed it out on the map, relative to the boat launch in Ashuelot River Park. Mr. Bergman asked if there would be tree removal in that area. Ms. Sargent thought there would be limited tree removal, stating that some would be required to access the swale location. Ms. Brunner thought the line of trees along the property line to the north were going to be removed and Ms. Sargent said they were already. Now, Ms. Sargent said the applicant proposed a Landscaping Plan (approved by the Planning Board) for that location once the other work is completed. So, Ms. Sargent confirmed that any additional tree removal proposed would be minimal to allow for removing the existing culvert and provide enough space to finish the grading work, which she exhibited on the plans.

Mr. Bergman asked about the current net movement of water through that drainage area; was it through a contained culvert or pipe? Ms. Sargent said yes, 18-inch, but because it was crushed, it was functioning like a 15-inch. Discussion ensued briefly as Ms. Sargent pointed to the pipe draining southward and the grading, which was represented by dashed lines on the map. Mr. Bergman said it was like taking a section out of an underground pipe and replacing it with a swale surface, but there would be a pipe or open culvert at either end of the swale. Ms. Sargent showed where it would be open drainage vs. piped.

Chair Madison recalled from the initial presentation before the Planning Board that the Conservancy's Executive Director intended to develop an aggressive invasive management program in that swale. Mr. Bergman noted there was a new Director. Chair Madison trusted that the new Executive Director, Amanda Littleton, would follow through.

Mr. Bill asked if there were any surface contaminations, such as coal and cinders used as fill on the trail. Ms. Sargent was unsure whether there had been any environmental monitoring. Mr. Bill knew that some red water drained through that area, in addition to other indications of possible contamination from past materials. Ms. Sargent could not speak to whether there had been any environmental reviews. From the Planning Board meeting, Chair Madison recalled that there was urban fill at this site, likely crushed brick. The Chair said he would also not have been surprised if there was coal ash at some point because it was common urban fill in NH. Ms. Sargent agreed, adding that this site used to be a parking lot, so there was two feet of gravel at this time; the asphalt was removed and only loam placed on top. Chair Madison thought that before this site

was a parking lot, it was pond for the Colony Mill. Ms. Sargent agreed. Mr. Bergman also agreed, noting that John Summers used to tell him about ice skating on the pond. He added that the trail perpendicular to West Street was built on a dike constructed to control the Ashuelot River and keep it from flooding East Keene so much.

Chair Madison mentioned the Commission's recommendation to continue planting pollinator friendly seeds to control invasive species on site.

Mr. Bill asked about native trees on site. Ms. Sargent listed species native to NH: maple, birch, rhododendron, inkberry, holly, and switchgrass. Mr. Therriault asked if there were any trees and Ms. Sargent said yes, multi-leader birch and red maple. She noted that not all of the Conservancy's desired plantings were shown, only enough for Planning Board approval; the plan was to do more. Mr. Bergman said it would be an improvement vs. the existing condition.

Mr. Therriault made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Mr. Bill. On a vote of 6–0, the Conservation Commission recommends the 0 Ashuelot St. Drainage Project, with the Expedited Minimum Impact Wetlands Permit, with the recommendation that the Monadnock Conservancy implement invasive species controls and use pollinator friendly plantings.

4) Public Hearing:

A) Acquisition of 3 properties located at 0 Gilsum Rd. for Conservation Purposes – In accordance with the requirements of RSA 36-A:5 the Keene Conservation Commission will conduct a public hearing to evaluate whether to expend funds from the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund for the purpose of purchasing .73 acres, .97 acres and .68 acres of forested uplands located adjacent to Greater Goose Pond Forest. The properties are TMP numbers 218-015-000, 218-013-000, and 218-003-000.

Chair Madison opened the Public Hearing at 5:30 PM.

Eloise Clark of Keene, former Chair of the Conservation Commission, asked to see a map of the parcels, which Ms. Brunner displayed. Ms. Brunner recalled that the Commission previously only discussed two parcels, but she could not recall what two specifically and she found three of the same size in the same approximate area. So, she thought the Commission might be interested in them all.

Discussion ensued briefly about the location of the properties, with Mr. Flaherty noting each is about 2/3 or 3/4-acre and entirely wooded; he had visited them a few weeks prior. He said one had an old, healed gravel pit. Ms. Brunner stated that all three parcels are contiguous with City of Keene-owned land, like the Greater Goose Pond Forest. She agreed that they were all forested, adding that a law was signed recently, which opened all these parcels for development. Until recently, a developer would have needed special permission from the City Council to develop those parcels but now they would only need to sign a waiver, and they could all be developed.

Mr. Bill asked how a developer would access those parcels; was there a gated portion? The Commission agreed it was a good question and perhaps something the Legislature did not consider. Ms. Brunner confirmed the parcels were abutted by a Class VI Road, which Mr. Bill asked the definition of. Chair Madison explained that Class VI Roads are not maintained by the City of Keene; generally, they could have been paved and were abandoned (e.g., Washington Street Extension by Beaver Brook Falls), so the City would not plow snow there anymore or repair the road, for example. Chair Madison thought this particular Class VI Road was abandoned sometime in the 1950s, so there were no homes there (perhaps some old cellar holes). Even if someone walked up 0.5-mile, Chair Madison still did not think they would have access via the gate. Mr. Flaherty added that the terrain is pretty steep. So, Chair Madison thought the development potential was low regardless of whether the parcels actually could be developed. He said the Legislature had made it technically legal, but it was not limiting.

Ms. Clark stated for the record that she was Chair of the Conservation Commission in 2009 when the City got the Conservation Easement on the whole Goose Pond Forest, which was the Commission's major effort at the time. She knew the City had acquired a few other parcels that were contiguous to the Goose Pond Forest and now these smaller ones would potentially be added too. Ms. Clark recommended ensuring the Commission informed the Society for the Protection of NH Forests so these properties might also be covered by conservation easements like Goose Pond. Otherwise, Ms. Clark was very supportive of this project.

Mr. Bergman asked if the parcel the City just acquired from Hull Forest Products along the Washington Street Extension would fall under the existing Goose Pond Forest Conservation Easement. Chair Madison replied that at this time, it was just owned by the City, and the City did not have a conservation easement on it. However, he said that with the City as the deedholder, the parcel was by virtue protected from development. Chair Madison asked if that parcel was zoned as Conservation. Ms. Brunner thought one end of it was either zoned as partially Conservation or Rural, and the rest of the Parcel closer to Washington Street was zoned Low Density, but Ms. Brunner said it would be pretty hard to develop. Ms. Richter noted that if purchased with the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund, then the land should technically remain in conservation. She said the most important thing is to document that it is purchased using the City's conservation funds. Ms. Richter shared language with Ms. Brunner to include in the deeds (not a deed restriction or conservation easement) that will stay with the land when transferred, indicating for future buyers that the land was intended for public benefit. Ms. Richter said there were different language options for layers of protection depending on the parcel without having to go through an entire conservation easement (i.e., timely, expensive). She recommended working with the City Attorney on such a clause, indicating these parcels were purchased for conservation using the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund, per RSA 36:5. Ms. Richter added that it would provide more reassurance in the future that the City Council would not decide to sell the parcels. Mr. Bergman asked if that clause was applied to the Hull Forest Products property purchase. Ms. Brunner and Chair Madison did not know, but Chair Madison said there were limits on that property because of steep slopes, so he imagined it would be hard to develop.

Mr. Von Plinsky knew the specifics of money were not this Commission's purview to negotiate and stated that he fully supported acquiring these properties .

Ms. Clark reemphasized what Ms. Richter stated about including a clause in the deed referencing the property being purchased with public conservation funds. Ms. Clark departed.

The Commission discussed process briefly. The group noted it needed to vote on all three parcels together. Chair Madison reminded the Commission that it could only recommend purchases to the City Council.

Chair Madison closed the Public Hearing at 5:44 PM.

Chair Madison confirmed that these funds originate municipally, not from the state. The monies come from the Land Use Change Tax and are put into the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund. The Commission would recommend that the City Council purchase these parcels with the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund (formerly the Land Use Change Tax Fund). Ms. Richter noted that the Conservation Commission has to vote to authorize the use of funds from the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund, which then adds a layer of protection for the land to only be used for conservation purposes.

Mr. Bergman asked if anyone knew the current revenue on these parcels (i.e., property taxes) when in private ownership that would be lost upon public ownership; he thought it was likely minimal but might be good to know. Chair Madison thought the parcels might be in Current Use, meaning their value would be practically nothing. Ms. Richter added that they are pretty small parcels. Ms. Brunner recalled their low development potential, being on a Class VI Road.

Ms. Richter made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Mr. Flaherty. On a vote of 6–0, the Conservation Commission authorizes the City Council to expend monies from the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund for the purchase of TMP numbers 218-015-000, 218-013-000, and 218-003-000.

This would go to City Council on August 21 and Chair Madison would report the results to the Commission in September.

5) Report-Outs:

A) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee

Mr. Walker reported that the Subcommittee had two meetings in July. On July 5, the meeting was in the park for field work and the group moved some trails out of the mud and realigned them in some places by the water tower. Five or six volunteers joined, so the work went quickly, and the Subcommittee was impressed.

On July 11, the Subcommittee met to focus on its target for the summer, the bridge at the spillway. While the new target for completion was September, Mr. Walker said most of the news was good. The City's Public Works Department could do a lot of the engineering internally and provide many of the foundation materials, all of which would reduce the cost considerably. Mr. Walker and Mr. Bill expressed concerns about meeting the September goal due to several factors

to negotiate, such as securing an available contractor. Still, Mr. Walker thought all the major issues, like being so close to the water, had been resolved.

Ms. Kinsella asked if the spillway bridge would be a footbridge and Mr. Bill said yes. Ms. Kinsella asked if it would go through the woods. Mr. Bill explained that the bridge could not be too close to the spillway, so it has to go down past the riprap. Mr. Walker said the bridge could be 40 to 44 feet long and 4 feet wide. The Subcommittee would be working on brochures for the public fundraising aspect of the bridge; Mr. Walker shared the draft content with the Commission that Mr. Haynes had prepared for input.

Next, Mr. Walker discussed trails, specifically the Subcommittee and City's efforts to combat unauthorized trail building throughout public properties. He shared a proposal for public policy developed by the Director of Parks & Recreation, Carrah Fisk-Hennessey. Mr. Bill said the Subcommittee was to provide comments for a revision if needed, so he thought Commissioners could provide feedback within the next month. Mr. Walker added the context from Ms. Fisk-Hennessey that the policy was not intended to be scary, hyper-technical, or too directive; she wanted it to cover just the most important things without needing a thesaurus to understand it. Mr. Walker thought she did well with it, noting the potential for some minor changes. Mr. Bill added the challenge that on these public lands, there are multiple users whose needs do not necessarily coincide, so they were striving for balance. The idea was for someone (e.g., the Director of Parks & Recreation) to see plans for public trail building before they happen vs. the current practice of unauthorized trail building.

Mr. Bergman asked if there would be signage to alert the public to this new policy. Mr. Walker said this was just a policy and a next step would be determining how to inform the public. He said the Subcommittee discussed signs at the trailheads, posting online, sharing with the various bike clubs, etc. He agreed that education would be important. Mr. Bill said Goose Pond, for example, has many needs (i.e., conservation, education, recreation), so the Subcommittee was trying to be frugal with trail building for legitimate needs. The City was trying to do the same at Robin Hood Park.

Ms. Richter mentioned maintenance of these trails and wondered who would be responsible, thinking it would probably fall on the City if not clearly indicated in the policy. She noticed that site walks were *encouraged*, but she recommended "required." Especially if the trails become popular and overused, she said somebody would need to take responsibility for maintaining them. Ms. Richter asked if e-bikes would be allowed on those trails. Mr. Bill said that was another issue under discussion and he was not familiar enough with the nomenclature, but said they were trying to limit to pedal assisted bikes, keeping the faster vehicles off the trails. However, he said that it is harder to enforce, as it had been in Ashuelot River Park. Mr. Walker agreed that some of the education and enforcement was still up in the air, but they were making progress.

Chair Madison asked how the Subcommittee was currently advertising for trail workdays. Mr. Bill said the first Saturday of the month is a workday and Mr. Haynes usually emails everyone on his list, which is a relatively limited number. The Subcommittee discussed how to improve

that but had not come up with a good method. Mr. Walker mentioned going through the Parks & Recreation Department but said it had not worked any better; Mr. Bill agreed, stating there were issues with access when used for his Goose Pond walks. Ms. Kinsella suggested a social media event. Mr. Bill said to give Mr. Haynes her email at the next meeting. Mr. Bill said that a group of six to 12 volunteers would be ideal. Ms. Brunner said she could post a list of planned trail workdays on the Commission's City webpage and add dates to the official City Calendar with contact details for the Subcommittee. Mr. Bill confirmed the first Saturday of the month was the Subcommittee's trail workday in the Park and the second Friday of the month was its regular meeting at the Parks & Recreation Center.

B) Invasive Plant Species

Vice Chair Williams was not present to report.

C) Land Conservation/Easement Monitoring

Ms. Richter had nothing new to report on easement monitoring. She recalled the Commission talking about updating its criteria for purchasing conservation land and wondered if that was something they really wanted to do.

Mr. Bergman recalled sending around some maps and a worksheet that he thought might be applicable after he and Mr. Von Plinsky met with Anne McBride from the Monadnock Conservancy in 2024. At that time, there were indications from Ryan Owens, the Executive Director, that the Conservancy was interested in Hull Forest Products' property (since acquired by the City). Mr. Bergman said the worksheet, in particular, was about forming a committee to approach a property owner and provided a way of ranking, prioritizing, and rationalizing these decisions; it looked like something filled out by each member the group. He said it categorized the kinds of values the Commission might want to use when assessing the potential value of land for purchase. Mr. Bergman had sent those materials to Ms. Brunner and asked her to distribute them to the others.

Ms. Richter said she waited on sending Ms. Brunner sample criteria to share until she knew the direction the Commission wanted to go. Mr. Bill mentioned proximity of the newly recommended parcels to other parcels the City already owned under conservation. Mr. Bergman agreed that contiguity is always valuable.

Mr. Von Plinsky asked if Ms. Richter acquired all the easement monitoring binders and she said yes; there were two—1) along the Stone Arch Bridge along the Ashuelot River, and 2) the Concord Road development. She drove by both properties but did not think she would be able to walk them until the fall.

Ms. Richter said she would review the current criteria and propose any minor changes needed. For example, is the property connected to an existing conservation parcel? Is there any Wildlife Action Plan habitat value? She wanted to keep it simple but provide reference that the Commission has reviewed the conservation value of the parcel.

Chair Madison reminded Commissioners that legally per RSA 91-A, they should not email the whole Commission or “reply all” to emails from staff. Send anything to Ms. Brunner and she will distribute it to the Commission.

D) Pollinator Updates

Mr. Therriault reported three updates:

1. This was National Moth Week, recognizing that moths are pollinators who typically pollinate things that bloom late in the day or early evening. These more nocturnal pollinators are important too, so they get their own week.
2. The Xerxes Society for Invertebrate Conservation, which oversees Bee City USA, sent a note apologizing for the delay delivering the PDF form of Keene’s Annual Update. They promised it by the end of July.
3. During Pollinator Palooza at Ashuelot River Park on June 24, Mr. Therriault met with Parks & Recreation Director Carrah Fisk-Hennessey about the parcel of land adjacent to the Skate Park along Water Street. Mr. Therriault mentioned hoping to see pollinator plantings there and offered to help, providing his contact information.

Ms. Richter mentioned that Mr. Therriault could come to the monthly East Keene meetings or Ms. Richter suggested attending a subcommittee that focuses on the Skate Park and gardens. She knew Dee Robbins mentioned inviting Mr. Therriault to the East Keene Group, so Ms. Richter thought there were opportunities. Mr. Therriault thought it was now at the point of planning for next spring, which Ms. Richter thought was fine for their purposes. Though Mr. Therriault said some wildflower plants need to overwinter on the soil as seeds for them to properly germinate in the spring. He suggested some seed fasting in late fall with the anticipation of those germinating in the spring.

6) Discussion Items:

A) Master Plan Update

Ms. Brunner reported that the July Master Plan Steering Committee meeting was rescheduled to August 12.

B) Outreach

Chair Madison said there were no updates.

C) Budget – Request for Donation from the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition

Chair Madison said a \$150 request for donation was received from the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition. Ms. Brunner had not included the email, but the person indicated that the Commission kindly donated to the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition’s trail expansion in 2024. Mr. Walker recalled the Commission contributing to the construction of the trail and a

privy, specifically. Ms. Brunner included an invoice, but the Commission could choose a different amount. Chair Madison imagined this donation would contribute to continued maintenance, upkeep, and improvement. He recalled that the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail goes through Keene. He did not think \$150 was a lot and Mr. Therriault recalled that a new fiscal year began on July 1.

Mr. Bill made the following motion, which was duly seconded by Mr. Walker. On a vote of 6–0, the Conservation Commission approved a \$150.00 donation to the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition.

7) New or Other Business

Discussion ensued briefly about organization of the agenda packets. Ms. Brunner noted they are bookmarked; if you click on an agenda item, it takes you directly to that part of the packet, so you do not have to scroll through the whole thing.

Mr. Bergman emailed Ms. Brunner and Vice Chair Williams because he saw a backhoe working along the bank near the small bridge in Woodland Cemetery, where the Commission had pulled Japanese knotweed. Ms. Brunner confirmed with the Public Works Department that they were removing a beaver dam not more knotweed.

Ms. Brunner noted that Mr. Milliken emailed her and Vice Chair Williams about wild parsnips. Chair Madison said they could discuss in August. Ms. Richter inquired, and Ms. Brunner explained that before Mr. Milliken was a Commissioner he sent the email expressing concern about the wild parsnips and they went to seed. This season, he was concerned about them going to seed again, so Mr. Milliken went out and removed them, bagged them, and Ms. Brunner informed Public Works. Mr. Von Plinsky thought this was a good example of the Commission’s discussion of needing contact people to “adopt spots” in the City, where they take care of invasives. He and Chair Madison thought it was a good starting point for ideas.

Mr. Bill asked if there was any update on the Council’s invasive species considerations. Chair Madison did not think there were any updates from the Municipal Services, Facilities & Infrastructure Committee, but he had asked them to put it on their August agenda.

8) Adjourn – Next Meeting Date: Monday, August 18, 2025

There being no further business, Chair Madison adjourned the meeting at 6:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker
July 28, 2025

Reviewed and edited by,
Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

WMT Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition

PO Box 484

Spofford, New Hampshire 03462

August 6, 2025

Keene Conservation Commission

City Hall

3 Washington Street

Keene, NH 03431

To all at the Keene CC,

On behalf of the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition and Board of Directors, thank you for your membership support of the WMT. The financial responsibility of the Coalition includes insurance, and developing and maintaining campsites along the 50 mile trail as well as supporting our partners in the upkeep of the trail. We now have four campsites and have spent many volunteer hours maintaining the trail and replacing signage.

The WMT Coalition includes land owners, conservation easement holders, a friends group, land managers, and various state, regional and local political authorities, each of which has an interest in a section or sections of the trail. Among those represented include the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the Swanzey Rail Trail Advisory Committee, the Horatio Colony Trust, Antioch New England, the Friends of Pisgah, Southwest Regional Planning, the State of New Hampshire, the Monadnock Conservancy, Pathways for Keene, Keene Parks and Recreation, and Conservation Commissions from Keene, Chesterfield, Hinsdale and Swanzey. We are lucky to have such a great collaboration!

We are very thankful to our WMT Coalition friends !!!!

For maps of the trail : wmtcoalition.org

Much thanks,

Lynne Borofsky

WMT Coalition, Treasurer

WMT Coalition is a non-profit organization 501(c)(3) whose mission is to preserve, protect and promote the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail for greater community use through the coordination of all groups with stakes in the fifty mile trail system joining Brattleboro, Vermont to Mount Monadnock, NH. Financial contributions are used to accomplish our mission.

Your membership donation of \$150.00 was received in August 2025

Thanks to all!
Lynne Borofsky

Paul Hebert
110 Arch St, Unit 29
Keene, NH 03431

Elizabeth Ferland
Andrew Bohanon
Rebecca Landry
Mari Brunner, Conservation Commission
City Of Keene, NH
3 Washington St
Keene, NH 03431

Hello Elizabeth, Andrew, Rebecca and Mari

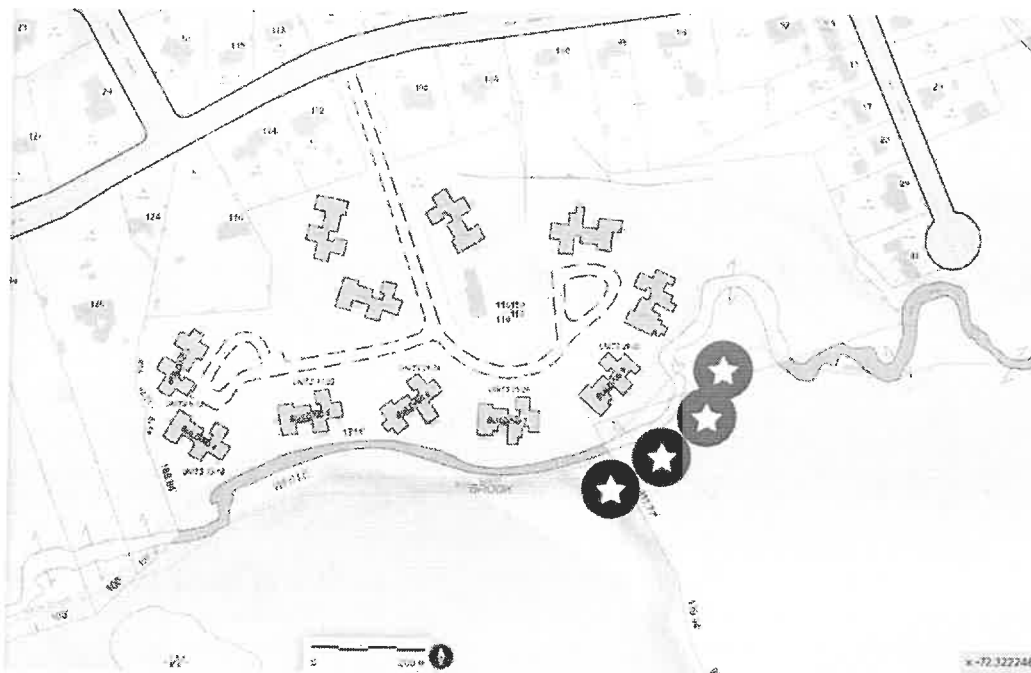
I am writing today to the City Manager and Team because I am not sure who in the City would be responsible for maintaining land adjacent to private property. Please forward this to the appropriate person if I am sending this to the wrong place. And also please let me know who the correct person is so I may follow up.

Willowbrook Condominium Association is concerned about the spread of invasive Japanese Knotweed from property owned by the City of Keene. The City property is the field at the end of Bent Court and is adjacent to our property on 110 Arch St. The State of New Hampshire has designated Japanese Knotweed as a "listed prohibited invasive species in the State of New Hampshire." This is occurring along the bank of the White Brook.

See:

<https://www.agriculture.nh.gov/publications-forms/documents/japanese-knotweed-bmps.pdf>

The weed is located on City property on the opposite side of White Brook at the rear of our Building 8, as shown on the map below. Knotweed concentration is indicated by the stars on this map:



The weed has been growing very tall and is now starting to grow in White Brook, and on our property at Willowbrook. This is beginning to be an extra expense in terms of removal of the weed from our garden areas.

From NH Department of Agriculture:

"Japanese knotweed has very few aesthetic qualities that make it a desirable landscape plant, especially as the above ground portion of the plant dies off leaving dead persistent stalks from late fall to spring. In unmaintained areas and natural habitats, these dead-brown stalks remain standing for up to 5-years. In urban environments, debris and trash tend to accumulate in Japanese knotweed thickets and, in some cases rat/rodent populations increase. Japanese knotweed stands also provide discrete locations for drug use and other illicit activities. All of these factors diminish intrinsic and monetary values of communities, personal property, and natural landscapes."

Regarding Economic impacts:

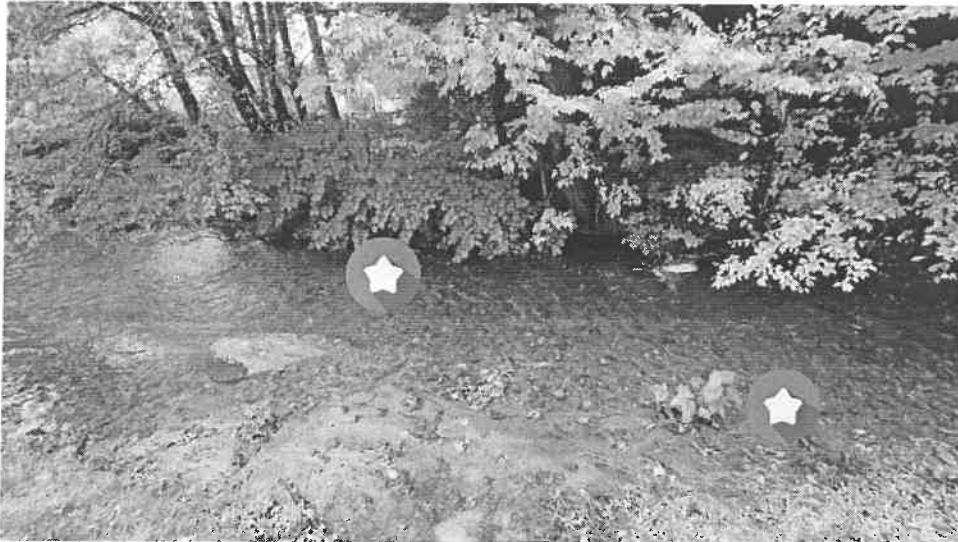
"The presence of Japanese knotweed in any location whether in development/construction sites, occurring along roadways, adjacent to homes or buildings or choking rivers and waterways all cause economic impacts. These impacts are difficult to quantify, but are attributed to structural damage/failure, safety concerns for motorists, flooding damage, and loss of important habitats. According to 2016 cost estimates from the Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD), the typical cost to manage knotweed using a glyphosate based product is approximately \$500/acre for the initial treatment. A follow up second year treatment costs approximately \$300/acre and if treatments for a third and subsequent years are necessary, the cost is around \$200/acre/per year. These cost figures do not include site remediation, removal of vegetative growth, soil stabilization or revegetation."

Photos of the knotweed situation as of September, 2025:



The stalks are getting to be 15-20 feet high in some areas.





This photo shows newer growth (darker green at middle left on the opposite side of White Brook) as well as growth in the brook (small green growth in lower right)

We would ask that the City please look at this situation and address some kind of mitigation for the continued growth and spread of this prohibited invasive weed. There are specific ways the State recommends for removal and killing the weed - especially given it's close proximity to the brook and wildlife. Cutting followed by smothering with plastic or non-woven geotextile material is the likely solution.(refer to the State publication linked above)

I am happy to meet anyone from the City that can come and see the issue and to discuss ways to manage this. We are concerned for the added cost to remove the weed from the Willowbrook side of the property, and also the impact of the thick stalks from the weed on the path of White Brook when the water rises in the spring and summer. We do not desire any added flood risk to the property. I would also suspect that you would want to prevent the large field that is City property from becoming full of this nuisance growth.

I look forward to meeting with someone and discussing further.

Best regards,
Paul Hebert
110 Arch St Unit 29, Keene NH
Willowbrook Condominium Association
603-852-9510
phebert140@gmail.com

From: [Mari Brunner](#)
To: [Conservation Commission](#)
Subject: FW: Registration Opens Today for the NHACC Conference
Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025 11:16:39 AM

Hello All,

Please see below for information about this year's NHACC Conference. Sessions tend to fill up, so I recommend registering sooner rather than later if you would like to attend so you can have your pick of sessions.

Thank you!
Mari

From: NHACC <barbara@nhacc.org>
Sent: Friday, September 12, 2025 9:20 AM
To: Mari Brunner <mbrunner@keenenh.gov>
Subject: Registration Opens Today for the NHACC Conference

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[View this email in your browser](#)



Registration Opens Today

**Join us for the NHACC
55th Annual Meeting & Conference**



Keynote: What does it mean to love a forest?

In this talk, Ethan Tapper, a forester, bestselling author and digital storyteller from Vermont, will draw from his work as a forester and his book *How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World* to discuss what it means to care for forests and other ecosystems at this moment in time. How do we respond to the harmful legacies of the past? How do we use our species' incredible power to heal rather than to harm? How do we reach toward a better future?

The conference will be held on Saturday, November 1, in Pembroke. Don't miss the only State-wide conference dedicated to municipal conservation commission members. The conference is an excellent opportunity to learn from peers & professionals. The conference will be held at Pembroke Academy, 209 Academy Road, Pembroke NH. For more information on the workshops, go to the NHACC [annual meeting website](#).

[Register Now](#)

If you have questions about payment, or your commission would like to send in one check for all of your members, please email Linda at Admin@NHACC.org

Visit our Website
NHACC.org