



Hooksett Conservation Commission

Town of Hooksett
35 Main Street
Hooksett, NH 03106

October 28, 2014

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Hooksett Conservation Commission “Vision and Triumph” Celebration

October 24, 2014

Celebrating a decade of land acquisitions and reaching its goal of conserving nearly 25 percent of the town’s total land area, the Hooksett Conservation Commission (HCC) hosted a “Vision and Triumph” program on Friday night at the Southern New Hampshire University Hospitality Center. A buffet dinner was prepared by students at The Quill.

The approximately 40 attendees who shared in the celebration included key town officials, local dignitaries, and the partners who helped the HCC realize a vision that began in 2004.

“We imagined a concept in 2004 of identifying key areas of conservation value in Hooksett. These areas included wetlands and areas identified in the New Hampshire Wildlife Protection Plan as ‘high value,’” said Steve Couture, HCC Chair and member for more than 15 years. “The gold standard for land conservation for a municipality is 25 percent. We reached just over 23 percent in 2014.”

One of the key partners for Hooksett is Bear-Paw Regional Greenways, a non-profit organization that holds conservation land and easements in southern New Hampshire.

“Hooksett has been a very valuable partnership for us,” said Bear-Paw Executive Director Dan Kern. “The members of the Conservation Commission have smoothed the path for us to achieve our directives in land conservation and wildlife protection. It’s not always this easy and we have made remarkable progress in a relatively short amount of time.”

Four of the areas that were identified in the 2004 Master Plan included the northeast quadrant of Hooksett that borders Bear Brook State Park and Candia, Pinnacle Park, Quimby Mountain, and the Merrimack riverfront area that runs along Merrimack Street in Hooksett.

“We started with the acquisition of 500 acres at Clay Pond headwaters in 2009,” said Dave Hess, HCC member and NH State Representative from Hooksett. “Once we close on Great Marsh, we will have 2,155 acres of conserved land with a cost to the town of \$318 per acre. These areas will be permanently protected from development, except for what is allowed under the easements for trails and public access.”

“None of this would have been possible without funding from our donors and grantors. Some of the entities being recognized tonight are, along with Bear-Paw, the Land & Community Heritage Investment Program, the NH Department of Environmental Services, the NH Society for the Protection of Forests, the New England Open Space Institute, the McIninch Foundation, the Doris Duke Foundation, and the Samuel P. Hunt Foundation,” said Couture. “All of these partners and more have helped Hooksett reach its goals in conservation.”

“Our next phase of planning involves the addition of trails, public access, educational opportunities, and enhancement of wildlife habitats through stewardship planning,” said Couture. “We are in the process of applying for two grants that we hope to use for the Merrimack Riverfront project. If successful, we could start trail construction next fall.”



Town Council Representatives Todd Lizotte (left) and David Ross (right) enjoy a moment with Cindy Robertson, HCC Vice-Chair



Hooksett Conservation members include, left to right, Phil Fitanides, JoCarol Woodburn, Frank Kotowski, Cindy Robertson, Todd Lizotte, Steve Couture, Dave Hess and Carolyn Cronin, staff support

