

MINUTES OF MAY 25th, 2022 MEETING

Access via phone (646) 558 8656 or via web at www.zoom.us with Meeting ID 840 7146 6122 / Password 873516

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on May 25th, 2022 and was again conducted remotely, this time consistent with Governor Baker's Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022 extending certain provisions that were previously held during the state of emergency.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Al Laakso, David Dumais, Patrick Carnahan, John Bresnahan, Kiernan Mulcahy, Andrea Chasen. **Absent:** Christopher Nolan, Kimberly Barton.

OTHERS PRESENT: David Sagan from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge, Steve Roberts, John Tomaszewski, Pat Gottschilcht, Arlene Miller.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: Chair Al Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Bresnahan, to accept the minutes of March 23th, 2022 as amended. Roll call vote - Mr. Laakso, yes; Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Carnahan: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes; Ms. Chasen: abstained; Mr. Mulcahy: abstained. Motion passed 4-0 with two abstentions.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Salary \$858.39, Maintenance: \$396.77, Office Supplies \$100, Miscellaneous \$0, Wetlands Protection Fund \$7,877.15, ConCom Trust Fund \$9,619.80.

PROPOSED INFORMATIONAL KIOSK ON TINA LANE PARKING: Mr. Sagan updated the commission on the most recent activities performed in the floodplains by the agency he represents:

- a) Maintenance of trails remains ongoing.
- b) The "Source-to-Sea" canoe camping site is being rebuilt after a large tree fell on the camping platforms and caused extensive damage.
- c) Vandalism on the viewing platform was recently reported but was addressed.
- d) A couple of nests have been spotted in the area: ospreys, blue herons and eagles have settled in the area.
- e) Some informational signs related to the area's fauna have been installed recently as well as a small information kiosk on the corner of Bark Haul Road and Pondsides Road.

Mr. Sagan kindly requested support from the commission to install, on the edge of the new parking lot on the corner of Tina Lane and West Road and at the start of the trail, which is land owned by the Conservation Commission, an identical informational kiosk and a small strip of pollinator plants. This is part of a larger effort to redirect the crowds to the new parking area in an attempt to make this location the "starting" point for visitor's journeys and deter pedestrian crossings of the railroad tracks on Bark Haul Road. Chair Al Laakso fully supports the idea but noted that, due to a conservation restriction in place for that parcel, the commission will reach out to the state's DCR to get a final approval; Mr. Carnahan added that this location is suitable for the Chronolog station that has been previously discussed.

Chair Al Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Bresnahan, to approve the installation of a small strip of pollinator plants and an information kiosk on the new Tina Lane parking lot at the starting point of the trail subject to final approval from DCR. Roll call vote - Mr. Laakso, yes; Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Carnahan: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes; Ms. Chasen: yes; Mr. Mulcahy: yes. Motion passed 6-0.

NOI – DEP NUMBER PENDING – TWO-STORY BARN ADDITION TO EXISTING GARAGE AT 115 OVERBROOK RD: On behalf of property owner Steve Roberts, Mr. Tomaszewski proceeded to describe the project with the following highlights:

- a) The title of the application "Proposed Garage Addition" has been corrected to indicate the actual scope of work, which consists of the construction of a two-story, 1,200 s.f. addition to be attached to the existing garage with a driveway extension.
- b) The entire property currently consists of a single-family home with associated site improvements. The developed portion of the property is relatively flat. The wooded portion to the north descends steeply to a wetland. The addition's footprint falls within the 50-foot buffer zone but the area has been previously disturbed and is currently covered with grass.
- c) The garage addition will be constructed on helical piers with no excavation or earth disturbance required.

- d) In order to comply with Zoning setbacks, Mr. Roberts and his direct abutter will proceed with a land exchange transaction that redefines the parcel boundary on that section.
- e) Two 50% (1:2) hypothetical slopes have been drawn on the accompanying Filing Plan shown extending away from the edge of the flagged wetlands until it daylights above existing grade (point B in above Figure). A minimum setback distance of 20 feet from Point B is required for a proposed foundation however there is no foundation or earth disturbance proposed as part of this project as the garage will be constructed on helical piers driven into the ground with no excavation for a foundation required.
- f) No erosion was visible in the last site visits where discharge pipes are located within the dingle.

MassDEP had not issued a DEP file number for this application at the time of the meeting but, with no members of the present to provide comment and the thoroughness of the application, Chair Al Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Bresnahan, to issue an Order of Conditions for the NOI filed for the project pertaining to a two-story barn addition to be built at 115 Overbrook Road, which will be released after MassDEP has assigned a DEP file number to this project without adverse comments with the recommendation that the construction's heavy equipment does not obstruct the neighbors' circulation. Roll call vote - Mr. Laakso, yes; Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Carnahan: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes; Ms. Chasen: yes; Mr. Mulcahy: yes. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Roberts was reminded about the following steps to take after the Order of Conditions is mailed out per the cover letter that is to be included.

Documents presented: Conservation Filing Plan W-1 dated 05/09/2022.

DISCUSSION – MITIGATION STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES RAISED BY PATRICK CARNAHAN:

- Mr. Carhanan discussed the following items:
- a) The Scout Guide he has prepared was well received by the commission, with the recommendation from Mr. Mulcahy that language be added to remind the troops to pick up materials after project completion.
 - b) The dump site along Turner Park's Longmeadow Brook has been visited by some town officials. The recommendation is to obtain a formal assessment/composition analysis of the site and subsequent proper removal of the hazardous materials that could be funded with Community Preservation Act funds as part of a two-phase proposal. Though the dump site is located within land owned/operated by the Town and its Parks Department, the commission fully supports Mr. Carnahan's efforts to begin due diligence on CPC eligibility and the creation of a formal plan of action on how to tackle this issue.
 - c) The Chronolog station discussed in prior meetings is an idea that has been embraced by the commission, therefore Mr. Carnahan has been encouraged to research the details of the project's expense before proceeding with any purchase and installation.
 - d) A business connected to lumber and/or tree log operations that abuts the Town's Recycling Center in the floodplains appears to be encroaching the nearby wetlands. Mr. Bresnahan attested to this issue and recommends that the commission continue to gather evidence on this matter and issue a letter to the owner of the business with the concerns.

DISCUSSION – POST-EARTH DAY CLEANUP FINDINGS AND CONCERNS RAISED BY ANDREA CHASEN:

Ms. Chasen, along with Arlene Miller, has been visiting certain locations within town to assess their conditions after the most recent Longmeadow Earth Day cleanup event and brought to the attention of the commission the following items:

- a) Baggott Farms has not removed plastic field coverings used in prior farming seasons in the vicinity of Gasek Farm, the amount of the material and the negligence is of concern. Resident and Gasek Farm abutter Patrick Gottschlicht corroborated said findings with the added comments that some of this farming debris may be intentionally hidden in the forested area; he also added that the field workers do not have an adequate portable lavatory facility and continue to leave a trail of trash after each visit.
- b) There are many large items near the riverfront area (mattresses, car parts, furniture, others), evidence of illegal dumping.

The commission is concerned of the level of illegal dumping. Comments regarding the strength of the enforcement effort on the part of the Police Department and the adequate display of regulations by means of signs were raised. Ms. Miller sympathized with the commission's concerns and Ms. Chasen was encouraged by the group to dissect the issues and prepare a report that outlines the concerns discussed this evening with potential solutions, as such a document can provide a defined road map to address these issues with other town officials.

OTHER BUSINESS – The following items were discussed:

1. Baggott Farms, for the third year in a row, has installed bee hives near the Gasek Farm to aid in the pollination process, an acceptable practice in an agricultural-zoned area.
2. The treatment of invasive species has begun in the Birnie Road Landfill Closure project location. However, the Japanese Knotweed presence is substantial and use of herbicide will be necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano