

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Town Hall- Room #014

May 14, 2019

7:30 PM

Present: Christopher Bajdek, Chair, Jenn Buttaro, Allen Rutberg, Ann Marie Pilch, Shaw Lively, and Utah Nickel, Commissioners, Sean Fay, Associate Commissioner

Ryan Clapp, Conservation Agent

Absent: Rebecca Weissman, Vice Chair

Christopher Bajdek, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

General Business

Forest Management and the Role of the Conservation Commission

- Many residents and concerned parties in town were present to discuss the state of Holliston's forests and what can be done to maintain and further preserve them.
- Ms. Mary Greendale offered her observations from walking on town properties. She has noticed many invasive plants outcompeting native plants, leading to native tree death. She noted that some invasives, such as bittersweet, do not stand out as an invasive plant. Ms. Greendale suggested that education is a good place to start. The Holliston Reporter and HCAT are valuable educational tools.
- Mr. Bajdek agreed that educational outreach is a good start. The Commission does not pursue any active forest management at this time. Most forest management is done passively through deed restrictions, purchase, donation, and Conservation Restrictions, all of which are reactionary to issues on these parcels.
- Ms. Pilch noted that she would like a more thorough plan of town lands, but time constraints limit the ability of the Commission to do so. Inventorying the natural resources on town properties is a necessary first step before putting together any sort of management plan.
- Ms. Pilch further noted that edge effects are the primary issue town lands face, and due to that, the Commission looks to connect existing parcels of land. The edges of forests are susceptible to increased colonization of invasive species, wind damage, and other effects that decrease further into forests.
- Mr. PJ Kilkelly noted that the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation offers grants to municipalities in order to develop forest management plans.
- Ms. Liz Newlands further noted that DCR can tailor forest management plans to the goals of the municipalities (wildlife, timber harvesting, forest health, carbon sequestration, etc.). There are licensed foresters that are willing to help with developing these kinds of plans.
- Mr. Kilkelly also expressed concerns about wildfires. With increased dead underbrush, there is more fuel for these fires if and when they break out, and the Fire Department would have difficulty in accessing these parcels with too much organic debris in the way.
- Ms. Joanne Hulbert also expressed concerns regarding mountain bikes damaging the Town Forest and Fairbanks Property. She noted that NEMBA has listed the town parking lot as access on their website.
- Mr. Bajdek suggested that the Commission reach out to NEMBA and the owner of the Conservation Restriction as allies in addressing this issue. The idea of placing biking

restrictions on the properties during the wet months of April and May was discussed, as well as limiting biking to certain trails.

- Ms. Newlands noted that funding of a forest plan could be a valid use of CPA funds.
- Mr. Robert Weidnecht suggested forming a land stewardship committee. Ms. Greendale supported this suggestion, stating that she knew there were several people in town who are interested, beyond those present tonight.
- Mr. Kilkelly asked how we all move forward.
- Mr. Bajdek suggested contacting DCR and having representatives present at an upcoming meeting. Ms. Greendale noted that it did not necessarily have to be a Conservation Commission meeting to have DCR representatives present, other boards could host.
- The Commission thanked those present and stated that they look forward to working with them to put together a comprehensive plan.

Public Comment

- No comment

Review/Approve Minutes of 4/30/19

Mr. Lively made a motion to approve the minutes of 4/30/19 as written. Ms. Buttaro seconded the motion. Vote passes (5-0-1) with Mr. Nickel abstaining.

Discussion: Community Farm Conservation Restriction

Documents: Draft of Community Farm Conservation Restriction

- Mr. Clapp presented the most recent draft of the Conservation Restriction. He has updated it to resemble the language in other Conservation Restrictions.
- Mr. Clapp asked Mr. Kilkelly how the new Agricultural Commission regulations could influence the CR. Mr. Kilkelly noted that as of 2016, Agricultural Commissions could hold land and Conservation Restrictions, and perhaps having the Agricultural Commission as the Grantee is an option.
- Ms. Pilch expressed concerns in conflicts of interest in having the town as both Grantor and Grantee in this situation.
- Mr. Kilkelly suggested reaching out to Town Counsel for input.
- Ms. Pilch noted that the recent Poitras CR has language related to agriculture in it. Pulling that language would be helpful.
- Mr. Clapp will forward Ms. Kriss Westland, Chair of the Community Farm Agricultural Commission, the current draft and ask for input.

Bike Path Issues: Fairbanks and Town Forest

- This item had been heavily discussed during the forest management discussion.
- Mr. Clapp suggested posting a notice on the entrances to Fairbanks and the Town Forest regarding the use of mountain bikes. He also suggested writing an article for the Holliston Reporter.

- The consensus of the Commission was to reach out to NEMBA before doing so, to work cooperatively with them. Mr. Clapp will do so and have a representative come in to an upcoming meeting.

Request for an Extension Permit for an Order of Conditions

- **245 (Lot 5) Prentice Street: DEP #185-810**
Documents: WPA Form 7A; Letter from Joyce Hastings dated 5/7/19
- Mr. Clapp reported that this Order was set to expire on May 18th, and the property owner wanted to extend for one year.

Ms. Pilch made a motion to extend the Order of Conditions for DEP #185-810: 245 (Lot 5) Prentice Street. Ms. Buttaro seconded the motion. Vote passes unanimously (6-0-0).

- **Lot 9 Prentice Street: DEP #185-811**
Documents: WPA Form 7A; Letter from Joyce Hastings dated 5/7/19
- Mr. Clapp reported that this Order was set to expire on May 18th, and the property owner wanted to extend for one year.

Ms. Pilch made a motion to extend the Order of Conditions for DEP #185-811: Lot 9 Prentice Street. Ms. Buttaro seconded the motion. Vote passes unanimously (6-0-0).

128 Fisher Street Update

- Mr. Clapp reported that he had met with Mr. Greg Carey onsite during the previous week. The area between the work and wetlands has been left undisturbed, and is currently growing in with natural vegetation. He noted that some of the mitigation plantings were surviving as well. The materials within the buffer zone were removed, and a boulder line was set up along the 50qbuffer. Mr. Carey will pick up several wetland plaques to install as well.

Review Correspondence / Other

- Mr. Clapp reported that he had received a question from the homeowner at 15 Boulder Road about installing a garage on his property. The proposed location encroached into the 50qNo Disturbance Buffer, but it was noted that the area was all existing lawn, with no trees or natural vegetation proposed to be cut. Mr. Clapp noted that an alternative was to seek a variance from the Zoning Board to place the garage on the opposite side of the house, along the property line. The Commission did not support the idea of a garage encroaching into the 50qbuffer if there was another viable alternative. If the ZBA did not grant a variance, then the Commission may reconsider.

Public Hearings/Public Meetings

Notice of Intent for DEP File #185-849: Old Cart Path, Paul Revere Lane, Minuteman Circle, Hiawatha Trail, Governor Prence Way (Assessors Map 14) for proposed construction of a roadway and drainage alteration - *Guerriere & Halnon, Inc.*, representing *Constitution Village, LLC*.

Documents: WPA Form 3; Plan Set entitled %Constitution Village Subdivision Modification in Holliston, MA,+dated 11/15/18; email from Mr. Clapp dated 12/26/18; Response Memorandum from Mr. George Mihov dated 12/31/18.

- Mr. Clapp reported that Mr. Mihov has requested a continuance tonight in order to continue addressing the peer review report.

Mr. Lively made a motion to continue the public hearing for DEP #185-849: Old Cart Path, Paul Revere Lane, Minuteman Circle, Hiawatha Trail, Governor Prence Way to the meeting on 5/28/19. Ms. Pilch seconded the motion. Vote passes unanimously (4-0-0).

Ms. Buttaro made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM. Dr. Rutberg seconded the motion. Vote passes unanimously (6-0-0).

*****All documents shall be kept in the Conservation Commission Office files*****