

Holliston Conservation Commission

APPROVED Meeting Minutes
Town Hall – Meeting Room #014

September 3, 2013
7:00 PM

Present: Allen Rutberg, Chair; Ann Marie Pilch, Vice-Chair; Chris Bajdek, Shaw Lively, Jim McGrath, Rebecca Weissman, Commissioners

Charles Katuska, Conservation Agent
Sheri O'Brien, Conservation Assistant

Absent: None

Allen Rutberg, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

7:00 PM: - Interviews for Conservation Commissioner Vacancy

7:00 PM - Rachelle Finn

Ms. Finn has an Architecture degree and has years of field surveying experience. Recently, she has had a lot of experience with wetlands delineation working with a wetlands scientist. She is interested in learning more about conservation and the wetlands. Ms. Finn grew up in Holliston and is raising her family here and would like to protect the town's resources for the future. She has done some NOI work both in the field and paperwork in the office. She has no issues with availability on Tuesday evenings.

7:10 PM - Harrison Grubbs

Mr. Grubbs has been actively involved in conservation and sustainability throughout his career. He has experience with regulatory and permitting process through his work with green building certifications (LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Mr. Grubbs has worked for Conservation Services Group since June 2009 which is the lead vendor for Mass Save Home Energy Services program (with NStar and National Grid). He has always had a passion for conservation and has a desire to give back to his community. Teaching is something he particularly enjoys. Mr. Grubbs is available on Tuesday evenings.

7:20 PM - John Rizoli

Mr. Rizoli has lived in Holliston for over 35 years. He believes that conservation is more important than ever, particularly water. He has a technical background in information technology. He has worked with a lot of people in the Federal government and financial institutions over the years, so he is familiar with regulatory issues. Mr. Rizoli inquired about what challenges are the biggest issues for the Commission today. He was involved with the Holliston Trails Committee. The Commission explained that their main focus is to review applications to administer the state and local laws and protecting the open space in Holliston. Mr. Rizoli is available Tuesday evenings.

7:30 PM - Nathaniel Simkins

Mr. Simkins has personally had experience with wetlands issues with the Winthrop Canal and the invasive weeds in Lake Winthrop and has helped organize the annual water chestnut pull. He is concerned about the weeds in the Lake Winthrop and the increased chance of West Nile virus due to mosquitoes in the wetlands. He believes in using the herbicide, Sonar, to kill the weeds in Lake Winthrop and to clean it up to make it fishable again. The Commission explained that these issues are many of the things that the Commission has goals to undertake; however, the regulatory permitting process is required by law so it takes a large portion of the Commission's time. Mr. Simkins is an avid sportsman, loves to fish, and believes that bow hunting should be allowed in Holliston to help control the deer population due to the deer ticks that carry diseases. He would like to advocate for open space preservation. Mr. Simkins is available on Tuesday evenings.

7:40 PM - David Schroder

Mr. Schroder moved to Holliston a year ago and would like to become more connected to the town. His professional life gives him a strong understanding of the organizational process and technical elements of a project. He considers himself an environmentalist and would like to assist in protecting the wetlands. When purchasing property, he gained experience with the regulatory process regarding wetlands. He has researched the laws regarding wetlands, reviewed GIS maps for wetlands, and understands that there are different levels of wetland protection. Involvement in the community is important to him. He has interests in the 1,000 acres of open space and thinks Lake Winthrop is a great asset to the town and believes that it may be under-utilized by town residents. Mr. Schroder is available on Tuesday evenings.

The Commission discussed the individual candidates and agreed that David Schroder was the candidate that they would like to recommend to the Selectmen for the Conservation Commission opening.

Ms. Pilch made a motion to recommend David Schroder to the Selectmen. Mr. Lively seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)

General Business

Grant Application – Dam Investigations

Lenard Engineering prepared an engineering evaluation package regarding the dams at Factory Pond, Houghton's Pond, and Lake Winthrop. The evaluation/application was funded by the Board of Selectmen and submitted to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

Pond Levelers for Weston Pond/Paul Road – Beaver Solutions Proposals

The Agent is still doing research regarding the Weston Pond dam before Mike Callahan can be responded to about installing a pond leveler there. The MA-DOT (Eric Naciemento) had no detailed plans for the culvert at Weston Pond dam at Route 16. The Agent will call the MA-DOT Survey Archives to try to find the plan for the culvert. He also sent an e-mail about the Paul Road beaver dam to the ACOE's Real Estate Division, but has not heard back from them yet.

Property Transfers for the Open Space & Recreation Area Plan Implementation – Memo from Karen Sherman/Town Planner

In a memorandum dated September 3, 2013, the Town Planner, Karen Sherman, proposed that the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Selectmen sponsor an article to transfer the following parcels acquired by the Town through tax title foreclosure to the Conservation Commission:

Map 7 Block 7 Lots 380, 381, 384 Located off Juniper Road
Map 7 Block 5 Lot 24 Located off Alpine Drive/Hanlon Road
Map 11 Block 2 Lot 144 Located off Mellen Street
Map 4 Block 2 Lot 37 Located off Adams Street

Ms. Pilch made a motion to cosponsor (with the Planning Board and Selectmen) an article for the October Special Town Meeting to transfer the above listed parcels (as outlined in Karen Sherman's memorandum dated September 3, 2013) to the Conservation Commission. Ms. Weissman seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)

Donation of Land at Corner of Johnson Drive and Washington Street – E. Raduano

The Conservation Commission already owns a Conservation Restriction at the corner of Johnson Drive and Washington Street (Map 4-4-323.1). Ms. Raduano has indicated she will not be paying anymore taxes for this parcel. It will cost the town more money to prepare an order of taking of the land; therefore, the Treasurer has recommended that this donation of land be accepted.

Ms. Pilch made a motion for the Conservation Commission to accept the donation of land (Map 4-4-323.1) from Elaine Raduano. Mr. McGrath seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)

Request for Partial Certificate of Compliance for DEP File #185-020:

73 Dalton Road – Stewart Lustgarten

This Sherwood Estates subdivision Order of Conditions was issued in June 1976. A full Certificate of Compliance was never issued; therefore, this lot (#20 on the Record Subdivision Plan dated June 16, 1976) needs a Partial CoC, because it is being sold. It is completely stable at this time.

Ms. Pilch made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for DEP File #185-020: 73 Dalton Road. Mr. McGrath seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)

Prioritization of Open Space & Recreation Plan Goals

The Commission discussed the prioritization of the goals for the Open Space and Recreation Plan and began to develop priorities for the goals assigned to the Conservation Commission.

There were questions about which version of the OSRP this document was, because Ms. Pilch and Mr. Bajdek noted that comments they had sent to Karen Sherman have not been incorporated into this version.

A high priority is the development of a Lake Winthrop Management Plan. Mr. Lively agreed to take the lead for this project with assistance from Dr. Rutberg and Mr. Katuska. The first step will be to meet with the Parks and Recreation Dept since they cosponsored the CPC Grant Application for the management of Lake Winthrop.

The staff's priorities are: 1) public education via the ConCom website, and 2) creating a parcel database for monitoring ConCom properties. Karen Sherman has already started a database while preparing the OSRP. This parcel monitoring would be a good opportunity to involve the Conservation Associates with developing the database, because the Associates have valuable historical knowledge with many of the parcels.

GPS-type apps for iPhone (Theodolite) and Android (GeoCam Pro) phones were discussed for use with this parcel monitoring database, because the apps allow the ability to take a photo, and the photo will show a layer of geographical information, such as Compass orientation, GPS position, and different phone inclinations like a Theodolite optical instrument.

A Year One Priority is: Developing Management Plans for Key Open Spaces, beginning with Fairbanks/Upper Charles River Headwaters area/Adams Street properties. Ms. Pilch agreed to work with developing an outline of a Management Plan for this land.

Roadside signage is a Year One Priority for ConCom town properties, such as the Joseph Cohen land, and the vernal pool behind Miller School. A standard should be developed and perhaps, the website could solicit volunteers to prepare signs. Perhaps, CPC funds can help with obtaining signage. Mr. Bajdek will investigate this idea. It was suggested that the signs have QR codes added to them that will lead to a trail map for the area.

An ongoing goal is to Accommodate Parking near trailheads. When signs are posted or repaired, it would be a good opportunity to think about creating parking spaces at trailheads.

Revised Plan to Decrease House Size for Amendment to Order of Conditions for DEP File #185-725: 36 Kingsbury Drive (Lot 28R) – Scott Mayo representing Jonathan Gerber

A new plan dated August 28, 2013 was submitted today by Scott Mayo, the septic system contractor for this site. The house has been reduced in size and the driveway has been moved farther from the wetlands.

Ms. Lively made a motion to accept the changes to the plan dated August 28, 2013 as an administrative update to the file for Amendment to Order of Conditions for DEP File #185-725: 36 Kingsbury Drive (Lot 28R). Ms. Weissman seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)

Brass ConCom Plaques for Concrete Bounds

Plaques are needed for concrete bounds that are set at the 50' No-Disturb Line for some projects. It was recommended that the plaques state "Town of Holliston Conservation Commission – No Dumping or Disturbance Beyond this Point." The Commission would like to be able to provide the plaques at cost to developers that may need them. The staff will provide cost comparisons for the plaques to the Commission.

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Issued by: Sheri D. O'Brien

Approved by Commission: 02-04-14

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Review Mail

There was no mail to review.

The staff will send the Commission the Holliston GIS Maps On-Line website log-in information.

At 9:57 PM, Ms. Pilch made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. McGrath seconded the motion. Unanimous. (6-0-0)