

AMHERST CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

February 24, 2021

Present: Brett Butler (Chair), Fletcher Clark, LeRoy Gaynor, Ana Devlin Gauthier, Larry Ambs, Laura Pagliarulo

Staff: Dave Ziomek, Stephanie Ciccarello

Absent: Jenn Hoyle Fair

Butler called the meeting to order – 7:03 PM

7:00 PM Comments from the Chair (Brett)

- Request by the Town Services & Outreach Committee (TSO)

TSO requested letter from town committees re: Pomeroy Village project plans to improve the intersection 116 West St and Pomeroy Ln (upgrading/round about). Ziomek gave an overview. Project will require wetlands permitting. Butler volunteered to write a letter on behalf of the Con Com. All supported the idea.

Director's Report (Dave)

- Assistant Land Manager search down to a few finalists.
- Fort River Watershed group gearing up for water quality work this spring and are advocating for an interpretive trail proposal along the Dickinson corridor (Groff Park to end of Mill Ln)
- Fort River Farm Conservation Area update– Ziomek and Ciccarello working with Beth Willson coordinating NOI submission for the floodplain restoration project. Ciccarello working with the Collaborative's Healthy Hampshire program to install raised beds in the community garden. During restoration project access, safety and easement rights coming into play as to timing of public access to the gardens.

Wetland Administrator's Report (Stephanie for Erin)

- DEP contacted the Conservation Dept re: Eversource project and lack of total resource area impacts being identified on a recently issued permit. Information was provided to the Con Com by GZA and the Town documented total impacts and financial compensation in a letter to the file. Six towns are impacted by this project – none of which had total resource area impacts included on their permits. Ciccarello coordinated with GZA for the submission of a Request for an Amended Order of Conditions to reflect total alterations as well as reference of a revised plan that includes a small wetland area that was omitted from the original plan.

7:15 PM Review and approval of Minutes from 1-27-21 and 2-10-21

- 1/27/21 Minutes

MOTION: Pagliarulo moved to approve the 1-27-21 Minutes. Ambs seconded.

VOTE: Butler called a voice vote: 5-0-1 (Fletcher abstained) to approve.

- 2/10/21 Minutes

MOTION: Gaynor moved to approve the 2-10-21 Minutes as amended.

Pagliarulo seconded.

VOTE: Butler called a voice vote: 3-0-3 (Pagliarulo abstained; Devlin-Gauthier abstained; Clark abstained) to approve.

7:30 PM Notice of Intent – Town of Amherst Department of Public Works for construction of 9,500 linear foot extension of drinking water main, associated valves, service lines, hydrants, etc. under East Leverett Road, Cushman Road and Teawaddle Road (Leverett) with directional drilling under Cushman Brook.

Butler opened the hearing. Beth Willson, DPW Environmental Scientist, presented on behalf of the Town:

- Project consists of trenching within the Right of Way (ROW) for a 12” main under East Leverett Rd. Pavement will be cut for the trench, backfilled w/gravel around the pipe, soil replaced and pavement patched. Work to be conducted in a linear sequence - no soil will be stored on the roadway. Silt socks to be installed for erosion control. Trenching work for service line (3’) within the ROW. Work is being conducted w/in Riverfront, BLSF and buffer zone.
- Erosion control will be installed between the resource areas and any work areas. Majority of work is temporary impact as backfilling will occur the same day. One hydrant is being installed in BLSF. Soil will get taken off site if it doesn’t get backfilled.
Directional drilling proposed under Cushman Brook. Project is being contracted out. General contractor with a subcontractor to conduct the directional drilling. Any dewatering needed will occur on site as indicated. Areas of disturbance around hydrants will get loamed and seeded. If they have to de-water will use a sedimentation bladder at the section they’re working at the site.
- Delineation done by EcoTech in April, 2020. Eastern portion of the project falls under NHESP territory. Letters provided by both DEP and NHESP programs.
- Ziomek questions: size of main, paving sequence related to trenching, time of year when work will occur, depth of drilling, project length. Recommended the Commission specify a depth for drilling beneath the Cushman Brook.
- Willson unclear as to exact drilling depth and will get information from the engineers.

MOTION: Devlin Gauthier moved to continue the hearing to March 10th at 7:35 PM. Pagliarulo seconded.

VOTE: Butler called a voice vote, 6-0-0 to continue.

Miscellaneous

- Other Business
 1. Recorded OoC 325 Sunderland Rd – Eversource
 2. UMASS Stormwater Maintenance – Notification by Mickey Marcus – SWCA
 - Work starting this summer. Erin to follow up on her return.
 3. Conservation Restriction - Pete Westover of Conservation Works
 - Proposed donation of 6.5 acres (Lohrer property located on Market Hill Rd). Needing Commission endorsement and signatures Purpose to keep the parcel in Ag use and add protection for the Cushman Brook watershed. Monitoring to be done by the Conservation Department on an annual basis. Slight cost to the town re: monitoring.

MOTION: Clark moved to accept the gift of the CR. Devlin-Gauthier seconded.

VOTE: Butler called a voice vote, 6-0-0 to accept the CR gift.

- Enforcement Orders:
 - Pomeroy Court – Poor Farm – will be filing an NOI
 - Canton Ave – Order of Conditions expired. The Enforcement Order is to be addressed at the 3-10-21 meeting to determine next step re: restoration/return to previous condition.
- Monitoring Reports submitted for Aspen Heights

MOTION: Clark moved to adjourn, Pagliarulo seconded.

VOTE: Butler called a voice vote: 6-0-0

Meeting Adjourned 8:48 PM

**Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Ciccarello**