

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Mr. Walker, Vice Chair at 7:15 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Walker (VC), Boice, Britt, Healey

Staff: Ziomek (arrived 7:55pm), Willson

**CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS**

Ms. Willson summarized a document in the Con Com's packet from VHB about the work accomplished at the Owen's Pond site. She stated they finished their work, they installed 6 instead of 7 step pools because the 7th was actually outside the original limit of work. Photos show the stream flowing and VHB has been monitoring the flow. Due to the warm weather they were able to put in the live stakes and erosion control matting. Ms. Willson stated that there were letters from Preserve UMASS group in the packets and a new vernal pool certification.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S ACTION**

**PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS**

**7:30 PM Request for Amended Order of Conditions** – UMASS for resource area improvement at Campus Pond including planting aquatic and shoreline vegetation, stabilizing the bank, and removal of invasive and non-native vegetation at North Pleasant Street (Map 8C, Parcel 13B).

- Opened the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.
- Closed the public hearing at 8:05 p.m.

Bruce Griffin (NEE), Andy Bohn (NEE) and Pamela Monn (UMASS) presented. Mr. Griffin presented two revised plan sheets with correct location of new walkway. He stated the area of work is the southern two thirds of the pond. Most of the pond edge is just an abrupt drop caused by erosion, a couple areas exist with wetland vegetation on the bank. Some areas are mown lawn all the way to the pond edge. The project proposes aquatic plantings and coir logs to create a bank that then will be planted with low growing vegetation for stability. The vegetation will also help to decrease access to the pond edge but because it's low growing not block the view of the pond. Larger trees will also be planted. The overall goal is to intercept sheet flow going to the pond.

Ms. Boice asked what was entailed in putting in the aquatic shelf. Mr. Bohn responded no sediment would be added, the aquatic plants will be planted in the existing substrate and the coir logs attached to the existing bank. He added that one goal is to minimize access for both people and geese, geese like to go from lawn straight into the pond so they are trying to minimize that environment.

Ms. Willson asked this work is happening after the dike reconstruction. Mr. Bohn responded it depends on the phasing of the dike work. Ms. Willson asked about pond elevation changes during the dike work and if this work is based on a particular pond elevation determined through the dike work. Mr. Bohn responded yes that elevation is being determined right now and that all the pond work will be based on that elevation. He added that the dike work is currently waiting on an Army Corps permit and it's not clear what work will take place when. Ms. Healey asked if there were three stone flagging access spots. Mr. Bohn stated yes and there are three approved for the northern section for a total of 6. Ms. Healey asked if a qualified person has or will be determining if the trees coming down are dead or dying, and how they are removed. Mr. Bohn stated the plans state that NEE recommends hiring an arborist to do that. Mr. Bohn stated that turbidity curtains will be used for erosion control. Ms. Boice asked if there are any live healthy trees being taken down. Mr. Bohn stated they are proposing to have the crab apple trees transplanted somewhere else. He added that it's a safety concern of UMASS to have trees people can hide behind.

Ms. Willson asked if a Project Notification Form had been submitted for this project in regard to it's impact on the historical significance of the landscape. Mr. Griffin stated no and that the question had not been brought up until earlier that day when UMASS, NEE and Preserve UMASS had met. Mr. Bohn added that the proposed work attempts to maintain the historical landscape. Ms. Monn stated that she considers the entire campus as the Waugh arboretum, there is an arboretum committee which oversees the landscape and trees and a group trying to tie the arboretum to the teaching and academics of the school. She added that when we do projects like this we need to take into account that we are adding to the arboretum.

Ms. Willson stated that one of the conditions will be that the Con Com be provided a copy of the arborists report with recommendations of which trees to remove.

**Britt moved and Healey seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** to close the public hearing and issue an Amended Order of Conditions.

Mr. Ziomek arrived 7:55 PM.

### **8:00 PM CPA Proposals**

Mr. Ziomek stated that at Fall Town Meeting CPA funding for Brunelle and Ricci properties were supported contingent on grant funding. Since then we found out we did get the Ricci grant but not the Brunelle grant. The Ricci property will close soon and he is hoping to have a big celebration/ribbon cutting with Con Com invited. Mr. Ziomek stated he will be going before the CPAC on February 7th with proposals for Spring Town Meeting.

He will be proposing the Brunelle property again, Brunelle is being proposed in two phases for about 26 acres total. He asked the Commission what they thought about the property and how he should approach a purchase if at all. He provided documents with different purchasing scenarios.

Mr. Ziomek stated another property is the SE St. property, 7.6 acres. He provided maps. He stated the property was bought at auction last week by a bank for \$500,000. Conservation groups are now talking with the bank about buying the property. He stated he is currently proposing a \$50,000 ask from CPA, however, waiting to see if it's needed after the other groups involved meet and discuss their options.

Mr. Ziomek discussed a third property off Old Farm Rd. It's approximately 8 acres around Gull Pond. The Town currently owns the other side of Gull Pond. He is in discussions with the owner as to whether or not he wants to sell.

Ms. Boice stated she would like to get an idea of how the Commission feels about these properties so she can share that information with the CPAC. The Con Com supported Mr. Ziomek's scenario #1 for the Brunelle property, trying for funding for just Phase I at this point. They supported \$50,000 or less for SE St. They did not take a vote.

### **Miscellaneous Untimed Items:**

- Preserve UMASS letters

Ms. Willson summarized the request from Preserve UMASS for the Con Com to suspend the dike construction OOCs based on the fact that the work was impacting a historical landscape. She recommended that the Con Com not take action because historical issues are not under the purview of the Con Com and that Preserve UMASS could go through Mass Historical Society to get the project stopped for those reasons. She added that as Bruce Griffin, NEE, stated earlier discussions have begun among these groups (UMASS, Preserve UMASS, Army Corps, Mass Historical Society) to put together a memo of understanding. The Con Com decided not to suspend the OOCs but will issue a letter to UMASS stating they are aware they proceeded with work without the required permitting from the Army Corps.

- Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 8:55 p.m.