

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Ms. Angus, Chair at 7:00 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Angus (C), Walker (VC), Allen, Boice

Staff: Ziomek, Willson

**CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS**

Ms. Willson updated the Commission on permitted projects that are starting up. Rte 116 - erosion control in place and will be inspected this week, contact is TJ Kosik (MassDOT) and Andy Pompie (C&A Contractors), MassDOT has a field office corner of West St. & W. Pomeroy Ln. Norwottuck Rail Trail Rehab just issuing RFP for contractor. DPW will be submitting NOIs for sewer & water main work on Harkness Rd. & Wildflower Dr. DPW has stated they have no money to pay for a consultant to work on Meadow St. issue.

Mr. Ziomek stated that Mike Andrews, Assistant Land Manager, is leaving. The dept has started the process to find a replacement, refer all potential candidates to Cons. Dept. CPAC voted to fund both Open Space projects, Brunelle Property & Southeast St. CPAC voted to fund \$125K for Southeast St., which they will bond, and \$156K for Brunelle. The Southeast St. purchase will include \$100K from DCR, money from sales of house lots, money from Town, and some money from Kestrel & neighborhood group.

There will be a discussion on invasive plants at the Hitchcock Center on Weds. April 3rd. Mr. Ziomek shared an article from the Gazette on the Hitchcock Center's plans to move their facility to Hampshire College grounds. They are raising funds and hoping to occupy the new facility by 2015. Mr. Ziomek & Ms. Willson met with New England Environmental who have offered to provide free services to improve water quality in one pond in town. Gull Pond was discussed. NEE is going to conduct a plant survey to identify potential treatment methods. If this moves forward we'll put a presentation together for a Con Com mtg.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S ACTION**

**PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS**

**7:15 PM Informal Discussion** – Todd Rees, Amherst Baseball, for improvements to Kiwanis Field

Todd Rees provided a summary of Amherst Baseball's field needs to run program. Amherst Baseball has new agreement with DPW to do their own maintenance of the fields at Mill River. They want to improve Kiwanis Field for tee ball which would involve removing the existing sod from the infield and replacing it with a field mix (sand, organic material, clay). Create a 50' tee ball diamond.

Chuck Dauchy stated that a wetland delineation was done when the field was first built and he recently re-flagged the wetlands along the eastern side of the field. He stated that he doesn't think the proposed work will impact the wetlands. Ms. Angus asked if the work is in Riverfront. Mr. Dauchy said no, just BVW buffer zone. Mr. Allen asked where the removed soil would go. Mr. Rees said they'll use it to fill in areas of the outfield. Ms. Angus asked about use of chemicals to maintain fields. Mr. Rees said there are DPW/State approved fertilizers they will use, they plan to aerate the fields. Ms. Angus stated she did not feel an RFD submittal is necessary considering the limited amount of work and distance to wetland. She added erosion control should be installed when the work is being done. Mr. Rees stated he will install erosion control in the same location as it is marked on the original plans for building the field. Con Com agrees no filing as long as they install erosion control as marked on old plan.

Mr. Ziomek stated that the gravel/dirt parking area to the north is actually on Conservation Land and that he hopes to improve it to lessen erosion and improve safety. He stated he was glad to hear that the maintenance agreement for Mill River was for inside the fence only considering quickly outside the fence is Conservation Land and Riverfront. The bank along Mill River has significant erosion problems from overuse of that area. He added he has strong reservations about the potential for a third practice field at Mill River and wonders why not make this field at Kiwanis a 60' field to be used for more than tee ball? Mr. Rees stated there is a soccer field oriented such that it limits the baseball diamond's size but that 60' would probably still fit. Con Com said OK for 60' diamond since it doesn't change threat to wetland.

**7:30 PM Request for Determination** – Town of Amherst Conservation Department for repair of a foot bridge along the Howard Garis Trail within resource areas at the Lower Fort River Conservation Area (Map 20A, Parcel 56).

- Opened the public hearing at 7:43 p.m.
- Closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Brad Bordewieck, Land Manager presented photos and plans for bridge replacement. The bridge was crushed by a fallen tree and is lying in the stream. They plan to re-use as much of the bridge as they can. Mr. Ziomek asked the length of the bridge. Mr. Bordewieck stated 30 to 40'. They will probably use hemlock to replace rotten support beams, decking mostly pressure treated and can be re-used. Ms. Willson added that the work is in Riverfront, it should be done by hand and during low flow. No digging. Mr. Andrews, Assistant Land Manager stated that the abutments are in good shape so no digging should be needed.

**Walker moved and Boice seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** to close the public meeting and issue a Negative Determination #2 that although the work is within an area subject to protection under the Act, it will not remove, fill, dredge, or alter that area.

**7:45 PM Request for Determination** – Town of Amherst Conservation Department for repair of a foot bridge and bog bridging within resource areas at the Plum Brook Conservation Area (Map 23A, Parcel 3).

- Opened the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.
- Closed the public hearing at 8:10 p.m.

Brad Bordewieck presented a description of the project. In addition to replacing all rotten parts of the bridge, they plan to lift up and lengthen the current bridge so it extends over both banks. They also plan to install bog bridging on either side of the new bridge. Ms. Angus asked if the bridge would need any footings within the bank or brook. Mr. Bordewieck said no. Mr. Walker asked why we even maintain this trail considering it goes right through a large wetland. Vivienne Carey stated the trail is usually not as wet as the photos are showing. Mr. XXX (public) stated he lives next to the trail on Carriage Ln and the trail is basically water and swampy grass from the bridge going north for at least 500'. He asked if the trail could be re-routed out of the water and then better maintained (mowed). Mr. Bordewieck said they could possibly move it west closer to the property line, and if that makes it dry enough they could mow it. Mr. Ziomek stated this is all in the floodplain of the brook and beavers are always going to be there. He added we could move the trail west and add bog bridging, trail will probably still be wet.

**Allen moved and Boice seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** to close the public meeting and issue a Negative Determination #2 that although the work is within an area subject to protection under the Act, it will not remove, fill, dredge, or alter that area.

**8:00 PM Presentation** – Town of Amherst Conservation Department update on field activities.

Brad Bordewieck (Land Manager) & Mike Andrews (Assistant Land Manager) did a presentation on the field work conducted in 2012. Bridges built include Two Mile Bridge, Houston Gage Bridge off Sandhill Rd. in Shutesbury, and the Old Farm Rd. bridge. Mr. Ziomek stated this is the only sidewalk the Cons Com controls. They installed balusters on the the XX bridge over Cushman Brook following an incident where a child fell off the bridge. They did some mowing with an over the guardrail mower which they were loaned by WMECO. Mr. Ziomek stated a lot of mowing was done at Wentworth Farm and Mount Pollux.

**8:30 PM Enforcement Order #2** – Northeast Utilities/WMECO for release of sediment into a stream and associated wetlands at Wentworth Farm Conservation Area (Map 18A, Parcels 46, 17 & 34). – **Long-term stabilization plan discussion**

Ms. Angus stated that at our last meeting with received a draft plan for long term stabilization. She had a discussion with DEP who do not have any substantial comments on the draft plan. DEP requested some of the language from the 2nd Enforcement Order be added, we had asked that Boyd Kynard be consulted. Tonight we're reviewing the final plan for long term stabilization. Ms. Willson stated Boyd Kynard was consulted and he approves of the plan. Brian Benito, WMECO, said Mr. Kynard agreed with the design of the stream, step pools etc.

Ms. Angus asked if the plans changed significantly from draft to final. Matt Kennedy, VHB, said not significantly. He stated they changed the matting to a biodegradable erosion control mat that degrades in 3 to 5 years. Ms. Willson stated there is a monitoring plan and wetland remediation plan that we didn't talk about before. Matt Varrell stated the monitoring plan is a modification of what was in the NOI and states monitoring of replication area until 2020. Monitoring for plant growth, erosion, and wildlife use. Ms. Angus stated the Cons Com would like a start and complete by date. Mr. Kennedy said they would

like to start towards the end of April and definitely be done by July 1. Ms. Angus stated a start date of April 15 and definitely finish by July 1, WMECO agrees.

Ms. Angus asked about monitoring conditions for construction. Ms. Willson stated that was something we can put in the 3rd Enforcement Order. She stated they should continue the weekly and storm reporting via emails and have an emergency phone call list as described in Enforcement Order #1. Mr. Ziomek asked if the wetland remediation was still going to be done by hand, is it going to be the last thing done, and how is that going to be coordinated with Beth? Matt Varrell said it can be done at the same time as construction. Mr. Benito said the method is following DEP and NHESP suggestions. Mr. Ziomek stated that over the weekend beavers were starting to block up the piping. Brad cleaned out the piping on Saturday, WMECO installed beaver deceiver fencing on Tuesday.

**Walker moved and Boice seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** that the requirements of Enforcement Order #2 have been met.

**Boice moved and Walker seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** to issue Enforcement Order #3 approving the long term stabilization plan presented to Commission tonight. Work shall not commence before April 15, 2013 and to be completed by July 1. Maintain weekly & storm reporting as outlined in first Enf. Order. Maintain temporary erosion control until construction is complete.

**Miscellaneous Untimed Items:**

- Application/Proposal for Field Classes on Conservation Land – Scott Jackson

Ms. Willson stated Scott Jackson, UMASS professor, is requesting to use a few different Cons areas for field classes. She stated he has done this in the past before we had the application process.

**Boice moved and Walker seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0)** to approve the conservation land use application.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

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