

**Conservation Commission Meeting  
July 8, 2015  
Town Room, Amherst Town Hall**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Ms. Angus, Chair at 7:05 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Angus, Boice, Allen, Brooks, Clark, Butler

Staff: Ziomek, Willson

**CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS**

Willson stated we need to sign the LAND Grant application, not on the agenda but has come up in the last 48 hrs. Willson provided updated photos of Puffer's Pond work. The work at the North Beach including parking area is complete, fencing on cliffs is complete. Ziomek stated work left to done includes new steps into pond on South Beach and work on the perimeter trail. Comments from the public on the work has been positive. Ziomek meeting with the Police Chief next week to discuss more regular patrols of North Beach after receiving calls about behavior/alcohol. On July 4th wknd police broke up a large party, 30-40 people, drinking/smoking. Butler asked about walking patrols at South Beach. Ziomek said they will look at a variety of options, maybe off-duty officer or CSO (community service officer). Ziomek stated there is going to be a dog park brainstorming meeting with the public on July 20th, 7pm in Town Room.

**MINUTES**

No minutes reviewed.

**PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS**

**7:15 PM Request for Determination** – Amherst Conservation Department for confirmation of resource area boundaries and trail mowing within buffer zone to resource areas on Belchertown Rd. (Map 15C, Parcel 22).

Stephanie Ciccarello, TOA Sustainability Coordinator, stated she has been working with Willson on identifying the resource areas at Fort River Farm Cons. Area. The wetland was delineated by Alec MacLeod. Willson showed map on overhead. Delineation includes lines A-F of BVW and line G which is an isolated wetland. Application looking for confirmation of those lines and for mowing of a walking trail around the perimeter of the property. The trail is an extension of the existing trail/farm access road along the eastern boundary next to the Fort River. Ciccarello communicated with NHESP because property is within both Priority & Estimated Habitat. NHESP response OK with mowing with two conditions: sweep for turtles during first mow, all mowing must comply with guidelines NHESP provided. Angus asked why wetland points on map not connected. Willson responded there was so many points they were hard to connect. Ciccarello said what we're really looking for tonight is approval of the location of the mown path. The plan is to keep the majority of path 10' from the nearest wetland

point, with a couple locations at 5'. Brooks asked if this mowing would be considered work under the regulations? Angus said cutting vegetation is altering the buffer zones ability to protect the wetland and can be considered work. Brooks added this "work" is very close to the wetland. Ciccarello stated the path needs to be that close to provide land for the incubator farms proposed for the field. Ciccarello stated we can keep the path 10' from wetland points at all locations (no 5').

Abutter (name?) stated she's concerned about the public walking close to her property. There is a den of foxes in the area and wild turkeys. More concerned with overall project, farming, etc. impacts. Ciccarello with communicate with resident about overall project.

**Boice moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0)** to close the public meeting and issue a Negative Determination for the delineation (not approving) and Negative Determination for the work with conditions that the trail is 10' from all wetland points and the NHESP conditions are followed.

**7:30 PM Enforcement Order (cont'd from 6-10-15)** – Park's Coop LLC/Andrew & Jocelyn Potter for removal of trees and other vegetation and relocation of a fence within Riverfront and buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetlands at 60 Sunderland Rd. (Map 5A, Parcel 23).

Andy Bohn, NEE provided updated planting plan which includes wetland delineation and note about no chemical fertilizer, pesticide or herbicide use on the lawn. Plan to do restoration planting in the fall.

Willson to issue EO#3 stating that Commission approves planting plan, EO#3 to be ratified at next mtg.

**Boice moved and Clark seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0)** to ratify EO #2 requiring applicant to provide delineation and updates to planting plan at tonight's mtg.

**7:45 PM Request for Determination** – Joseph Torras for removal of trees within buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetlands at 8 Norwottuck Circle (Map 20A, Parcel 157).

Ziomek recused himself, he knows the applicant and is a neighbor to the property. Joseph "Peppe" Torras, property owner, stated they would like to take down four trees - one on their own property and three on their neighbor's property. They have received permission from their neighbors to take down three trees. All four trees are within buffer zone to wetland. Trees A&B (on map) are dying, tree C is a black cherry that is getting old, and tree D is a cottonwood that spreads fluffy seed pods that aggravate allergies. He would like to re-plant at locations C & D. Willson presented photos on the overhead. Willson stated there was a lot of yard waste deposited in the wetland. Angus asked if the trees can all be taken down from the lawn. Torras said yes.

Willson stated Commission received a letter from a neighbor complaining about the brush being dumped in the wetland.

**Boice moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0)** to close the public meeting and issue a Negative Determination with conditions that the trees be removed from the lawn side by hand,

that the stumps for trees A&B not be removed, if equipment used for stump removal of C&D than silt fence required, and dumped brush/leaves must be removed from the wetland,

**Miscellaneous Untimed Items:**

- Sign Stosz & Stowes Property LAND Grant application

Ziomek stated this property is along the Cushman Brook on East Leverett Rd. We own much of the land around it. Includes two parcels one along the brook and one on the north side of East Leverett Rd going up the hill buy at approximately \$255,000. LAND Grant is due July 15th, wouldn't hear back from grant program until Nov. 2015 then would ask for CPA funds at Town Meeting spring of 2016.

**Brooks moved and Boice seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0)** to support and sign the LAND Grant application.

- Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

**Adjournment**

**Voted** unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 8:15 PM.