

**Conservation Commission Meeting
December 9, 2015
Town Room, Amherst Town Hall**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: Angus, Boice, Healey, Brooks, Clark

Staff: Ziomek, Willson

CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS

Willson stated there is a letter from Tom Reidy, Attny from Bacon Wilson, requesting on behalf of his client to continue the University Drive project public hearing. Willson stated we have a contract with Ecotech, Inc. (Art Allen) out of Worcester to conduct the peer review for the University Dr. project we're waiting on the funding from the applicant. Willson stated we received one proposal in response to the Wentworth Farm RFP. She added we need to organize a mtg of the review committee. Ziomek suggested we send the RFP electronically to the entire Commission and they provide feedback to Willson. Subcommittee will consist of two Con Com, two Ag Com, and two staff.

Willson stated she conducted a site visit at Mill Valley where they are doing the permitted sedimentation basin cleanout. The work looked fine, erosion control is up and in good shape. They hope to finish the sedimentation basin work before winter and start up the sidewalk and parking lot work in the spring.

Ziomek stated his stint as Interim Town Manager should be ending in mid-late January 2016. The Town is in negotiations with an applicant for new Interim Town Manager and then there will be a search committee for a permanent Town Manager in spring 2016. Ziomek stated staff is making progress on the Land Management Plans. The CPA deadline is this Friday for project submittals. He stated the first Open Space project is a 66-acre piece of farmland owned by Jim Hoerle which he, Kestrel, the Town and the state are working to put an APR on and the CPA money would be the local match to the APR. It's the last large piece of farmland along this section of SE St. to not be protected. The maximum local match is 20% but the APR program does sometimes allow as low as 10%. The second project is along the Cushman Brook on East Leverett Rd., it's two properties owned by the Stowes/Stoz families. Area #1 is 8 acres along the Cushman Brook, it's one of the last pieces of land along the Cushman Brook the Town doesn't own. Area #2 is about 6.3 acres on the other side of Leverett Rd. that abuts conservation land. We have a pending LAND grant for these parcels that we should hear whether we've been awarded or not soon. We'll move ahead with the CPA application, if we don't get the LAND grant we'll re-group maybe pull the CPA application or change it.

MINUTES

Review/approve Minutes of 3-11-15 & 3-25-15

Healey moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to approve the minutes of 3-11-15.

Healey moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to approve the minutes of 3-25-15.

PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS

7:15 PM Request for Determination – John Kinchla for confirmation of resource area boundaries at the rear of 716 Sunderland Road (Map 2A, Parcel 30).

Chuck Dauchy, wetland consultant for John Kinchla, presented the project. He stated the property is currently and has historically been used as a nursery, however, the property owner would like to use it for something else, possibly a solar farm. Dauchy stated there is a small isolated wetland, basically determined using soils, and a wetland at the southeast corner of the property associated with an intermittent stream that is just off site to the east. He added there is an area where the soil has been compacted and purple loosestrife is growing, however, the soils are not hydric and the hydrology does not exist so it's not wetland. Angus asked how the upstream hatchery affects the hydrology at the site? Dauchy stated he believes the hatchery uses groundwater that is then released into the stream. He added in terms of intermittent vs perennial we use the state criteria which he followed, stream stats says 0.42 square mile. That definition doesn't take into account a stream that's supplemented with groundwater.

Brooks asked if the isolated wetland was really a rectangle? Dauchy stated it would have taken many soil samples to get the exact shape but the rectangle shows the furthest extent of the wetland.

Angus stated due to it's size the isolated wetland is not jurisdictional under the state regulations but is under the Town Bylaw.

Boice moved and Clark seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to issue a Positive 1, 2A, and 5 determination for the wetland delineation, and confirmation that there is no Riverfront Area on the site.

7:30 PM Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (cont'd from 11-23-15 mtg) – UMASS New Build, LLC/Trey Wills for confirmation of resource area boundaries on University Dr. (Map 13B, Parcel 33).

Angus stated we have a letter from the applicant requesting to continue the public hearing.

Brooks moved and Boice seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to continue the hearing until January 13, 2015 at 7:15pm.

Miscellaneous Untimed Items:

- Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

Adjournment

Voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 8:00 PM.