

**Conservation Commission Meeting
August 24, 2016
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, Allen, Brooks, Clark, Butler

Staff: Willson

CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS

Willson stated the Eric Carle Museum bear sign was installed on Bear Mtn in the Holyoke Range Cons Area location by DCR. The town water ban is in effect, conservation and DPW are working on water conservation strategies and enforcement.

MINUTES

Review/Approve 1-13-16 Minutes

Butler moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to approve the minutes of the 1-13-16 meeting.

PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS

7:15 PM Land Management Plans– Mt. Pollux

Stephanie Ciccarello, Amherst Sustainability Coordinator, stated the Mt. Pollux LMP has been updated in response to the comments from the Commission and the Friends of Mt. Pollux. Timeline tables have been added. Looking for the Commission to vote to adopt this version of the LMP as final.

Clark asked Land Manager (Brad Bordeweick) how he felt about the timeline. Bordeweick said the short terms items look good, things in the long term category will depending heavily on funding to determine timing. Ciccarello said conservation staff is working on an MOU between the Town and Friends of Mt. Pollux. Commission should see a draft of that soon. Angus asked does the 1-3 yr category start once all the LMPs are approved? Ciccarello responded yes. Angus stated Bordeweick should report to

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Commission on progress of implementing LMPs annually. Ciccarello stated there is something in the MOU stating that conservation staff will meeting annually with the Friends Group to go over what to accomplish each year. Tom Johnson, Friends of Mt. Pollux stated that this version of the LMP is a large improvement. He stated he's glad to see the goals and objectives addition, it could be tied to the timeline a bit better but overall the document is ready to go.

Clark moved and Butler seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to approve and sign the Mt. Pollux Land Management Plan as written.

7:30 PM Request for Determination – Immanuel Lutheran Church for confirmation of wetland boundaries and installation of a playground structure at 867 N Pleasant St. (Map 8A, Parcel 71).

Michael Peterson, Immanuel Lutheran Church, stated they would like to put up a play structure in the lawn area on the north side of the church. The location is within the buffer zone to an intermittent stream and associated wetlands. Willson presented the site plan and pictures on the overhead. Angus asked what the surface under the play structure would be. Peterson stated just grass, the structure will be anchored. Commission decided erosion control is not necessary because there is no excavation.

Brooks moved and Butler seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to close the public meeting and issue a positive determination for the wetland boundaries as mapped and a negative determination for the work.

7:45 PM Request for Determination – Marjorie Melnick for solar panel installation within buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetlands at 48 Stanley St. (Map 18A, Parcel 48).

Tim Post, developer with Revolusun, stated that this project came before the Commission previously and was told to file an NOI or move solar panels to a new location. They moved the solar array just outside the 30' setback line. Will take the large ash tree down and array will go over stump. Willson provided photos (including cat cage!!!). Commission good with new location. Angus said not enough information to confirm wetland boundaries but we can approve the work.

Brooks moved and Clark seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to close the public meeting and issue a negative determination for the work with the condition that erosion control (filter sock) be used at limit of work.

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8:00 PM Request for Determination – The Common School for removal of trees within buffer zone to isolated wetlands at 521 South Pleasant St. (Map 17A, Parcel 78).

Gary Powsner, The Common School, stated would like to remove five trees of which three are dead and two are dying. They would like to take a little bit of the undergrowth just to gain access to the trees. The trees are setback slightly from the school driveway. Stumps are not being removed, wood will be chipped. Willson provided photos on the overhead.

Clark moved and Butler seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to close the public meeting and issue a negative determination for the work.

8:15 PM Request for Determination – Trustees of Hampshire College for demolition of a house and barn within buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetlands at 1095 West St. (Map 25B, Parcel 67).

Todd Holland, Hampshire College, stated part of the agreement with the Planning Board for the solar project. which is on the same lot, was that this house would be taken down so that the solar project was not considered an accessory to this residence. House is deteriorating, was lived in until recently. Willson provided photos and the site map on the overhead. Willson stated the wetland to the north includes a portion built as mitigation for the rotary project. An intermittent stream wraps around the cleared area from south to north. Angus stated you have asked for us to make two determinations, one is the area subject to the act and two is the work. The maps provided don't provide enough information to determine the exact area but they do provide enough to determine if the work is allowed. The work is buffer zone, and pretty far from the wetland within a cleared lawn area.

Holland stated they are expecting the Historical Commission to delay demolition for one year.

Butler moved and Clark seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to close the public meeting and issue a negative determination for the work with the conditions that erosion control be used and the Wetlands Administrator be notified in a year when the work is starting.

8:30 PM Request for Determination – Trustees of Hampshire College for demolition of a building within buffer zone to an intermittent stream at 793 West St. (Map 22D, Parcel 11).

Todd Holland again, stated that this building is known as the ARF (animal research facility). Allen

stated they used to train dogs there to believe they were sheep!! Holland stated there isn't a historical commission hold on this demolition and they plan on moving forward with it next week. Willson provided a map and photos. She showed where the intermittent stream is just to the north of the building. There is a pile of soil on site that needs to be covered with a tarp and erosion control should be installed right away because trenching to remove a utility line was already done on the stream side of the building.

Brooks moved and Allen seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-0) to close the public meeting and issue a negative determination for the work with the condition that the Wetlands Administrator be notified once the erosion control is up.

8:45 PM Enforcement Order (cont'd from 8/10/16 mtg) – Eversource Energy for filling of an intermittent stream bank off Henry St. (Map 6A, Parcel 91).

Brett Butler stated Eversource has requested to continue this enforcement hearing until the September 14, 2016 Conservation Commission meeting. Willson added we need to vote to ratify Enforcement Order #3. Willson stated we've had a few meetings regarding the salamander tunnel replacement. There was a meeting today with Eversource, Tighe & Bond, Hitchcock Ctr, Town Engineer, and product rep from company that manufactures animal crossing tunnels (ACO Polymer). It was a good conversation, Hitchcock finally made it clear what they want. Now we wait to see Tighe & Bond's design and costing to see what of the project is doable as mitigation. Commission will eventually have to put a monetary value (cap) on the mitigation. Eversource would like alternative mitigation options, salamander tunnels may be too expensive.

Clark moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0, Angus abstained) to ratify Enforcement Order #3.

Brooks moved and Clark seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-0, Angus abstained) to continue the hearing to 9/14/16 at 7:30pm.

Miscellaneous Untimed Items:

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

Adjournment

Voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 8:40 PM.

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