

**Conservation Commission Meeting
December 14, 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, Boice, Allen, Healey, Brooks, Butler

Staff: Willson

CHAIR, DIRECTOR & WETLANDS ADM REPORTS

Willson stated that Stephanie Ciccarello, Dave Z, and Ron Bohonowitz attended a ceremony in Boston where they received an award from the state electric vehicle organization. They were one of only three towns receiving the award. Willson also stated we received the Cole Property LAND Grant. We'll be asking for CPA funding and hopefully some funds from DCR to buy the property. The LAND Grant was for \$220,000, and the property may be as high as \$800,000. We also received the Division of Ecological Restoration Grant for the Fearing Brook.

Boice stated there are four Open Space Projects being submitted by the Town for CPA funds. \$30K for trail maintenance, \$350K for Cole property, \$? for Kieras property, and funds for due diligence. Presentations will be in the beginning of February and voting in March. Butler asked if trail maintenance is allowed to be funded under CPA. Boice said the CPAC will be consulting Town Counsel about that question. Willson stated the CPA webpage showed that many other towns use CPA funds for such things.

Willson stated that in the Commission's packet is a letter from Eversource notifying us of their herbicide application for next year. There is a reference to their webpage for questions on their Operational Plan. Willson stated she shared a link with the Commission to the Beacon Communities project Environmental Notification Form. She stated under the Comprehensive Permit they are using all committees and boards may provide comment, the Planning Dept has asked for the Commission's input in regard to stormwater. The ZBA hearing has opened but will continue for a while. She provided copies of Appendix F of the permit application which is a technical memorandum on stormwater and is the only thing they have provided. Willson stated it doesn't include calculations or design just promises. Angus questioned why we would require a stormwater report if under a Comprehensive Permit they don't have to meet the MA Stormwater Standards. Willson said we would simply be recommending to ZBA to ask for more details on the proposed system to show that it will work. Healey stated she

supports the project in general and we should include that in the letter. Willson will write something up and email it for Commission's review.

MINUTES

Review/approve minutes of 4-27-16, 5-11-16, & 5-25-16.

Brooks moved and Healey seconded. Commission VOTED (4-0-2, Boice & Butler abstained) to approve the minutes of 4-27-16.

Brooks moved and Healey seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-1, Butler abstained) to approve the minutes of 5-11-16.

Brooks moved and Butler seconded. Commission VOTED (5-0-1, Boice abstained) to approve the minutes of 5-25-16.

PERMITS/DISCUSSIONS

None.

Miscellaneous Untimed Items:

- Discuss & Vote on MACC Interstate Gas Pipeline Opposition Letter

Healey and Boice support the letter and feel comfortable signing it. Brooks stated he doesn't feel like he has the authority or it's the Commission's jurisdiction to speak for the Town on this issue. Healey stated she thought the letter was general enough and discusses a topic that is related to conservation. Angus stated she also doesn't think it's in our jurisdiction. Butler is comfortable supporting the protection of conservation lands but the overall support against fossil fuels feels outside the Commission's realm. Willson will contact MACC about support.

Healey moved and Allen seconded. Commission VOTED (4-2-0, Angus & Brooks opposed) to sign the letter.

- Certificate of Compliance - Mill Valley Estates

Willson stated this was the project to add ADA accessible walkways and entrances and cleanout five sedimentation basins. It was permitted in the fall of 2015. Commission did a site visit that morning and it looked fine, no impacts to wetlands, work done in accordance with OOCs. They submitted an O&M

Plan which we can refer to in the COC. Willson to look at other conditions that need to be referred to in the COC.

Boice moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0) to issue the Certificate of Compliance.

- Emergency Certificate - TOA DPW culvert replacement Meadow St.

Willson stated DPW installed two new 24” culverts after old culverts finally failed and there was a hole in the road.

Boice moved and Brooks seconded. Commission VOTED (6-0-0) to ratify the Emergency Certification.

- Education programs on Conservation land - Brett Butler

Butler stated there is a grant opportunity for up to \$10K to get 4th graders onto public lands. Asking if the Commission would support a project that would involve students going on Amherst Conservation land. There is a program in Springfield called Ecos that gets 4th, 7th, and 11th graders out into the wilderness. Healey suggested talking to the Hitchcock Ctr. Commission would support such a grant application.

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

Adjournment

Voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at 7:55 PM.