

Conservation Commission Minutes
Regular Meeting – Sept. 13, 2022, 6pm, in person
Facilitator: Grace Larson

Present for the Conservation Commission: Bruton Strange, Chair; Bob Armstrong, Grace Larson, Bob Nowak

Others Present: Mary Kay Costello, Brittany Nickerson, Deb Donaldson, Forest & Trails Committee; Janet Chayes, Michele Turre, Open Space Committee; Louise Beckett, Administrative Assistant

Meeting Convened Grace called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from August 9, and August 23, 2022

On a motion from Grace to approve the minutes of August 23, 2022, Bob Armstrong seconded; Vote: 4:0. The Minutes from August 9 will be presented for approval at a later date.

Financial Matters - Approval of invoices

Recorder Invoice – \$139.11 (\$66.88 Eversource) + \$72.23 (E. Lichter) Eversource - On a motion from Grace to approve payment of \$139.11 to the Recorder, Bob Armstrong seconded; Vote: 4:0.

Check from M. Stinson re: E, Lichter, 1101 S. Deerfield Road, \$72.23 On a motion from Grace to approve receipt of payment, Bob Nowak seconded; Vote: (4:0).

BOH/Building permits/site revue

0 Jones Corner Road – Shed and Sugar House construction – The Commission has already signed off on this but we should look at the assessors’ maps to see if there is any water issues.

Forest Cutting Plan: No plans have yet been presented.

Mail/Announcements

· Welcome Louise Beckett

Miscellaneous Matters

· Nexamp - Update on Solar farm on 1424 Main Poland Road, property owned by Sarah and Onion Newman. Bruton will address the erosion issues with Jaymie Stanton, who is the project manager from Nexamp at this site. The issues we were investigating stem from a Code Enforcement order as requested by DEP for the soil erosion from the driveway and side area that flowed into the culverts, underneath the driveway and also underneath the road that emptied into the wetland on the other side of the road. There is no signoff on the Code Enforcement, but rather it becomes part of the original NOI's (Notice of Intent) Order of Conditions that list out the conditions the project managers must comply with in order to complete the project and receive a Certificate of Compliance. The NOI officially puts a lien on the property until the Certificate of Compliance has been signed off and registered with the Greenfield Registry of Deeds. Nexamp has not yet requested the C of C and probably won't until next year when the Commission will address not only the culvert and soil erosion, but also the issues at the solar site itself.

Guests: Bruton welcomed two residents interested in joining the Commission, Brittany Nickerson and Mary Kay Costello. They were asked to submit a letter of interest to the Selectboard.

Hearings

6:10 RDA – Forest & Trails – Construct foot bridge – Fournier Forest

Bob Nowak said that using 2x6 instead of 4x6 for the footbridge doesn't seem sturdy enough due to safety concerns. Deb said that there would be maybe a 5' gap between boards. Bruton suggested having a minimum of a specific measurement between the logs. F&T also needs to maintain the foot bridge. They are asking for an exemption of an unpaved walkway. On a motion from Grace not to approve 10.02 (2)(b) 1.a - unpaved pedestrian walkways less than 30" wide for private use and less than 3' wide for public access on conservation property, Bob Armstrong seconded, all said aye and the vote was unanimous in favor (4:0). Negative 5 determination. F&T has 10 business days to appeal the decision. If they were to start prior to approval, they would begin construction at their own risk. Approved with a negative 5.

6:20 RDA – Open Space – Maintenance plan for South River Meadow

Most of the RDA involved mowing, planting of new trees/bushes, placement of signage, benches, picnic table, etc. But there was the on-going application of chemicals to the knotweed and other invasive species. Open Space has in the past requested and received approval from the Con Comm for the treatment of invasives. From what and Michele indicated, when it was first introduced, a public forum and information sent out to the abutters and all other parties that may have an interest in the treatment of invasives. David Fisher of Natural Roots, whose farm interests depend on the South River did not attend. Michele also indicated that since the treatment of knotweed does not enter the water via spraying, but rather by individual plant injection, there was no negative affect on the water quality, and the chemicals used are approved by DEP. The original paperwork for work to be done by certified sprayers from Baystate Forestry included a Certificate of Liability insuring the Town of Conway as well as the sprayer. Question was: would that Certificate be necessary again with the wording on the RDA. In recent past, the Con Comm has requested that abutters be notified when the treatment of knotweed was being proposed by individual property owners.

The wording on the approval did mention that spraying had been previously approved but did not mention the RDA from 2007. The motion to approve was for a Negative 2, meaning that the work projected would not alter the land, but we did put on a condition that the ConCom was to be notified prior to the spraying and that if a community garden was to be put in, it would need a separate approval. On a motion from Grace to approve the applicability maintenance plan for the South River, for a Negative 2, meaning that the work projected would not alter the land, with the condition that the ConCom will be notified prior to the spraying and that if a community garden is to be put in, it would need a separate approval. Bob seconded; Vote: 4:0.

Adjourn At 6:55 p.m. on a motion from Grace to adjourn, Bob Nowak seconded, Vote 4:0.