



TOWN OF PELHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Pelham, Massachusetts

Minutes for October 11, 2018

PRESENT: Dana MacDonald, Tilman Lukas, David Gross, Meredith Borenstein

The meeting was brought to order by Chair MacDonald at 7:08 PM.

Review Previous Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded that we approve the minutes of August 30, 2018. Approved unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that we approve the minutes of September 13, 2018. Approved unanimously.

The minutes for the September 27, 2018 meeting were discussed. A clarification in one item was suggested. It was moved and seconded that we approve the modified minutes of September 27, 2018. Approved unanimously.

Recap of DCR meeting scheduled for 10/11/18

Commissioner Lukas reported that he had attended the meeting, which was arranged to discuss a violation letter sent to James Harrington dated August 23, 2018 by the DCR outlining timber harvesting violations at Quabbin gate SH1. Mr. Harrington was present. He said that he had attempted to make repairs to wetland crossings during the period that rains were heavy in July and August. He eventually decided to stop. Jennifer Fish of the DCR said that he should have contacted the DCR to get their assistance. No work will be done for some time at the site. The Quabbin forester noted that all running water on Quabbin land must be bridged if it is to be crossed.

Review and approve AA letter for 14 Boyden Road

The Commission read Agent Borenstein's draft of a letter to Judith Sanders describing the site visit of September 14, 2018 to her property and the Commission's subsequent ruling. The primary finding by the Commission was that recent yard work appeared to impinge on the 100 foot buffer zone by 8-10 feet. The Commission advised that this edge of the buffer zone be allowed to revegetate and that the front gravel parking pads be removed to the owner's requirements. The Commission made some suggestions on the wording of the letter.

It was moved and seconded that the Commission approve the letter with suggested changes. Approved unanimously.

Parking sites at conservation areas

The Commission agreed that we will ask Chris Volonte from Kestrel Trust if we can meet with all the principals for three separate conservation areas to review siting and changes in parking

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sites for the different conservation areas. Included are the Keyes Farm area, the Pemberton Forest area and the Community Forest area. We will propose that the group meet on Friday, October 19, Friday, October 26 or Friday, November 2 in the early afternoon to visit the three areas. Agent Borenstein will contact Ms. Volonte with our three proposed dates and times.

Chair MacDonald reported that DPW Chief Rick Adamcek wishes to route stormwater runoff from South Valley Road to a traprock dry well beneath a renovated parking area for the Keyes Farm trailhead parking area.

Other business

Commissioner Lukas informed the Commission that he is doing work on his driveway that does not involve widening the drive, and so it is exempt from Commission jurisdiction.

Commissioner Lukas described ongoing efforts to design and construct a high density senior housing project on the current HRD property off of Amherst Road abutting Buffum Brook. A Select Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 17 at 6 PM in the Ramsdell Room will take comments from various boards that will have jurisdiction over the project if it goes forward. Chair MacDonald said that he would try to attend as will Commissioners Lukas and Gross.

Chair MacDonald reported that the ice pond at the Bray farm near Cook Road has been compromised by beaver dams. The Board of Health plans to issue a removal order for the beavers. DPW Chief Adamcek wants to wait until trapping season in order that the beavers can be harvested for pelts and not just destroyed. Once the removal order has been issued and a date has been set, the Commission will need to issue a special permit in order to allow the process to move forward.

Chair MacDonald said that he had visited the septic installation ongoing at 141 Amherst Road. He noted that the installer needs to entrench the silt fence 25-30 feet at the northwest corner of the site and that the fence needs to be backed up by coir logs to block silt migration into the small stream nearby. Agent Borenstein will contact the installer.

Chair MacDonald proposed that we pay Agent Borenstein to revise the Open Space Plan. The Kestrel Trust noted that the state requires us to have an approved plan to receive funding for conservation land purchases. The Fennessey property transfer may be held up unless we make substantial progress on the revision by Spring 2019. The Commission agreed that we will budget \$4000 from the Conservation Fund for this project, to be completed by May 31. Moved, seconded and approved.

As noted at past meetings, mosquito spray trucks were seen on Harkness Road in August. After inquiries were made, Chair MacDonald found that Mosquito spraying was not done by Pelham. Perhaps this was an Amherst project and the trucks were simply passing through Pelham.

The Commission was contacted by a contractor for Eversource Energy who want to remove a leaning dead oak tree overhanging power lines on South Valley Road. The Commission determined that the oak tree removal on South Valley Road is not in the purview of the Commission. Agent Borenstein will let Eversource know.

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There are active negotiations ongoing with the McClungs to obtain, through the Kestrel Trust, their property to add to the Community Forest parcel. In addition to the Community Forest addition, Kestrel is working on a larger project in collaboration with Cowls logging to allow solar installations in Shutesbury and Leverett with conservation restrictions and habitat preservation on other portions of the whole set of parcels. This project will allow preservation of a continuous connection from central Pelham to the Quabbin, providing a protected wildlife corridor.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted by David Gross.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Gross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more legible than the last name "Gross".