



TOWN OF PELHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Pelham, Massachusetts

Minutes for June 25, 2020

Present: David Gross, Tilman Lukas, Janice Gifford, Dana MacDonald, Richard Seelig, Meredith Borenstein

The meeting was held online via Zoom due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and state-mandated restrictions on meeting in person. The link to the Zoom meeting was published as part of the regular Commission agenda. The meeting was held under guidelines from the Attorney General and the Governor.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:04 pm.

Chair MacDonald took the roll call.

Update on Potential Enforcement at 59 Meetinghouse Road

Chair MacDonald reported that he has made no headway in determining who is the owner of record at 59 Meetinghouse Road. He proposes to table this until the next meeting.

Commissioner Lukas asked which bank is the lien holder and if there is a contact name at the bank. Chair MacDonald said that he hasn't yet found that information. Commissioner Lukas offered to find out who the contact person is so that the Commission can move forward. He noted that trash has begun to build up again at the site. The Commission agreed that the bank needs to deal with this. The Commission also agreed that it needs to contact the owner and to understand the situation at the site before we make a site visit.

Progress on Conservation Area Signage

Chair MacDonald noted that Peter and Kate Lamdin wrote to ask how things were going. He said that he hasn't yet contacted Guilford Mooring about installing signs at the Cook Road waterfall. Chair MacDonald said that he will phone Mr. Mooring about this issue. Chair MacDonald said that he also had received an inquiry from Julia Les and Gavin Myers of 100 Harkness Road about the status of a sign for the Harkness Conservation Area.

There was discussion of a Zoom meeting with the Community Garden Committee on June 23 that Chair MacDonald attended. The Garden Committee noted that they already had four signs near the garden that said that dogs must be kept on a leash in the garden area. The Committee said that they would like to have signs posted that state the town's dog bylaw. They additionally would also like a sign saying that people should pack out dog waste. The committee reported recent heavier usage of the Buffam Brook Conservation Area. Several committee members expressed the opinion that the heavy use of the Buffam Brook Conservation Area suggests that dogs should be on leash within the conservation area at all times. They suggest that signs with dog walking regulations be posted at all entry points for the conservation area. Chair MacDonald noted that the Commission can make rules for conservation areas such as leash-only for dogs, and those rules can result in tickets with fines,

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but enforcement of the rules would be difficult due lack of personnel time for enforcement. Chair MacDonald has 10 signs that say dogs must be on leash or under control as per the town bylaw that were printed earlier but not posted. After some discussion, the Commission agreed that for Buffam Falls 4 of these signs would be adequate. There was discussion of adding a second sign saying that visitors should pack out dog waste and trash. Commissioner Seelig suggested that a second sign could easily be added at a later date after the dog bylaw signs are posted. The Commission agreed that this is a sensible proposal. Commissioner Lukas suggested that the second sign say 1) carry out your dog waste and trash and 2) keep your dog under control at all times according to the Pelham Dog Bylaw.

Commissioner Lukas volunteered to get four 4X4 posts for the signs. The Commission will install the posts and signs on Sunday, July 12 at 2 pm, weather permitting. Agent Borenstein will have the signs for Cook Road and Harkness Conservation Areas printed by Amherst Copy. The signs will be aluminum and 9X12. When the signs are ready, the Commission will install them at Cook Road and Harkness.

Minutes from May 28th and June 11th

The Commission reviewed the minutes from the May 2 and June 11 meetings. It was moved to accept both sets of minutes with one name correction in the June 11 minutes. Seconded. Approved unanimously, 5-0. (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

Request for Abutters List at Tower Road

Agent Borenstein said that TRC has requested an abutters list for Cowls property near Tower Road. The Commission discussed the likelihood that there will be a proposal for a large solar array installation on that parcel that is inset into the Cadwell Memorial Forest. Chair MacDonald noted that there is a Union Army graveyard within the Cowls parcel and that the parcel is upland, though there are wetlands downslope from the parcel. Agent Borenstein reported that the Commission does not yet have a proposal from TRC. The Commission discussed issues with a major construction project on the parcel and concluded that any such construction must be restricted to the summer dry season.

It was moved to adjourn at 8:20 pm. Seconded. Approved unanimously 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by David Gross

