

Present: Elliott presiding, Dinsmore, Rand, Rice, Steeves Absent: Boeing, Masterson

4/16/2019 - Minutes

1. Public Hearings, Public Meetings & Appointments

- A. 7:00 PM - Continuation Of Public Hearing Re: Abbreviated Notice Of Resource Area Delineation Filed By Mass Composting Group For Review Of Resource Area Boundary Delineation (BVW, Riverfront, And BLSF), At 161 Nashua Road In Pepperell

Scott Smyers of Oxbow Associates, Matt Waterman of Land Tech, and Attorney Doug Deschenes of Deschenes and Farrell PC, representatives for the applicant, attended the continuation of the public hearing. Chuck Caron of Caron Environmental was hired to complete a third party peer review of the wetland delineation, which was conducted on April 4, 2019. Snow and frozen ground delayed the review/confirmation of the delineation. Caron was joined by Terrasi, Smyers, and Matt Charpentier of Oxbow at the site visit. Caron prepared a report of his findings, which he provided to the Commission and representatives of the applicant. Caron requested two revisions to the plan to the A-series wetland. Specifically, he requested the area along Nashua Road, which had not previously been delineated, show a complete wetland line and he requested a revision to expand the northern most point of that wetland, where hydric soils and wetland plants were identified. The remaining flags were confirmed to be accurate for the riverfront and BVW delineation along the river. Land Tech survey located the new flags and an updated site plan was forwarded to the Commission. On a motion from Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to issue an Order of Resource Delineation for this project as shown on the plan.

- B. 7:20 PM - Discussion Re: Ten-Year Forest Management Plan For Pepperell Springs

Liz Newlands, CR Stewardship Coordinator with the Mass Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW), requested an opportunity to speak with the Commission about the Forest Management Plan for Pepperell Springs. The original plan expired and a Forest Management Plan is a requirement of the CR. DFW holds the CR on 255 acres of the Pepperell Springs property. Newlands suggested the Commission consider opportunities to enhance wildlife habitat for species in decline, when working with the Consulting Forester to draft the Plan. Rice expressed an interest in mapping the natural communities. Consulting Forester Craig Birch, who drafted the original Plan, met Rice, Terrasi, Newlands, and Jenn Jones (DFW) on the property recently to discuss the next steps for drafting the Forest Management Plan. There has been little change to the property from a management standpoint but Birch will complete an inventory to confirm the condition of the forest. The Commission asked that the Forest Management Plan make reference to other Conservation Commission properties that are currently being "managed", such as the Heald Orchard, Nissitissit Meadows, and Keyes Parker. It was also suggested the Plan include a contingency for addressing future impacts from invasives such as Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Newland mentioned an area near the intermittent stream where there were 5-6 oaks with crown dieback, which she suggested be evaluated during the site visit for the inventory. There will be additional discussions and a site visit with Craig Birch.

2. Review Of Draft Minutes

- A. Review Of Draft Minutes Of March 5, 2019

On a motion from Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to accept the draft Minutes of March 5, 2019, as amended.

3. Conservation Administrator's Report

- A. Natural History Walk, Sunday, April 14, 2019 At 10:00 AM To Noon-Ish, Meet At The DFW Land At The Prescott Street Bridge Over The Nissitissit River (Directional Signs Will Be Posted)

The first Natural History Walk of 2019 will be held this coming Sunday, April 14. Signs will be posted to direct people to the meeting location.

4. Other Business

A. Discussion Conservation Land Rules And Regulations Update

Diane Cronin with the Historic Commission indicated the Historic Commission would like to prohibit metal detecting/digging on town-owned land unless a permit from Mass Historic has been issued. There is concern that sites of historic significance could be altered. While some Commission properties have CRs, which prohibit digging unless the Commission has granted permission and a permit from Mass Historic has been issued, most Commission properties do not address digging. Rice suggested adding digging to the list of uses which are not allowed to the Rules and Regulations. Terrasi also mentioned she was asked recently about the use of drones on Conservation Commission properties. Rice pointed out that Nissitissit Meadows and the Heald Orchard are both managed for ground nesting birds and nesting birds are threatened by hawks, which drones could be mistaken as. This could lead to birds defending their nests, resulting in wasted energy, and abandonment of the nests. Terrasi stated she would ask Dave Pease, who had mentioned the use of drones on conservation land to attend a future meeting to speak with the Commission.

5. Matters That May Be Raised That The Chairman Didn't Reasonably Anticipate

None

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Terrasi
Conservation Agent