

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 2, 2017
APPROVED: APRIL 20, 2017**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 6:45pm in the Town Hall, 13 Ayer Road, under MGL Chapter 131 §40 The Wetland Protection Act and The Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 119 the Wetland Protection Bylaw

Members Present: Paul Willard, Wendy Sisson, Jim Breslauer, Charlie Gorss and Joanne Ward

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), David Outman (HCT), Jim Lee (HCT), Marty Green (Harvard Press), Brian McClain, Libby Levison, C, Davis, Suzanne Dutkewych, Steve Finnegan, George Watkins, Pamela & David Erdos, Norm Dubuc, Pam Durrant and Frank Calmone

Executive Session

Jim Breslauer made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the possible purchase of real property, the public discussion of which could have detrimental effects on the negotiating position, only to return to the public meeting once completed. Wendy Sisson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Wendy Sisson, aye; Joanne Ward, aye; Jim Breslauer, aye; Charlie Gorss, aye; Paul Willard, aye.

At the conclusion of the discussion under executive session, Jim Breslauer made a motion to come out of executive session and to return to the public meeting. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Joanne Ward, aye; Charlie Gorss, aye; Jim Breslauer, aye; Wendy Sisson, aye; and Paul Willard, aye.

Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant Presentation – Dean’s Hill, Still River Road (Map 16 Parcel 15)

Wendy Sisson introduced and narrated the PowerPoint© presentation on the Commission’s application for a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant for the purchase of 14.28 acres of the Dean’s Hill (aka Davis land) on Still River Road. After the presentation the public raised the following questions or comments:

- Who would be purchasing the remaining 9 acres of land? Peter & Mary Dorward, who’s property currently abuts the Davis land
- This would be a good opportunity to provide education about wetlands and conservation to the general public
- Who is maintaining the orchard? Peter Dorward (Chuck Davis, son of the owners was present and stated his parents still maintain the orchard with help from Peter)
- The trees in the orchard are over 100 years old; an inventory of the orchard should be obtained from the current owners. Chuck Davis noted there were several heritage varieties present.
- How will the views be maintained in perpetuity? Through a conservation restriction

The residents in attendance supported the Commission’s effort to protect this parcel of land from development and agreed that this parcel is key to delivering the contiguous line of open space.

Ms. Sisson noted the Commission will need to work with the Capital Planning and Investments Committee, as well as the Community Preservation Committee to seek funding at a fall special town meeting. Having the support of the community during this process will assist in protecting the land.

Revisions to the 2016 Open Space & Recreation Plan

Revisions to the Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) were presented at the end of the PowerPoint© presentation for Dean’s Hill. The revision to section nine of the OSRP included

addition of action items to goals 2, 3,5,6,8 and 9 to include specific information in regards to Dean's Hill on Still River Road and the Schramm land on Sherry Road.

With no comments or question on the proposed revisions Jim Breslauer made a motion to accept the revisions to the 2016 Open Space & Recreation Plan. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Request to Contribute to Town-wide Clean-up

Brian McClain and Libby Levison were present to discuss the town-wide clean-up scheduled for the end of April. Ms. Levison explained last year supplies for this event were paid for out-of-pocket by those who organized the event. With great success last year the group is seeking to conduct the event again this year. Mr. McClain and Ms. Levison are seeking contributions from local boards and commissions to assist in the cost associated with the event. Monetary donations have been received thus far from the Board of Health and the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee. In addition, the group will be asking the Board of Selectmen to contribute as well. The event will take place April 27th-30th. Ms. Levison stated other communities will also be conducting town-wide clean-up at the same time. Nashua River Watershed Association will be asking their volunteers to assist along the river.

After a brief discussion, Wendy Sisson made a motion to donate \$100 to the town-wide clean-up. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Approve Minutes

Minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

Allocation of funds for MACC Fundamentals for Conservation Commissions

Jim Breslauer made a motion to approve the allocation of \$55.00 for a webinar offered by MACC for Joanne Ward. Wendy Sisson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Licensing of Conservation Land Update

Joanne Ward has begun reviewing the information available in regards to lands the Commission has licensed for agricultural use. Ms. Ward stated the majority of the information is for licenses that no longer exist. The members reviewed the sites that are active and who is working the land. Jim Breslauer suggested creating a spreadsheet for the Commission to review of the current lands with licenses, who is working the land and the amounts paid.

Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant Application

With the receipt of the appraisal on the Davis land, the Commission reviewed the proposed project funding. The Commission also discussed the draft conservation restriction, with some minor amendments. After a brief discussion, Jim Breslauer made a motion to amend the proposed project funding to increase the amount borrowed from \$300,000 to \$350,000 and to make the suggested amendments to the drafted conservation restriction. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Proposed Harvard Snowmobile Club Protocol

The draft protocol is still under development.

Discuss Interest in Purchasing Smith Land – Littleton County Road (Map 14 Parcel 56)

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Update on Gifts of Land

- Stone Cutter's Path – Town Counsel is drafting the necessary deed
- Still River Road – Harvard Conservation Trust is in the process of working out the details of this gift of land with the trustees for the land

- Maxant, Willard Lane – The boundaries are marked and can be reviewed once Ted Maxant is back in Town.

Letter to the Finance Committee

Liz Allard stated with the suggestion from the FinCom of having her no longer attend meetings to free up time in the office and therefore reduce the need for additional assistance, she has reviewed the current job description. Attending meetings and transcribing minutes are two functions within the description. What is not in the current job description are activities as it relates to land management. Ms. Allard suggested for the time being she would step back from those activities and allow them to be completed by the Commission members in order to free up some of her time.

After a brief discussion, Wendy Sisson made motion to draft a letter to the Finance Committee detailing the importance of having the land use administrator in attendance at meetings and continuing to perform land management functions. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Adjournment

Jim Breslauer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:54pm. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/Conservation Agent