

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 19, 2016
APPROVED: AUGUST 4, 2016**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm at the Hildreth House 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, Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson, Jim Breslauer and Joanne Ward

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Bill Scanlan (Town Planner) and Marty Green (Harvard Press)

Discuss Potential Roundabout at Ayer & Poor Farm Road

Bill Scanlan, the Town Planner, was present to discuss the potential of a roundabout along Ayer Road, which would require the taking of a portion of the conservation land known as Ayer Road Meadow. Mr. Scanlan explained a group of Town official have come together to discuss the traffic issues along the Ayer Road corridor; specifically the intersection of Ayer Road and Poor Farm Road. Three sites for locating a roundabout have been proposed; Poor Farm Road, Gebo Lane and 206 Ayer Road (aka Dunkin Donuts). The roundabout proposed at Gebo Lane would fall within the Ayer Road Meadows conservation land. The first step in removing land from conservation is for the Commission to vote to do so.

Members of the Commission agreed that the traffic at 206 Ayer Road is a much more hazardous site. Members would consider the taking of the conservation land if other traffic issues along Ayer Road are addressed as well. Mr. Scanlan said that MassDOT is concerned with traffic backing up on Route 2 if a roundabout is located at 206 Ayer Road; a roundabout in that location would not assist with the issues at Post Office and Poor Farm Road. Members felt that a rotary is an urban thing and this would further single out this area. Jim Breslauer asked if there any thought of installing a traffic light at South Shaker Road. Mr. Scanlan stated, no.

The Commission requested additional information before making a decision, including more information on pros and cons of the other two locations, the absolute need for the construction of a roundabout at all, and if need be, more information on the land that will be taken and the land that will replace the taken land.

Discuss Proposed Revised Septic Design – 187 Prospect Hill Rd, DEP#177-645

Liz Allard stated Pete Dumont has requested this discussion be continued to the next meeting in order for him to gather additional information.

LAND Grant Update – CPIC Application

A meeting this week which included Wendy Sisson, Liz Allard and Dave Outman, Director of the Harvard conservation Trust and Lorraine Leonard, the Finance Director, helped in understanding the process for applying to the Capital Planning and Investment Committee for funding support.

After a brief discussion, Wendy Sisson made a motion for the Commission to proceed with the application process for both a LAND Grant and with CPIC for the purchase of a conservation restriction for the land along Sherry Road. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

National Grid Request to Remove/Prune Trees on Conservation Land

Liz Allard explained she has been contacted by the arborist for National Grid, who is working with the Tree Warden to identify trees for removal or pruning along the roadways in Harvard that are considered a threat to electric lines. Some of the trees in question are on conservation land and

would require Commission approval for removal. Don Ritchie and Jim Breslauer agreed to meet with National Grid to review the trees in question. Liz Allard will arrange the site visits.

2016 Bird Research on Williams Land

Jim Breslauer made a motion to allow the research as described in an email from Leone Brown on May 12, 2016 on the Williams Land this summer. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

3-year Term and Annual Appointments – Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson & Jim Burns

After a brief discussion, Jim Breslauer made a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectmen the re-appointment of Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson and Jim Burns. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Land Stewardship Subcommittee Update

Wendy Sisson stated she and Phil Knoettner are looking into the use of Eagle Scouts for land stewardship projects, such as building bridges and creating signage for newly acquired properties. A mud wallow on the Clapp-Scorgie land will need to be dealt with in order to have a good connection between this land and the Willard land. Jim Burns is willing to assist the stewardship committee on projects as well. Ms. Sisson asked if any members are aware of trail heads that are in need of mowing, please let her know.

In addition, efforts with invasive control on conservation land have also assisted in the control of ticks. The invasive plant species barberry, a species targeted on the Clapp-Scorgie land, is a great destination of ticks, as mice tend to live within the thorny brush of barberry and they are carriers of ticks.

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update

Liz Allard stated the survey for the Open Space and Recreation Plan is going well with over 250 responses thus far. The survey closes May 26th.

Update on Beaver Deceivers

Mike Callahan, of Beaver Solutions, and his crew were at the Williams Pond today installing the beaver deceiver. Wendy Sisson stopped by and guided them on the proper location for the outflow pipe. Liz Allard had encouraged the Department of Public Works to go by to see the deceiver and how it will function, as well as be able to discuss further installations with Mr. Callahan.

Update to the Gifts of Land

Wendy Sisson stated the removal of the structures at 100 Shaker Road will require approval from the Harvard Historic Commission. The application for that approval has been submitted. The existing well will need to be abandoned. The Commission would prefer capping the well for future use as agriculture, however according to the Town Sanitarian you cannot leave a well abandoned for longer than two years.

Bylaw Amendment – Land Subject to Flooding

Jim Breslauer is proposing the Commission add language with Chapter 119, the Wetland Protection Bylaw that would allow additional protections of land subject to flooding (floodplains). Members agreed this is a matter the Commission should pursue. Mr. Breslauer will gather the appropriate information for the Commission to review and discuss.

Trail Ridge Extension

Upon request to extend the Order of Conditions, DEP#177-621 from Fairway Partners for the development known at Trail Ridge along Littleton County Road, Jim Breslauer made a motion to extend the Order of Conditions for three years. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Adjournment

Jim Breslauer made a motion at 8:20pm to adjourn the meeting. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/
Conservation Agent