



CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – April 8, 2019

Present: Paul Hall- Vice Chair, Bob Hidell, Bob Mosher and Jacqueline Zane, Loni Fournier- Conservation Officer

Absent: Laurie Freeman- Chair, Frank Gaul and John Mooney

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

Presentation by the Weir River Estuary Park Committee (WREPC)

Patti Coyle, Hingham Chair of the WREPC, gave an overview of the committee – its origins, mission, accomplishments, and membership. In recent years, the WREPC's activities, meetings, and membership have been in decline. P. Coyle specifically advocated for a renewed interest in and members for the WREPC.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the March 25, 2019 minutes was postponed until April 8, 2019 due to the lack of a quorum for Commissioners present at the meeting.

Certificate of Compliance

247 Gardner Street – DEP 034-1024, **continued to 5/6/19**

Applicant: Old Colony Montessori School, Inc.

Other Business

a. Request from Aquarion Water Company to install a staff gauge at 87 Leavitt Street (Commission-owned land)

The C.O. summarized that in an attempt to address seasonal low flow conditions in the Weir River, Aquarion is looking into the possibility of storing "excess" water in its Fulling Mill Pond facility on South Pleasant Street and releasing that water when conditions warrant. In order to monitor the conditions in the river, Aquarion would like to install staff gauges, including one on 87 Leavitt Street. Commissioner Hall asked about the location of an existing USGS gauge, which was confirmed to be located nearby, and why its data couldn't be used. The C.O. stated that she hadn't yet been able to connect with Steve Olson, from Aquarion, regarding more details on the project, but would ask. Commissioner Hidell stated that he didn't feel there would be any disadvantage to allowing the gauge to be installed. The C.O. recommended that the data collected be shared with the Commission.

b. Discussion of changes to Wetland Regulations: Part 1, Section 4.0 Exceptions; Part 2, Section 23.0 Tree Replacement/Site Restoration; Part 2, Section 23.1 Septic Systems

c. Discussion of establishing environmentally sensitive areas within the Wetland Regulations

The C.O. distributed written comments from Commissioner Freeman. Commissioner Hidell expressed an interest in the Commission coming to a consensus on the types of proposals that are acceptable, especially those that are located "on the edge of things," and linked his interest/concerns to proposed development on marginal land. As an example, Commissioner Hidell mentioned groundwater recharge as an acceptable, if not a mandatory, component of a proposal. The C.O. raised the Commission's "mission" (MGL c. 40 s. 8c) and encouraged the Commission to think about the types of proposals that align with their mission. For example, focusing more on water quality issues than water supply issues. Commissioner Hall suggested assembling a list of proposals that would be favorable or unfavorable in the eyes of the Commission, within its jurisdiction. The C.O. suggested that the current regulations, specifically any language related to activities in the 50' buffer zone, be used as a starting point and then modified or clarified. Commissioner Hidell also suggested reviewing the proposals that came before the Commission over the last 24 months. Commissioner Mosher expressed some concern over generating a finite list of proposals and having them challenged by applicants in the future. The C.O. reminded the Commission that their proposed changes would be reviewed by Town Counsel before they became effective, so potential problems with the revised language could be identified then.

Commissioner Hall adjourned the meeting at 8:13 PM.

Submitted, _____

Loni Fournier, Conservation Officer

Approved on April 22, 2019

Meetings are recorded. To obtain a copy of the recording, please contact the Conservation Office.