



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Conservation Commission

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Approved
12/9/2019

Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2019

Members Present: Greg Young (Chairman), Todd Helwig, Tom Beals, Diane Guldner, Wayne Baldelli, Kelley Marston

Members Absent: Justin Dufresne

Others Present: Mia McDonald (Conservation Agent), see attached Sign-In Sheet

The Chair opened the regular meeting at 7:02 p.m. and made an announcement to mute cell phones and that the meeting is being recorded for transcription purposes.

Ms. Guldner read into record the hearing notice for the application to Amend Order of Conditions DEP#247-1151, 383 Whitney Street (after-the-fact installation of lawn, and restoration of 25-foot buffer zone to a wetland resource area along with associated site work).

Mr. Baldelli made a motion to approve the October 7, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes; Mr. Helwig seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Request for Extension of Order of Conditions 249 Green Street (Map 21, Parcel 2) Dep File #247-1126 - Mr. Beals reported that there was a violation with water flowing down the road. Ms. McDonald will follow up with a site visit. Mr. Beals made a motion to extend the Order of Conditions for 249 Green Street for one year; Ms. Marston seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Request for Certificates of Compliance:

301 Bartlett Street, Map 66, Parcel 5, DEP File #247-859 – Scott Weiss (The Gutierrez Company) said the warehouse project was completed in the spring; the site is now fully established. Ms. McDonald said there have been issues with contractor trash on the slopes. The General Manager of Lincoln Property Management Company said he has plans to remediate the trash. He ordered six “No Dumping-Protected Area” signs, is incorporating the landscaping scope to include weekly trash pickup, and is working with tenants/contractors to require a cover/tarp for any open containers on the site. Ms. McDonald feels those measures are sufficient and they will be included in the ongoing conditions along with the previously required ongoing conditions. Mr. Helwig made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 301 Bartlett Street; Ms. Guldner seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

383 Whitney Street, Map 19, Parcel 59, DEP File #247-1151 –The applicant was not in attendance. Ms. Guldner made a motion to continue the public hearing to the December 9 meeting of the Commission, Ms. Marston seconded and all voted in favor; motion approved.

Vote to Accept Land Donation:

0 Green Street (Map 20, Parcel 45) – Town Counsel has ordered a title search on the property, the matter was postponed to the December meeting.

Informal Discussion:

Ben Newman – Eagle Scout Project (Chapin Canal Loop Trail) – Ben Newman, Eagle Scout Candidate and Forest Lyford, Trails Committee member, were in attendance. Mr. Newman said explained the current trail and proposed trail layout. Mr. Newman explained that the trail was constructed by a previous Eagle Scout, but directs people to the fenced rear of the wastewater pump station, and many walkers end up trespassing on adjacent private property due to the fence. The proposed trail layout wil loop walkers back to the field prior to the pump station and private property. Mr. Lyford gave the history of the canal. He believes a loop would make it more attractive for a walk around the river and an opportunity to highlight the historical features. Posts need to be installed before the ground freezes. There will be some brush clearing; no tree removal; invasives will be removed. Along the trails there will be markers directing people back to the field. Mr. Helwig made a motion that the work proposed is an exempt activity; Ms. Guldner seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Solomon Pond Update – The abutters to the pond held an informational meeting; they are trying to form a pond association. Ms. McDonald attended to tell them what the Commission could provide to the pond association, once established and public access is provided. They are considering a non-public access route and had the pond surveyed by Solitude; they are waiting for the results.

Bartlett Pond Treatment Update – Dan Clark, PhD (Open Space Committee and Regional Director for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation) and John Campbell (Chairman of the Open Space Committee and the Community Preservation Committee) were present. The Open Space Committee was asked to sign a letter of support for the Commission’s CPC application; Open Space abstained from signing. The Open Space Committee stated that they were not opposed to it, but felt they did not have enough information about the actual treatment, what species were being targeted and the long term goals for the pond. Ms. McDonald explained that it was done every three years instead of consecutively due to funding restrictions. Open Space recommended establishing long term management goals for the pond and suggested it be held at the CPA meeting. Ms. McDonald recommended it take place at the Conservation meeting and invited Dan Clark to attend to provide his professional input.

Mr. Clark introduced himself and expressed concern that the same treatment has been conducted the same way for twenty years. Mr. Baldelli said maintenance has been done every three years with lapses due to lack of funding. Mr. Clark said he wasn’t sure what the goal was or where the program was heading, but stated the goal seemd to be management of invasive species and over-abundance species. He interpreted over-abundance to mean native; it wasn’t clear what the target was. He suggested a more aggressive approach be taken. Mr. Campbell said the Commission has an account with \$64K of non-restrictive funds. Ms. McDonald said the Commission is requesting \$60K in the CPC application be placed in the Conservation fund for use to expend on vegetative management including monitoring, surveying, reporting, permitting, application of herbicide, mechanical harvest or any other method of vegetative management approved by state or federal authorities. Mr. Clark said typically with invasive species, the biggest benefit is to attack the locations where there is a recent infestation and have a goal of eradication. Mr. Baldelli said there are numerous invasives in the pond; there have been no checks and balances. Mr. Helwig (also an Associate CPC Member) said they will be asked at the CPC meeting if there is support for it and, based on the letter, the answer is no. Mr. Clark was asked if that was his opinion. He said his opinion is that if it is going to be done the way it is currently structured (every few years), it’s not worth it. It would be better to be aggressive for at least the first three years. Mr. Helwig asked if he would support it if the Commission requested more money. Mr. Clark said if the Commission is committed to doing it, it is a priority, and the goal is eradication, he would recommend the

Commission take a very aggressive position and make sure it is well funded for the first three years and then have another survey done to do some recommendations; possibly scale back at that point. Ms. McDonald said the recommendations made by the consultant are the annual approach and could be followed annually. She asked what the Commission's goals are, every three years or an annual eradication; all agreed that an aggressive annual approach is needed.

Native vs. invasives were addressed. Water lilies, water shields and coontails are considered natives. Mr. Clark said he was uncomfortable signing the application the way it was structured without the background information. He would be all for it if there was a letter summarizing what was discussed. John Campbell (Open Space Committee & Community Preservation Committee) spoke for the Committee and said they support the efforts of everything they do together joining with Conservation; therefore they would support the right way asking for more funds and believes it could be brought forth as part of the discussion around the applications; it is a better investment than what was previously requested in the CPC application. Ms. McDonald will submit a supplemental letter stating that after professional input from Dan Clark, PhD, OSC Member, the Commission proposes a long term management goal that is a more aggressive annual treatment and the Conservation Commission is requesting funding at \$27K/year for five years; the Conservation fund will be used for any shortfall. Ms. McDonald wants to bring the letter to the Open Space meeting on November 25th to request their support as part of the CPC application. Mr. Clark and Mr. Campbell agreed that the Commission had addressed the Open Space Committee's concerns. Mr. Campbell will suggest to Kathy Joubert that the CPC hold the Commission's article until January when it is all out on the table and there will be no question of support.

Amendment to Order of Conditions DEP #247-1151– 383 Whitney Street; Map 19, Parcel 59

Applicant: Julian Basha
Request: Installation of lawned area, restoration of 25-foot buffer to wetland resource area and associated site work.
Jurisdiction: Buffer zone to a bordering vegetated wetland.

Mr. Basha was not in attendance. Ms. McDonald stated that his attendance was requested and agreed to reach out and request attendance at the December meeting. Ms. Guldner made a motion to continue the matter to the December meeting; Ms. Marston seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Correspondence was reviewed.

2020 Meeting Calendar – Mr. Beals made a motion to accept the 2020 Meeting Calendar; Ms. Marston seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Mr. Baldelli commented on the construction occurring at 15 Maple Lane under a current Order of Conditions. The lot was cleared for the house that will be built which is close to the wetlands; it abuts the pond. A tracking pad is needed. Ms. McDonald said she visited the site that afternoon and noted the erosion controls need maintenance; she will schedule a site visit with the owner. Mr. Baldelli said there is a very large branch hanging over the street that will take down the wires. Ms. McDonald will let them know they have the Commission's permission to remove it.

Ms. Guldner commented that there was paving/roadwork being done on Newton Street. Ms. McDonald was not aware of any work going on; there is an expired Order on the property; she will follow-up to see if the work in the Order was completed.

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The next meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2019.

Ms. Marston made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Guldner seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.
The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Rich
Commission Secretary