

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 2016
APPROVED: NOVEMBER 17, 2016**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 7:02pm in the Town Hall Meeting Room 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, Charlie Gorss, Wendy Sisson, Jim Breslauer, Joanne Ward, Jaye Waldron and Jim Burns (Associate Member)

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Margaret Kusner, Eve Wittenberg, Libby Levison (BOH), Peter Dorward (HCT), Jonathan Bransfield, Diane Rayla, Tony Shaw and Connie Woolcock

Board of Health Request to Support Water Conservation Efforts

Libby Levison was present to represent the Board of Health (BOH), which is seeking support on advising residents to conserve water. Ms. Levison read the language as it appears on the website. Members discussed ways to get the word out such as using Nextdoor Harvard or an article in the Harvard Press. Wendy Sisson suggested a way to assist in the effort of water conservation is to have get information out there about creating and caring for healthy lawns. A talk on the matter was suggested for the spring time. Jim Breslauer asked about BOH putting out a new bylaw with fines for watering during a drought. Ms. Levison would be interested in determining what other towns are doing.

After the discussion, Jim Breslauer made a motion to support the Board of Health in their efforts to inform the residents of Harvard on the conservation of water by linking the language on the website to the Conservation Commissions page on the Town website. Wendy Sisson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Review Proposed Invasive Control for 103 Prospect Hill Road, DEP#177-638

Eve Wittenberg, of 103 Prospect Hill Road, and Jonathan Bransfield, of Bransfield Tree Company, were present to discuss the proposal to control invasive plants at 103 Prospect Hill Road within the wetland and its associated buffer zone. Mr. Bransfield stated the proposal is to control the bittersweet, porcelain berry, and buckthorn. Area A on the plan provided contains emergent plants and Area B has woody vegetation.

Wendy Sisson thinks now is not the best time of year to be completing the spraying of invasive plants. In addition, it is Ms. Sisson's experience that in woody areas it is best to cut and spray the cut stump. Paul Willard agrees that it is best to have activity on growing vegetation in order to use foliar spray on the plants. It is his opinion as well that it is too late in the season to be spraying.

Mr. Bransfield stated this is a two year process, in which you may get may get in the range of 70 - 80% result at this time year. Ms. Wittenberg asked if the Commission is opposed to the plan itself or just the timing. Ms. Sisson stated the Commission is not opposed to the control, but the timing of doing the treatment. Jim Breslauer is concerned with the spraying within the wetland and the accuracy of the sprayers. Ms. Sisson explained the process.

Wendy Sisson made a motion to allow the invasive control as proposed on the plan prepared by Bransfield Tree Company, dated 10/4/16, with notification to the office of activity. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. Jim Breslauer made a friendly amendment, that the sprayer is narrowed to a point that targets only the invasive plants. Ms. Sisson further explained the process of backpack spraying. Mr. Willard suggested adding a color marker to the spray. Mr. Bransfield

agreed to use the dye while spraying. The amendment was passed over. The vote of the original motion was unanimously in favor of that motion.

Determination of Applicability Hearing – Michael Woolcock, 24 Littleton Road, Harvard#1016-01. Opened at 7:30pm

Gift of Land – Still River Road

Liz Allard stated she had received a request of a gift of land along Still River Road. The parcel is adjacent to Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT) land. With members of HCT in the audience a discussion was had as to whether or not they would like to accept the land. Peter Dorward, president of HCT, will present it to the lands committee at their next meeting to see if there is any interest.

Update of the FY17 1st Quarter Conservation Funds

Members had not had an opportunity to review the documents and will discuss at the next meeting

Annual Budgets – Due November 1st

Members had no comments in regards to the fiscal year 2018 budgets. Paul Willard, as the chair, reviews the budgets along with the chairs of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Annual Meeting with Harvard Snowmobile Club & Harvard Conservation Trust

Tony Shaw and Mark Adams, members of the Harvard Snowmobile Club (HSC) were present to discuss use of Town conservation land trails for the 2016-17 snowmobile season. Jim Lee, from Harvard Conservation Trust (HCT), was also present. Wendy Sisson spoke about the drainage improvements made on the Clapp-Scorgie Trail by the Land Stewardship Subcommittee (LSS). In addition to those improvements the LSS is seeking to install two boardwalks where the trails come together. A discussion was had in regards to the boardwalks, making them user-friendly with snowmobile use and how to install them. Ms. Sisson stated when doing trail improvements woodchips should not be placed in wet areas; woodchips are good in upland areas where you are trying to suppress vegetation.

Jim Lee asked how to get in touch if there is an issue during the season. Mr. Shaw stated you can get in touch with him at his place of business, Toreku Tractor, or at home. Mark is also available to contact.

Margaret Kusner, a resident of Harvard, expressed concern with the use of Holy Hill by snowmobiles. The LSS has been trying to resolve the issue of the eroding trail at this location for a number of years. The primary culprit of the erosion is stormwater and the not the uses of the trail. The LSS has been trying to redirect walkers to use the new trail and snowmobiles use the other. Ms. Kusner feels the swath create by snowmobile use has been getting wider each year. Ms. Sisson stated the LSS has not found a better way for the passage of snowmobiles, but will revisit the signage along that trail. Mr. Shaw stated he would review the area for an alternative route. Mr. Shaw noted signage installed by the HSC during the season is removed, which makes knowing the location of the appropriate trail is difficult for riders.

Mr. Shaw reviewed the process of installing signage during the last week of November and first week of December. Martin Luther King Day is typically the end of the season depending on the weather. Ms. Sisson stated communication as we approach the end of the season is key, as some trails may be suitable where others are not. Mr. Shaw stated he will keep in touch with the Conservation Agent as he has in the past as far as trail conditions are concerned. Liz Allard stated she could post trail conditions on the Town site as well.

Mr. Shaw stated the HSC is working on two proposals to expand the existing trail system. The first would be into Devens by way of Old Mill Road. The Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC)

seems interested. Mr. Shaw requested the Conservation Commission send a letter of support to DEC. A discussion ensued as to where the trail would connect. A letter will be drafted and approved at the next meeting.

The second location is the newly acquired conservation land along Massachusetts Avenue. This trail would re-open the trail to the Williams Land on Stow Road. A discussion was had about the other private land that would be needed to connect this trail, which has a conservation restriction (CR) and may not allow for the use of motorized vehicles. The CR is held by HCT and will be reviewed for its allowed uses.

Address Concerns with the Annual Draw Down of Bare Hill Pond

Diane Rayla, a resident of Wilroy Avenue, was present to express her concerns with the six foot draw down of the pond. Ms. Rayla would like the Conservation Commission (ConCom) to reconsider their approval of the drawdown this year.

Jim Breslauer stated the Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee (BHPWMC) is waiting back to hear from the State with guidance. The ConCom will meet with BHPWMC in two weeks, at which time a decision may be made as to whether or not to continue with the drawdown. According to Megan Glew, of the BHPWMC, the pond will not be drawn down any further in the meantime. With that said, Wendy Sisson made a motion to continue the discussion to the November 3, 2016 meeting when additional information is available. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

LAND Grant Update

Minor amendments were made to the handout for Article 1 for Special Town Meeting (STM). Joanne Ward made a motion to allocate \$39.00 for the printing of 100 color copies of the handout for STM. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Willard Land Conservation Restriction & Trail Easement

No update was available this evening.

Update on Gifts of Land

- Stone Cutter's Path – Liz Allard has spoken with Town Counsel who has stated he has been in touch with the representative for Stone Cutter's Path and has asked, but has not received information from the home owners association. Town Counsel stated he will forward his correspondences to Ms. Allard.

Bylaw Amendment – Land Subject to Flooding

Jim Breslauer stated he had nothing new to report on this matter.

Adjournment

Jim Breslauer made a motion at 9:26pm to adjourn the meeting. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/
Conservation Agent

**Harvard Conservation Commission
Request for Determination of Applicability Hearing Meeting Minutes
Michael & Connie Woolcock, 24 Littleton Road, Harvard#1016-01
October 20, 2016**

The public hearing was opened at 7:30pm by Chairman Paul Willard under the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, Ch. 131 §40 and the Harvard Wetland Protection Bylaw, Chapter 119 of the Code of the Town of Harvard in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 13 Ayer Road, Harvard

Members Present: Paul Willard, Charlie Gorss, Wendy Sisson, Jim Breslauer, Jaye Waldron, Joanne Ward and Jim Burns (Associate Member)

Others Present: Liz Allard (LUB Admin) and

This hearing for a Request for Determination of Applicability was filed on behalf of Michael & Connie Woolcock for the construction of landscaped and hardscaped areas around the existing dwelling within the 100' wetland buffer zone at 24 Littleton Road, Harvard.

Liz Allard stated an abutter was not notified of the hearing; therefore the hearing will need to be continued. Jim Breslauer made a motion to continue the hearing to November 3, 2016 at 7:30pm. Joanne Ward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard
Land Use Administrator/
Conservation Agent

DOCUMENTS & OTHER EXHIBITS

Board of Health Request to Support Water Conservation Efforts

- Water Conservation Encouraged (www.harvard.ma.us/home/news/water-conservation-encouraged)

Review Proposed Invasive Control for 103 Prospect Hill Road, DEP#177-638

- Cathy Corning, 103 Prospect Hill Rd, Harvard, Ma, Invasive Management Proposal 10/4/16, prepared by Bransfield Tree Company, LLC

LAND Grant Update

- Article 1: Acquire Horse Meadow Knoll for Conservation Purposes, undated