

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DECEMBER 7, 2017  
APPROVED: FEBRUARY 1, 2018**

Chairman Paul Willard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm in the Town Hall, 13 Ayer Road, under MGL Chapter 131 §40 Wetland Protection Act and Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 119 Wetland Protection Bylaw

**Members Present:** Paul Willard, Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson, Carl Sciple and Mark Shaw (Associate Member)

**Others Present:** Liz Allard (LUB Admin), Jim Breslauwer, Lucy Wallace (NRWA), Peter Dorward (HCT), Tom Cotton (HCT), Jim Lee (HCT) and Erin McBee (Planning Board)

**Update Pine Hill Village, Stow Road, DEP#177-586**

Don Ritchie and Liz Allard returned to the site last Thursday to find the wetland flags in the wrong location. Ms. Allard informed the property owner that she was willing to meet on site with a representative from the R. Wilson & Associates to assist in locating the wetland flags appropriately. Members of the Commission have concerns with the wetland line considering the Order of Conditions was issued in 2011. Ms. Allard will research the file to determine what information is available in regards to the wetland delineation.

**Capital Planning & Investments Committee (CPIC) FY2019 Application Update**

Liz Allard was informed by the Town Administrator (TA) that CPIC has voted not to support the Commission's request for \$100,000 for the conservation fund. The TA stated the request for funding is now being sent to the Finance Committee.

Commission members discussed what steps should be taken to assure this funding request is on the warrant for the annual town meeting in 2018; including a citizen's petition. Lucy Wallace, the Board of Selectmen liaison to Conservation Commission, advised that as a citizen petition a funding source still needs to be determined. There is available money in the Capital Stabilization and Investment Fund; however this fund is typically reserved for expenditures having a useful life of at least five years.

The Commission requested Liz Allard obtain an official notification of CPIC's decision and the next appropriate steps that need to be taken to ensure this request is before the Finance Committee.

**Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Study and Draft River Management Plan**

Lucy Wallace, president of Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA), was present to discuss the effort by NRWA to designate portions of the Nashua River as Wild & Scenic. Ms. Wallace explained the National Park Service Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers program is dedicated to protecting nationally significant river resources through locally-based partnerships. This study was authorized by legislation signed into law on December 19, 2014. Eleven Massachusetts and New Hampshire communities are working together to craft a vision for the future of the Nashua, Squannacook and Nissitissit Rivers; consider their eligibility and suitability to be part of the National Wild & Scenic River System; and determine how these rivers should be managed in order to protect water quality and the three Outstandingly Remarkable Resource Values (biological diversity, recreation & scenic and historical & cultural).

This is a three-year process that began in January 2015, with the final draft of the stewardship plan to be completed by January 2018. Once complete, if participating communities vote affirmatively, the US Congress will be asked to designate the rivers as Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Ms. Wallace detailed the benefits of the designation, including a locally driven stewardship plan, which can be used to guide what NRWA is doing to protect the watershed, as well provide funding towards a designate stewardship committee. Funding could also be used to acquire land along the river for further protection. The designation is also a plus when applying for and obtaining some grant funds.

Ms. Wallace encouraged those present to review the Stewardship Plan, specifically those sections that reference Harvard. The Committee wants to be certain they have not missed any important details or have not misstated any details. Comments can be sent to Al Futterman at NRWA. The Committee will be seeking letters of support from the communities involved in January. Ms. Wallace asks that these letters of support be copied to the Board of Selectmen as well.

Wendy Sisson arrived at 7:51pm.

### **Discuss Potential Gift of Land – Brown Road**

Liz Allard was notified yesterday afternoon that the potential deal that would have resulted in the preservation of this land unfortunately is uneconomical for the potential donor. Ms. Allard was encouraged by the individual to reach to the property owner to determine if they would be willing to gift the land to the Conservation Commission if the Commission were to pay the back taxes that are owed. The Commission agreed Ms. Allard should pursue this potential protection of open space.

### **Approve Minutes**

Wendy Sisson made a motion to approve the minutes of October 19, 2017 as drafted. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Approve Invoices**

Wendy Sisson made a motion to approve the following invoices:

- Land Stewardship, Inc. - \$250.00
- Heritage Fields - \$17,500.00
- Mark J. Lanza - \$70.00

Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Certificates of Compliance**

Don Ritchie made a motion to issue the following Certificates of Compliance:

- 18 Cove Road, DEP#177-653
- 187 Prospect Hill Road, DEP#177-645

Carl Sciple Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Land Use Boards Meeting Update with Planning Board Member**

Paul Willard stated the Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health and the Conservation Commission do not see a need for a full-time planner; part-time planner and/or contracted planner. Erin McBee, chair of the Planning Board (PB), stated a Planner will assist in keeping the Town on task with Master Plan goals. The PB is seeking consistency with a town-employee as opposed to a contracted individual. In addition, the PB has been advised that they can not continue to fill this role under a contracted service as it has done for the past four years. McBee stated the PB is seeking full-time employment as there a number of projects they are unable to complete on their own.

The role of a Town Planner was further discussed, which is not only economic development, but also includes such activities as housing and town center improvements.

There will be a need to determine how the office is going to function with the overlapping tasks between the Town Planner and the Land Use Administrator.

### **Wetland Enforcement**

- **30 Oak Hill Road**  
Wetland violation consists of the mowing of a wet meadow. Members requested a letter be drafted detailing the allowed mowing on the property.
- **140 Old Littleton Road**  
Liz Allard spoke with the property owner last week at which point he indicated he is in the process of completing the necessary application.
- **10 Madigan Lane**  
As requested at the previous meeting a letter has been drafted explaining the activity performed on the property requires a filing with the Commission. Education material will be provided with the letter, along with a map detailing the wetlands on the property. Wendy Sisson made a motion to approve the letter as amended this evening. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Review Land Use Administrator Revised Job Description**

Liz Allard had previously explained in an email to Marie Sobalvarro how the title of Conservation Agent was dropped from the draft Land Use Administrator job description. Members had no additional comments or questions in regards to the draft Land Use Administrator job description.

### **Review & Approve Letter to DPW re: Beaver Trapping**

Don Ritchie made a motion to approve the letter, as drafted, to the Department Public Works, re: Beaver Trapping, dated December 7, 2017. Carl Sciple seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Review Offer Letter for Smith Land – Littleton County Road (Map 14 Parcel 56)**

Concerns with this land transaction have surfaced now that the Littleton Conservation Trust is no longer involved. As drafted, the offer details Sudbury Valley Trustees being the owners of the land in Littleton and the Harvard Conservation Commission owning the land in Harvard. Questions about parking and access need to be addressed before the Commission will be comfortable with allocating existing funds for this project.

### **Deer Management Update**

Wendy Sisson had some detail questions for the draft charter in regards to the membership of the committee. Ms. Sisson will continue to work on the charter for approval by the Commission within the month.

### **Potential Open Space – Woodside Road, Map 30 Parcel 14**

No news from Town Administrator

### **Licensing of Conservation Land Update**

This item was passed over

### **Update from the State Service Forester – Cruft Lane**

Liz Allard continues to work on complying information to be sent to the State.

### **Chapter 147 Wetland Protection Bylaw Regulations**

This item was passed over this evening.

### **Holy Hill Bridge Improvements**

Carl Sciple stated he and Phil Knoettner are working to improve the bridge along the Holy Hill trail that has been in need of repair for a number of years. The improvements will take place in two phases, with the first phase being that of a re-supporting effort of the bridge that is in place. The second phase will take place in the spring, which will include the replacement of existing railroad ties that are rotting.

Wendy Sisson made a motion to allocate up to \$1,000 from the Conservation Fund for the improvement to the Holy Hill bridge as detailed above. Carl Sciple seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

#### **Adjournment**

Don Ritchie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37pm. Carl Sciple seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard  
Land Use Administrator/  
Conservation Agent

### **EXHIBITS & OTHER DOCUMENTS**

#### **Conservation Commission Agenda, dated December 7, 2017**

##### **Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Study and Draft River Management Plan**

- Excerpts Draft "Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Plan", version 12-1-17
- Benefits to the our rivers, December 2017
- FAQ and map of the Nashua River Wild & Scenic Study Committee, undated

##### **Approve Minutes**

- Draft minutes of October 19, 2017 prepared by Liz Allard

##### **Approve Invoices**

- Land Stewardship, Inc. Invoice#062-2017, in the amount of \$250.00, dated November 27, 2017
- Heritage Fields Invoice # 069, in the amount of \$17,500.00, dated 2017-11-22
- Mark J. Lanza, re: Davis Land, in the amount of \$70.00, dated October 31, 2017 - \$70.00

##### **Wetland Enforcement -10 Madigan Lane**

- Draft letter to Frank Culmone & Erica Tremblay, Re: Activity within 100' Wetland Buffer Zone, dated December 7, 2017

##### **Review & Approve Letter to DPW re: Beaver Trapping**

- Draft letter to Tim Kilhart, Director, Harvard Department of Public Works, RE: Beavers Trapping, dated December 7, 2017

##### **Review Offer Letter for Smith Land – Littleton County Road (Map 14 Parcel 56)**

- Draft letter to Attorney Ray Lyons, Re: Offer to Purchase approximately 59 acre of unimproved land located on Whitcomb Avenue in Littleton and Harvard, Massachusetts, dated December 7, 2017