

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

June 12, 2012

Chairman Nadia Madden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room in Town Hall. Members Craig Auman, Bruce Easom, Marshall Giguere, Peter Morrison, Bill Neacy, and David Pitkin were present. Conservation Administrator Barbara Ganem was also present.

7:00 p.m. – Appointment Town Manager Mark Haddad

Mr. Haddad introduced the consultants working on the proposed central fire station, architect Donald Walter of Dore & Whittier and engineer John Perry of Gale Associates. Chairman of the Center Fire Station Committee, Jeremy Januskiewicz, as well as Fire Chief Joe Bosselait were present. Mr. Walter explained the proposed 18,550 SF fire station layout will include four apparatus bays with drive-through capability. Administrative offices and training facilities will be located on the first floor. He said they are about 97% complete with the design schematics and are scheduled to meet with other town boards, including the Planning Board and the Historic Commission, shortly. The goal is to have construction documents ready for bid by the end of the year. They anticipate the building process would take between 12 and 14 months.

Mr. Perry described the 11-acre parcel as farmland which is currently classified as Ch. 61 agricultural land. It was subdivided into four lots about a month ago. He noted the wetlands are more extensive than that shown on the Town's GIS mapping. Determining how sewer will be brought to the facility will take additional study and will involve a filing with the Conservation Commission. It may be gravity fed from the fire station to the existing pump station in the Public Safety Building parking area. This would run along the rear portion of the lot. Trenching or directional drilling under the wetland dividing the 11-acre parcel from the Public Safety Building are two options. The third would be to bring the sewer line down the Farmers Row right-of-way to Pleasant St. which would be 800 – 900 linear feet. This would involve work within the 100-ft. buffer zone. The goal is to do whatever makes the best sense financially for the Town.

The sellers want to assure that the first lot is developable and to that end are requesting the filing of an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation to assure a driveway can be sited 100 ft. from the wetland. M. Haddad stressed that the Town has to consider the economics of the project. A 6-in. sewer line at the rear property line would have stubs to service the three proposed house lots. The Sewer District prefers this arrangement as opposed to extending the Sewer District. It may be necessary to upgrade the Public Safety force main because of the flow analysis for the fire station which will include showers and a kitchen.

Member Giguere said “the less disturbance in the buffer zone, the better.” The Commission has seen successful directional drilling projects, including the water connection for the W. Groton Water Treatment Plant and sewer connections on Rt. 119. A trench would involve an excavation in the wetlands 3 ft. wide by 4 ft. deep. C. Auman said he preferred directional drilling as well. It is likely the right-of-way alternative would only require the filing of a Request for Determination

of Applicability because of previous alterations. B. Easom questioned whether it would be possible to keep the entry and exit pits outside the 50-ft. buffer zone. This may add to the cost, but it's likely getting the equipment to the site is the main cost. The consultants will compare the costs involved with directional drilling vs. trenching on a linear foot basis. No replication would be involved since it involves temporary disturbance.

B. Neacy reminded those present that the Commission's cost benefit analysis gives consideration to the environment. Mr. Haddad thanked members for considering the consultants' report.

7:15 p.m. – Request for Determination of Applicability continuation – Eklof/31 Ames St.

Dr. Eklof explained he was supposed to have a remediation plan ready by this date, but he has found it difficult to find someone to prepare a plan. Estimates have come in between \$3000 and \$5000, and that is out of his price range. He has recently contacted Steve Ericksen, and he identified invasives to be controlled and suggested removal and then re-planting. He asked what he will need to do to satisfy the Commission and make the situation right. He noted there is garlic mustard and multiflora rose in what was formerly a meadow. M. Giguere suggested identifying the things to be cut or controlled, over what period of time, and how the area will be maintained in the future. He recommended the planting of shrubs such as viburnums and highbush blueberry, and the plan should identify the number to be planted.

Members suggested preparing a sketch showing what might be save, i.e., the tiger lilies and ferns and where mowing will be done. D. Pitkin suggested planting shrubs between the meadow and the wetland, and N. Madden added that shrubs would also protect against erosion along the stream. Members suggested using a plot plant or superimposed layers on the GIS plan. Upon a motion by C. Auman, seconded by D. Pitkin, it was

VOTED: to continue the meeting for the Request for Determination of Applicability for 31 Ames St. to the July 10, 2012 meeting.

Members advised Dr. Eklof to get the plan in before the meeting.

7:30 p.m. – Notice of Intent – Prest/6 Weymissset Ave. DEP#169-1083

Matt Bombaci of GPR, Inc. submitted the abutter notification cards. The NOI covers an upgrade of the septic system and the re-location of a well pump. Two 25 ft. trenches will be constructed 79 ft. from the edge of lake. A mini-excavator will be used to dig the well pump pit about 4 ft. deep. As a result of meetings with the Health Agent, the septic system will actually be located a little further from the lake, and Mr. Bombaci agreed to provide an updated plan. C. Auman recommended that the trees that are to be removed be accurately shown on the plan, such as the 18 -20 in. diameter oak, not a 6 in. maple. Mr. Bombaci thought there were 3 trees to be removed in total. The old septic tank will be pumped, crushed and backfilled in place. There has to be an offset between the suction pump in the basement and the leaching field so the suction pump will be moved and pressurized from pump to house. N. Madden noted the owner should file for a Ch. 91 license for the dock. Upon a motion by B. Neacy, seconded by P. Morrison, it was

VOTED: to close the hearing for DEP#169-1083 for 6 Weymissset Rd.

7:45 p.m. - Ch. 61 recommendation – Gilson/Dale Lane

Attorney Bob Collins and his client, Edward Juskalian, were present to discuss the proposed removal of a section of Jodie Gilson's property from Ch. 61 tax classification. Mr. Collins explained that the frontage along Dale and Worthen Lanes was bought in a separate transaction, and this land was not chapter land. The parcel to be removed from Ch. 61 is actually landlocked and is not adjacent to existing conservation land although one corner touches the Groton Conservation Trust Reynolds parcel at a point. Mr. Juskalian has agreed to a restriction through his negotiations with Natural Heritage under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. Mr. Collins pointed out that to buy this property would not be a worthwhile use of municipal resources as it is landlocked without access.

Thomas Gibbons, attorney for Jodie Gilson, explained his client has worked hard to maintain her land in agricultural use after the collapse of her greenhouse the previous winter. She needs the sale in order to regain her economic position and continue her business. If the transaction is delayed, it could jeopardize her business. He indicated the land has been in chapter classification since the early 1980's. B. Easom pointed out the Town has made an investment in this real estate through giving them a tax reduction. Town Assessor Rena Swezey was present and estimated \$15,000 may have been saved in taxes, but there is a roll back expense of between \$8000 and \$9000 for the property that is to be removed.

Mr. Easom questioned whether the agreement between the buyer and seller includes clauses and contingencies that effectively prevent the Town from exercising its right of first refusal. Mr. Collins said Ms. Gilson purchased the frontage along Worthen and Dale two years ago, but has not added that land to Ch. 61 classification. Mr. Gibbons noted she will continue to own 25 acres after this parcel is subdivided out. Ms. Swezey stated an owner must have at least 5 acres to qualify for chapter classification, and she understood the frontage land was to be classified under Ch. 61.

Mr. Collins assured the Commission the purchase and sale agreement was not structured in a way to circumvent the right of first refusal. The Town would have to meet the purchase price. P. Morrison noted the conversion is occurring because the buyer is interested in that particular parcel. He maintained the Commission is not here to get involved in tax law, but to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Auman commented this parcel is not on the Commission's 2001 or current priority list.

Bob Lotz (163 Indian Hill Rd.) said he has attended several meetings on this matter and said he certainly supports Ms. Gilson's agricultural efforts and had stored plants for her during the greenhouse collapse and also made a significant cash contribution. Nevertheless he thought it important to preserve hilltop viewsapes. It will be necessary for the applicant to get a special permit for a hammerhead lot, an Order of Conditions from the Commission, and there will be clearing around the house except for the land subject to the restriction. He questioned what could happen with Mr. Juskalian or another owner in the future. If there is a change in the limit of disturbance, the applicant would be required to come in for an amendment. Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Neacy, it was

VOTED: to not recommend the purchase of this property to the Board of Selectmen.

The vote passed by majority with B. Easom voting in the negative.

8:00 p.m. – Appointment Boy Scout Jesse King

Mr. King explained he is a life scout and wishes to do a service project at Gibbet Hill as part of becoming an Eagle Scout. He outlined major components of his plan including a kiosk showing the history of the castle and a description of the location. He noted many visitors to the site know nothing of the history. He is also considering several benches or tables and would like Commission input on how to proceed.

P. Morrison thought descriptive signage at the castle would be very useful to put on display. It could include information about General Bancroft and the acquisition of the Conservation Restrictions. He thought Bill Conley would be able to provide more information on the history. C. Auman suggested consulting the Groton 350th book, the Historical Society, Mike Roberts, and Steve Webber, the owner of the property. He advised considering history from the time of Native Americans through the Webber purchase. It could include photographs and old postcards as well.

Members suggested visiting kiosks at the Rail Trail and Surrenden Farm and reminded Mr. King he would need the landowners' permission to do any work on the area. It is also important to read the Conservation Restriction for the property. N. Madden thought the project was received enthusiastically and suggested careful consideration be given to the placement of benches or tables because of the need to keep the trail mowed. Tom Callahan is another resource as he has written a thesis on Gibbet Hill. Trails Committee member Joachim Preiss indicated he would work with Mr. King and asked where the kiosk would be placed. He urged consideration of a sign on Rt. 40. Commissioners wished Mr. King good luck with his project.

8:15 p.m. Interviews with potential candidates for the Conservation Commission

Rena Swezey submitted a letter of interest to the Commission. Member Morrison noted that the Commission meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, and these meetings are preceded by Saturday site walks. M. Giguere said Commissioners are also involved in other activities such as stewardship, forestry, and serving on the Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Swezey said she has previously served on the Commission for about 8 years. There are a lot of big projects proposed for the lake area, and R. Swezey thought the lake needs a voice on the Commission. She lives on the lake and is willing to do whatever is required. M. Giguere commented Ms. Swezey's participation on the Commission preceded the implementation of the Bylaw. Land management tasks such as trail improvement are another aspect of Commission responsibilities. The majority of Commission time is expended in the adjudication of the Wetlands Protection Act and Bylaw. The development of an Open Space & Recreation Plan and the preservation of land are other interests. Members asked Ms. Swezey how she would balance the removal of lands from the tax rolls with being an advocate for open space.

B. Easom thought Ms. Swezey could be a great resource for the Commission as a lot of our work does center on the lake. He thought local knowledge could be helpful, particularly as we consider sewerage the Lost Lake/Knops Pond area. Ms. Swezey said she has a tight tank and is in favor of public sewer. She believes assessors' standards should be used to determine whether a lot is buildable or not. N. Madden mentioned the severe weed problem at the lake, and Ms. Swezey replied that home values at the lake were at a peak two years ago, but lately people are filing for

abatement because they can't swim in front of their properties. She noted the chemical application done several years ago was very successful. Many other towns have successfully treated their lakes with herbicides, including Harvard and Shirley. She felt the weed harvester makes things worse as it just mows the weeds and pointed out the Town is losing a valuable resource area. Commissioners thanked her for signing up to serve on the Commission. Ms. Swezey said she felt she had balanced serving as assessor in Carlisle during her previous stint on the Conservation Commission.

Another candidate, *Cindy Swezey*, said she is very aware of the time commitment required to serve as a Commissioner. Attending the meetings of other Town boards, as well as Town Meeting, is part of the work. She stated she is a graduate of the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture with a degree in horticulture. She also completed studies in environmental science and has worked with the state for 20 years in the identification of endangered plant species. P. Morrison pointed out that invasive plants are a major concern on conservation lands, and Ms. Swezey said it would be very difficult to make them disappear but some level of control is possible. Multiflora rose has become embedded in our landscapes and out-competes our native species. Controlling weeds in the lake is also an issue. Ms. Swezey indicated she has taught at the New England Wildflower Society and recommended a mixture of approaches to getting rid of invasives. Herbiciding is not appropriate in every instance, and you may get rid of *cabomba* in one area of the lake only to find it crop up again in another area. Other invasives continue to work their way northward, and it's important to be watchful. There has to be a balance between encouraging native plants and managing invasives. Monitoring, at least twice a year, the area where boats are launched. Ms. Swezey stated there should be a monitoring program in place, but there is nothing other than the weed harvester. With no follow up management plan, just putting in a lot of chemicals is not going to work.

Ms. Swezey pointed out there are several other Great Ponds in the Town, including Whitney Pond and Martins Pond, the shore line of which is mostly private with no public access. Migrating birds can bring in seeds at any time, however, and there needs to be a management program for each of the Great Ponds. Member Giguere noted the Great Ponds Advisory Committee plans to approach the Board of Selectmen about submitting a Notice of Intent. Septic systems in the buffer zone also play a part in the nutrients entering the lakes.

C. Swezey said she has studied soils and plant materials for most of her life. She urged the Commission to soften things a bit and to work together more. She admitted it has been hard to get to a consensus in the 7 years she has been on the Great Ponds Advisory Committee. C. Auman commented he had been an associate member when Cindy was formerly on the Commission, and he felt the Commission could use her skills with wetland plants, soils, and delineations.

B. Easom thought C. Swezey had impressive credentials and would complement the Commission's make up. He felt it was important to have people with different strengths. Ms. Swezey indicated she would want to read up on the Bylaw and Regulations. B. Neacy thought she would make an outstanding Commissioner.

John Smigelski explained he has a BS in agriculture and has been a life time resident of Groton. He acknowledged he has a lot to learn but felt his perspective could add to the Commission. P. Morrison said there are opportunities to learn more through the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions. B. Neacy thought agriculture is important to the Town. Mr. Smigelski said he has brought back The General Field which is a “body of his work”. He felt the Commission could benefit from an agricultural point of view, and an example is the siting of the fire station. He did not think Groton should put municipal buildings on prime agricultural soils. Members pointed out the Commission did not make that choice.

Mr. Smigelski acknowledged he licenses land from the Commission and wondered if this would pose a conflict of interest. Selectman Peter Cunningham was present and advised, in order to avoid a perception problem, filing a notice with the Ethics Commission and the Town Clerk. B. Easom acknowledged Mr. Smigelski served on the Agricultural Commission and agreed with him on the siting of the fire station on active farm land. He thought it would be great to have an agricultural voice on the Commission and asked what he would do to support local agriculture in the Town. Mr. Smigelski responded “I would have to mull things over.”

B. Neacy said the Commission has different properties that we would like to see in agriculture. M. Giguere cautioned that Article 97 makes it difficult to manage land in the long term, but we do have short term licenses which can be difficult for the farmer. He noted that Commissioners are also involved in the Great Ponds Advisory Committee, forestry, stewardship, conservation restriction monitoring, and other activities. Mr. Smigelski said he would find the time to participate in Commission activities. He acknowledged there is a steep learning curve, and Mr. Giguere said there are resources through the MACC handbook and the Wetlands Protection Act and Regulations themselves, as well as the Bylaw and Regulations that explain what authority the Commission has. Mr. Smigelski said he was willing to do things other than just sit on the Commission. Members mentioned much of the work is very routine, such as the review of septic systems and pools, and thanked all of the candidates for coming in for interviews.

Chairman of the Groton Lakes Association Art Prest announced the Commission needs a member who lives on the lake such as Rena Swezey. While invasives covered 15% of the lake in the 1990’s, that number has risen to 58%. It is likely to rise still further this summer because there was no winter ice pack. He maintained the resource is dying due to the invasive weeds, and this could impact the value of homes by as much as 20%. Mr. Prest said the Commission’s help is necessary to restore the lake. The issue of invasives has been addressed with drawdowns, herbicides, weed harvesting, and benthic barriers. He urged the use of Sonar which is an herbicide which has been successfully used in Sandy, Flanagan, and Spectacle Ponds. In fact, in Ayer it is the Conservation Commission that is driving the herbicide effort. A. Prest said the bridle shiner is no longer present in the lake, and Natural Heritage is doing a DNA analysis to see if there are any other endangered species in the lake. He invited the Commission for a boat ride to view the condition of the lake.

An advertisement for agricultural management of the field at the O’Neill Conservation Area appeared in the May 25, 2012 edition of the *Groton Herald*. Lisa Wiesner submitted a written proposal and was present to answer Commission questions. She thanked the Commission for its support. Also present was Jean Nordin Evans who distributed copies of a letter submitted to

abutters. L. Wiesner said she has spent 1½ years exploring the potential for a community garden on O'Neill Way. Her proposal is geared toward the neighborhood with an emphasis on education, cultural enhancement, and community building. She acknowledged she had the misperception that we had the general approval of abutters, and she feels terrible about the lack of communication. Going forward she would like the activity cleaner and more inclusive. Jean Nordin Evans added she would like to see the O'Neill Way and condo neighbors come together to grow food, flowers, and make honey, and she is optimistic and willing to put work into the project.

Member Easom asked if there had been any changes since the last time the proposal was presented, and Ms. Wiesner indicated she has a new awareness of neighborhood concerns and the need for consensus and collaboration. She has become more humble about the whole thing, but is hoping to build support and community. She contacted other towns managing agriculture on conservation land and understands there has to be liability insurance. She has mowed the field twice. D. Pitkin asked if she is still interested in licensing the land. N. Madden clarified that there have been no changes since last proposal. L. Wiesner emphasized that every aspect is about consensus from the Commission and the neighbors who want to take part. P. Morrison pointed out the land has previously been in agriculture and has lain fallow, and this would be an opportunity to get things growing again.

M. Giguere felt that it could be beneficial to the community and has previously been farmed, but he has concerns about Article 97, the licensing process, and the wetlands on site. B. Ganem read an excerpt from the deed to the property: "Said real estate is conveyed to said Town under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 40 s. 8C as it may hereafter be amended and of Amendment Article 49 of the Massachusetts Constitution to be managed and controlled by the Conservation Commission of the Town of Groton as conservation, open space and passive recreation land for the promotion of the natural resources and for the protection of the watershed resources of said Town." Town Counsel David Doneski has cautioned about the interpretation of agriculture as a promotion of natural resources but concedes organic techniques may be acceptable. M. Giguere expressed concerns about the proposed structures and parking area along Rt. 119. Ms. Wiesner felt that an arbor would be necessary to allow people to rest in the shade, and she estimated there could be between 15 – 20 cars. DPW Director Tom Delaney would have to weigh in on the parking. Members estimated there could be 10 garden plots, and L. Wiesner added they would use a coop-based system for chickens, and include an orchard as well as herb and medicine gardens. It is essential that the different purposes be integrated so that we can provide a demonstration or experimental area. The long term viability of the project will depend on having an integrated system.

C. Auman expressed concerns about the abutters to the O'Neill Way Conservation Area as this is essentially their front lawn, and it should be a positive visual experience. Abutter Bill Townsend (10 O'Neill Way) submitted a letter on behalf of the neighborhood. He stated he had just become aware of this project recently, and he appreciated the letter Lisa Wiesner sent to the neighbors. Nevertheless, he indicated he believed the project is out of scale for the land. There are a lot of activities to be squeezed in, and he was not sure it follows the intent of agriculture. Mr. Townsend pointed out Rt. 119 is very busy, and there are certain setbacks that must be addressed. He worried there would be parking on the cul-de-sac. There are wetlands present, but

there is no water source because wells are not allowed because of Conductorlab. Other concerns are long term maintenance and the provision for a bond if restoration is necessary. There are liabilities involved, including involving children near a busy highway, the presence of livestock, and beehives.

He questioned whether this type of project qualifies as agricultural management restoration which he thought emphasized the growing of hay. This project appears to be more recreationally oriented. C. Auman said the license can be modified in such a way that could be more acceptable. P. Morrison mentioned that the Commission owns the land and is ultimately responsible for how it is managed. He noted Groton is a right-to-farm Town, and we want to keep it that way. This is not the first time we have tried it on conservation land as we have developed licenses for individual properties that are revocable, and the Commission has the ability to control what goes on there. The Commission is open to a lot of possibilities. It is not viable as a hay field because of the size because it small size does not make it economically valuable. Soil amendments could be added to improve the site for other crops. At this time, the Commission does pay to maintain the property.

A 15-year resident Laura Pollard (10 O'Neill Way) asked about the governance process as this does affect her front yard. P. Morrison said the Commission typically does site walks twice a month and does check on activities on conservation lands. There would be close oversight by members. There is the potential for participant in the community garden to reclaim the land, have a diversity of activities, and use it as a communication tool for teaching. M. Giguere said the governance is through an agriculture license which specifies what can be done on the property. The Commission would make sure the licensee complies, and the license could be revoked at any time.

B. Easom cautioned that the details would be laid in the license agreement. He did not want to be a party in setting up a battle between homeowners and the agricultural community. N. Madden commented that it is valuable for the Commission to get input tonight, and P. Morrison said this is really the first public meeting on the project, and it is the beginning of the public process.

Michael Leisten (8 O'Neill Way) felt this project seems over aggressive for this small a parcel. He is in favor of community gardens, but there are a lot of other activities proposed. He expressed concerns about increased traffic, safety concerns, and the presence of children in a busy area. It's one thing to have a simple garden with flowers, but he felt a more consolidated plan for funding should be included. The proposal should be reasonable and consider property values, neighbors, and whether these activities fall more under parks and recreation.

Jeff Pollard (10 O'Neill Way) commented abutters must be notified by certified mail for wetland filings, but yet abutters had no way of knowing of this proposal. He stated he was offended by how things were done. There is no game plan, and chickens are likely to attract predators. He indicated he was a proponent of leaving the wildflower meadow as it was, and he was offended that he was not asked for his thoughts before the proposal was submitted.

Bill Townsend (20 O'Neill Way) also expressed dismay that abutters were not involved in the process. Members noted agenda items are posted at Town Hall as well as on the Town web site.

Members said the advertisement appeared in the *Groton Herald* where just about all public notices are posted for the Town. Members of the neighborhood asked if there was to be any commercial gain associated with carrying out this project.

Michael Leisten (8 O'Neill Way) complained there was no initial notification of abutters other than children coming around with flyers. Members explained the notification in the *Herald* was the official notification. Abutters maintained they were not informed properly of what was proposed. P. Morrison noted it has been a fallow field that costs the Town \$180 to mow, and the Commission's goal is to have it managed in a manner that is revenue neutral or will allow the Town to make a little money. It is beneficial to have agricultural activities on the property. Hay, however, is not a viable crop. B. Neacy informed those present that the Commission is interested in the promotion of agriculture. C. Auman pointed out that a community garden supplies food locally and supports sustainability.

Monica Hinojos, Executive Director of Three Rivers Arts, indicated her group, a non-profit educational organization, would fiscally support the project, and there is no financial gain as they are a non-profit. Michael Leisten asked how many classrooms, how many children, what kind of licensing, and how many cars would be involved. P. Morrison said this was something that could be addressed in the licensing. B. Easom added it would need an affirmative vote from the Commission to flesh out the agricultural license. L. Wiesner said it is appropriate that everyone has concerns, and she would like to find a way to live in harmony with an open process. The gardening and farming has to be integrated and she was willing to offer additional information to flesh this out. The goal is a big picture, integrated approach whereby the system does not need inputs from the outside.

M. Giguere commented it may sound scary because people don't know what is going on. Education is necessary for the abutters and the public alike; residents want to see the plan and hear it explained on the ground. There is a public outreach piece. He felt it best to table discussion at this point and have a neighborhood meeting in the field. Bob Evans (18 O'Neill Way) said he could understand the concerns about aesthetics of the field, but Lisa Wiesner has over 20 years of experience in gardening, and the field will be beautiful. Ms. Wiesner said she practices permaculture which is a more informed decision-making process for gardeners. She expressed hope that the licensing process and full disclosure and transparency will help. A date of July 7, 2011 at 8 a.m. was agreed upon for the neighborhood meeting which will include abutters and the applicant. Michael Leisten said it is important that we all hear the same thing. This will be followed up with a Commission discussion at the July 10th meeting. In the interim, members recommended that L. Wiesner not continue managing the property in any way.

C. Auman made and motion, seconded by D. Pitkin to approve the minutes of May 22, 2012. In discussion on the minutes, questions came up about the vote on nominating Marshall Giguere to the Bylaw Review Committee. Some members recalled there were two votes. B. Easom agreed to review the wording, and the vote will be delayed until the next meeting.

Commissioners agreed to postpone reorganization until such time as the new members have been appointed by the Board of Selectmen. N. Madden said she would not be able to continue as Chairman of the Commission.

Member Morrison had photographs of 7 Hemlock Park Dr. in which the bare slopes in the front yard appear to be burying a culvert under Rt. 40 and silting the wetlands across the street. He thought the Commission should issue an Enforcement Order requiring haybales be installed. B. Ganem will visit the site tomorrow to follow up.

In discussion on the candidates to recommend to the Selectmen for the open positions on the Conservation Commission, upon a motion by D. Pitkin, seconded by C. Auman, it was

VOTED: to unanimously recommend the appointment of Marshall Giguere.

After further discussion and a ballot, upon a motion by B. Neacy, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to recommend, in the following order, the appointment of Cindy Swezey, Rena Swezey, and John Smigelski.

(At 10:50 p.m., members Neacy and Madden had to leave the meeting.)

The Williams Barn Committee is proposing a new sign at the Sorhaug Woods Williams Barn property. N. Madden commented it should have some mention of the Conservation Commission as we are the owner. Upon a motion by D. Pitkin, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to approve the sign for Williams Barn as submitted.

The motion was approved by a majority vote of D. Pitkin, M. Giguere, and B. Easom voting in favor, and C. Auman and N. Madden voting in the negative.

The Open Space & Recreation Plan draft is nearing completion. B. Easom asked to include a comment about what has been lost in the way of priority parcels since the 2005 *Plan* was done, and B. Ganem replied that most of the building that has taken place involved build-out from previously approved subdivisions, both of which involved significant donations of land for conservation purposes.

In reviewing the proposed replacement sign for Sargisson Beach, members noted the “No Drinking” should be changed to “No Alcohol”. They also questioned the appropriate size for the lettering and the look and feel of the different materials.

(N. Madden left at 10:55 p.m., but a quorum of members remained.)

Anna Vega of 394 Lowell Rd. has inquired whether the Commission may be interested in purchasing a portion of her 2.77 acre lot that straddles Martins Pond Brook. Commissioners agreed to take a look at the lot during the next Saturday site walks.

Members agreed that the work done by the Highway Department at Petapawag Boat Launch improved conditions greatly. Consideration may have to be given to doing a targeted management plan for the treatment of invasives and poison ivy.

An Executive Session had been under consideration, but those present felt that full Commission membership should be present for that discussion.

Commissioners reviewed the plan submitted by Erich Garger for the construction of a retaining wall under a Request for Determination of Applicability filed in 2009 for 46 Redskin Trail. Members also reviewed photographs of existing conditions at the site as of May 22, 2012. Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by D. Pitkin, it was

VOTED: to issue an Enforcement Order requiring the filing of a new, after-the-fact Request for Determination of Applicability by the Commission's next meeting with fines of \$50 on the first day, \$100 on the second day, and \$300 for the third and subsequent days if the filing is not received by June 26, 2012.

The vote was unanimous.

C. Auman and B. Easom indicated they planned to attend the Board of Selectmen meeting on June 18, 2012. Mr. Easom thought the meeting should be posted for the Conservation Commission in case we have four or more Commissioners present. Members decided to read the update on land management tasks individually, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara V. Ganem
Conservation Administrator

Approved as drafted 6/26/12.

EXHIBITS

Document	Source	Date
Request for Determination of Applicability	Eklof/31 Ames	Filed 3/8/12
Notice of Intent	Prest/6 Weymisset Ave.	Filed 5/14/12
Ch. 61 removal letter from Robert Collins, Esq.	Gilson/Dale Lane	6/7/12
O'Neill Way Conservation Area file	Wiesner proposal Letters from abutters	Various
Sign application	Williams Barn Committee	Received 5/9/12
Request for Determination of Applicability/Enforcement Order	Garger/46 Redskin Tr.	Filed 4/28/09