

## GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### Minutes

Monday, December 22, 2014

Chairman John Smigelski called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. with Susan Black (Clerk), Rena Swezey, Marshall Giguere, Mary Metzger, and Bruce Easom present. Peter Morrison (Vice Chairman) was absent. Conservation Administrator Takashi Tada was present.

Taking up General Business, the Commission reviewed the draft Order of Conditions (OOC) for 250 Hill Road, septic repair project, DEP #169-1119. The public hearing was closed on 12/9/2014.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to issue the OOC under the Wetlands Protection Act for 250 Hill Road, DEP #169-1119.

The vote was unanimous.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to issue the OOC under the Groton Wetlands Protection Bylaw for 250 Hill Road, DEP #169-1119.

The vote was unanimous.

On the issue of Petapawag Canoe Launch, T. Tada provided updated information from the Town Accountant on the money available in the Sargisson/Canoe Launch Gift account. Previously the gift account included a donation intended for aquatic weed control in Lost Lake/Knops Pond. The Town Accountant has now created a separate account for the weed control, which is coordinated by the Groton Lakes Association. Therefore the current budget of the Sargisson/Canoe Launch Gift is \$6,974.29. Michelle Collette, Land Use Director, recommended that the Commission try to distribute this money equitably between Sargisson Beach and Petapawag Canoe Launch. At the last meeting on 12/9/2014, the Commission authorized up to \$4,000 to cover the Petapawag Signage Pilot Study proposed by Michael Roberts.

Upon a motion by R. Swezey, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED: to amend the Commission's approved budget for Mike Roberts' Signage Study to \$3,500.

The vote was unanimous.

Also pertaining to Petapawag Canoe Launch, T. Tada reported that the Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA) and the office of Congresswoman Niki Tsongas are seeking permission to hold a press event at the canoe launch on Monday, January 12, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. The event relates to the Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Study Act.

Upon a motion by M. Metzger, seconded by R. Swezey, it was

VOTED: to approve the request to hold a press event at Petapawag Canoe Launch.

Moving on to Sargisson Beach updates, T. Tada reported that the bank stabilization and restoration work at Sargisson beach is going well, according to John Giger of the Sargisson Beach Committee (SBC). R. Swezey reported that the Town Manager's budget review committee requested full funding for Sargisson Beach operations in FY16, including lifeguards through the YMCA of Greater Lowell. The SBC will notify YMCA if the budget is approved by the Board of Selectmen.

On the topic of Surrenden Farm West, M. Giguere recapped the site walk conducted on 12/15/2015 by the Commission (J. Smigelski, M. Giguere, and T. Tada) and Patricia Huckery of MA Department of Fish & Game (DFG). DFG holds the Conservation Restriction on the property. Ms. Huckery indicated a willingness to reconsider the seasonal mowing restriction placed on the hayfields. The mowing restriction favors grassland bird breeding, but makes the field less viable for sustained agricultural use. The Commission also needs to revisit the annual agricultural license to give the farmer, Roy MacGregor, more incentive to make improvements to the field.

M. Giguere also reported that they observed encroachment in one corner of the property by the abutters, John and Penelope Maynard. The Maynards installed a new fence gate along the eastern boundary that clearly extends beyond the visible corner boundary survey marker. It appears the gate swings open in such a manner that the Maynards had to expand the fence line. However, M. Giguere and B. Easom revisited the site with a high-accuracy GPS and it also appears that portions of the mowed field are on the Maynards' side of the property line. The Commission should attempt to locate and mark the actual field boundary.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by R. Swezey, it was

VOTED: to issue a letter to the Maynards requesting relocation of their fence gate onto their side of the boundary marker.

Moving on to other General Business, M. Metzger mentioned she is working on a brief synopsis of the Commission's work to be presented at the upcoming Conservation Forum on February 11, 2015. She will provide a draft for review.

Upon a motion by B. Easom, seconded by R. Swezey, it was

VOTED: to authorize J. Smigelski, M. Metzger, and T. Tada to finalize the Commission's presentation for the Conservation Forum.

The vote was unanimous.

M. Metzger also mentioned that planning is underway for the “Connecting Communities” trail event in Groton to be held on May 31, 2015. These events are organized by the Montachusett Regional Trails Coalition and Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area.

T. Tada mentioned a request submitted by attorney Bob Collins, on behalf of Linda Iovino, to consider installation of an irrigation well at 583 Lowell Road, as a minor plan change to the open Order of Conditions (DEP #169-1075) issued for the garage construction. T. Tada suggested that the installation of a well typically requires special conditions for drilling, dewatering, and erosion controls, plus references to Board of Health approvals. Therefore the filing of an RDA seems appropriate in this case. Commissioners agreed and T. Tada will inform Mr. Collins.

There being no further business, it was

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

The vote was unanimous.

Notes taken by

Takashi Tada  
Conservation Administrator

**Exhibits on file at Conservation Commission Office:**

1. OOC, Septic Repair, 250 Hill Road, DEP #169-1119

**Approved 2/10/2015**