

## GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

John Smigelski (Chairman) called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Peter Morrison (Vice Chairman), Susan Black (Clerk), Eileen McHugh, and Marshall Giguere present. Bruce Easom participated remotely by speakerphone; therefore all votes were by roll call. Conservation Administrator Takashi Tada was present. S. Black read the public hearing/meeting notices at the indicated times.

Beginning with General Business items, the Commission reviewed draft meeting minutes from 1/12/2016. There were no comments.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by S. Black, it was

VOTED: to approve the meeting minutes from 1/12/2016, as written. The roll call vote was unanimous.

The Commission approved payment of an invoice from *The Groton Herald* for legal notices, in the amount of \$90.00.

On the topic of Land Management updates, T. Tada said the next meeting with MassWildlife to discuss the Resource Management Plan (RMP) for Surrenden Farm will be on 3/1/2016 at 10:30 AM. M. Giguere recapped the previous RMP discussions held on 1/22/2016. The state ornithologist, Drew Vitz, has requested that the current haying restriction on the Management Zone 2 (no mowing before July 15<sup>th</sup>) remain in effect to allow for successful bobolink breeding. MassWildlife also would like to see the path through the middle of field closed off during the bird breeding season. This can be accomplished by placing signs and not mowing the pathway. M. Giguere said he tried to push back somewhat and reiterated the agricultural imperative of Management Zone 2. MassWildlife will look into ways to provide financial incentive and/or compensation to the farmer for the crop value lost due to the delayed mowing. MassWildlife also indicated a willingness to perform needed maintenance on the hedgerows in the middle of the hay field. Chairman Smigelski emphasized the current mowing schedule is not a viable arrangement for the farmer. He said he would provide some of his harvest data from the neighboring General Field to MassWildlife for comparison. He will also try to be part of the next round of discussions.

E. McHugh provided an Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee update. She said the committee issued permits for GELD's proposed storage facility behind the Lowell Road substation, the proposed subdivision at 530 Old Dunstable Road, and Lawrence Academy's proposed improvements to Powderhouse Road.

7:10 p.m. – Public Hearing: NOI, septic system, 51 Kemp Street (Ialeggio), MassDEP # not issued

Applicant/owner: Tim Ialeggio

Representative: Doug Smith (Soilsmith Designs)

Site Walk: 1/23/2016

Doug Smith of Soilsmith Designs presented the proposed septic system project for the existing single family home at 51 Kemp Street. The homeowner, Tim Ialeggio, is undertaking a full renovation of the existing house. Mr. Smith had copies of his wetland data sheets and also the proof of mailing of abutter notifications (green cards). He said the only viable location for the septic system leach field is behind the house within the 50' No Disturb zone of the flagged BVW associated with an intermittent stream. Due to the high water table and Board of Health regulations, the leach field must be built up into a mound and supported with a retaining wall on the wetland (south) to minimize grading in the No Disturbance Zone. The nearest distance of proposed work to the wetland is 20'. A 40-mil barrier will be installed on the south side of the leach field.

P. Morrison asked about the existing system. Mr. Smith said the existing failed system consists of a tank and a pit located on the east side of the house; these will be decommissioned properly.

S. Black asked about the height of the wall, and if any fencing was proposed. Mr. Smith said it would be 6' tall, and said the owner was willing to put up fencing if required. S. Black said she preferred not to see any fencing because it would encourage the regrowth of invasive plants. She said Mr. Ialeggio did a lot of work to clear the yard of nuisance vegetation.

M. Giguere reminded Mr. Smith to provide a copy of the wetland data sheets. Mr. Smith handed out two copies. M. Giguere asked if there were plans to cut/remove the alders growing in the buffer zone. Mr. Smith said they would not disturb any vegetation beyond the proposed retaining wall. M. Giguere stated that he would request the placement of 'No Disturbance' signs at the limit of work, as a special condition of approval. He noted that the proposed grading appears to meet the Bylaw standards (no greater than 3:1 slopes), and the retaining wall would eliminate the need for extensive grading in the direction of the BVW and intermittent stream.

E. McHugh asked about plans to revegetate in the work area. Mr. Smith said there was no specific plan. M. Giguere suggested a wetland seed mix within the No Disturb zone. E. McHugh also asked about a timetable for completing work to renovate the house. She expressed concern that the house renovation challenges could jeopardize the septic work.

MassDEP has not issued a file number for, nor commented on, this NOI. A rare species determination letter is also pending from the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP). Mr. Smith requested that this hearing be continued to February 23<sup>rd</sup>. He said he would be here on that date anyway for another NOI that he will be filing soon.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by E. McHugh, it was

VOTED: to continue the public hearing for 51 Kemp Street, MassDEP # not issued, to 2/23/2016. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Moving on to other General Business, T. Tada reminded members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Groton Conservation Summit to be held on 2/3/2016 at the Lawrence Academy.

On the topic of Land Acquisition updates, T. Tada reported that the property deeds for the Robison (North Woodlot Nominee Trust) and Groton School (portion of former Decilio parcel) conservation land donations now appear of record at the Registry of Deeds. However, attorney Bob Collins is still waiting to receive the recorded originals back from the Registry. T. Tada will prepare a press release for the Robison parcel, per the agreement with Cliff Robison. He will also work with the Tax Collector and Accountant to resolve the back taxes on the Gustin parcel. In addition, T. Tada walked the Bennett Black Trust parcel with the appraiser, Ellen Anderson.

B. Easom provided a brief Community Preservation Committee update. The CPC held a public hearing 1/25/2016 to provide comments on the draft proposals received for this funding cycle. He said the bulk of the proposals are for historic preservation.

T. Tada presented a copy of the draft 2015 Annual Report. E. McHugh asked where the money for the Conservation Fund comes from. Commissioners explained that the funds have come through the CPC process since the Town adopted the Community Preservation Act in 2004. Prior to that, the funds were appropriated through warrant articles at annual Town Meeting.

Moving on to other Land Management topics, Chairman Smigelski mentioned he received an offer from Surrenden Farm abutter John Maynard to clear some of the overhanging/fallen tree branches and encroaching shrubs along the northern fence line of the Surrenden Farm hay field. Chairman Smigelski said he will take a look at the area with T. Tada this week, and asked if the Commission would authorize them to make the call on whether to allow Mr. Maynard to do the work.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by S. Black, it was

VOTED: to authorize the Chairman & Conservation Administrator to decide whether to allow Mr. Maynard to perform vegetation maintenance work at Surrenden Farm. The roll call vote was unanimous.

Also under Land Management, T. Tada recapped the site walk at McLain's Woods Conservation Area conducted 1/23/2016. T. Tada said he secured a Burn Permit from the Fire Department. Paul Funch, volunteer steward of the property, will burn the brush piles in the small field area.

There being no further business, upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by S. Black, it was

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting. The roll call vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Notes taken by Takashi Tada  
Conservation Administrator

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

1. NOI, 51 Kemp Street, MassDEP # not issued
2. Resource Management Plan, Surrenden Farm
3. Meeting Minutes, 1/12/2016

**Approved 2/9/2016**