

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

John Smigelski (Chairman) called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Peter Morrison (Vice Chairman), Susan Black (Clerk), Eileen McHugh, Bruce Easom, and Olin Lathrop present. Marshall Giguere was absent. Conservation Administrator Takashi Tada was present. S. Black read the public hearing/meeting notices at the indicated times.

7:00 p.m. – Public Hearing (cont'd): NOI, Baddacook Pond Weed Management, MassDEP #169-1138

Applicant: Board of Selectmen

Representatives: Great Pond Advisory Committee (GPAC); Ted Fiust, Aquatic Vision LLC (by phone)

Site Walk: 4/23/2016

Jim Luening, GPAC Chairman, reported that they are still waiting for a written determination from NHESP on the issue of rare species.

T. Tada mentioned he received the comment letter from the Groton Conservation Trust, which reflects the three verbal comments received from the Trust prior to the previous meeting. The Trust is opposed to leaving the harvested biomass to decompose on the Baddacook Field/Shattuck Homestead property. The Trust is also concerned about stabilizing the landing area where the material will be offloaded into the DPW dump truck. And the Trust is not supportive of using manual harvesting as a stand-alone, long-term solution to the weed problem, based on a review of the scientific literature.

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

VOTED: to continue the public hearing for Baddacook Pond NOI to 6/14/2016. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

Taking up General Business – Meeting Minutes, the Commission reviewed draft minutes from 4/26/2016. P. Morrison pointed out an error on Page 4. T. Tada will make the correction.

Upon a motion by B. Easom, seconded by E. McHugh, it was

VOTED: to approve the meeting minutes from 4/26/2016, as amended. The vote was 4 in favor, with P. Morrison and O. Lathrop abstaining.

Moving on to General Business – Invoices, the Commission approved the following invoices:

- Nashoba Valley Voice - \$128.88 for legal notice publication
- EWH Anderson Real Estate - \$2,700.00 for appraisal of Black Trust parcel
- J&S Business Products - \$15.00 for Williams Barn plan copies

The Commission also reviewed a proposal from Val Prest of Groton Engineering LLC, in the amount of \$2740.00, to conduct a structural review of the Williams Barn. The proposal was submitted to DPW Director Tom Delaney at his request. Mr. Delaney has been overseeing the emergency stabilization of the barn after structural deficiencies were observed earlier this year. Mr. Delaney would like to know if the Commission will cover some or all of the proposed cost.

S. Black noted there is a clear need for improved foundation support of the barn, and wondered if any improvements were made to the foundation after the Commission acquired the property.

P. Morrison said the barn renovation was done with state historic preservation grant funding, but he did not recall any work on the foundation. He said the Commission owns the barn and expressed support for paying all of the proposed structural review costs.

B. Easom said the foundation needs to be redone. He spoke with Uwe Tobies, the contractor who temporarily stabilized the north wall at Mr. Delaney's request. According to Mr. Tobies, the walls are not providing structural support.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to pay for the structural assessment of Williams Barn as proposed by Val Prest, Groton Engineering LLC, in the amount of \$2,740. If the work is completed before the end of FY16, it will be paid out of the Commission's operating budget. Otherwise the Land Management fund can be used. The vote was 5 in favor, 1 opposed (S. Black).

7:18 p.m. – Public Meeting: RDA, Screen House & Passageway, Hollingsworth & Vose Plant, 219 Townsend Road

Applicant/owner: Hollingsworth & Vose Company, Inc. (H&V)

Representatives: Bob Collins, attorney; Bob Pine, engineer

Site Walk: 5/7/2016

Bob Collins presented the plans to replace the existing Screen House structure with a new structure in the same footprint, utilizing the existing foundation; and to construct a new passageway between Buildings 2 & 17. Mr. Collins said the proposed work requires approval of the ZBA for variances, which he anticipates getting on June 15th; and also requires site plan review by the Land Use Departments.

E. McHugh asked how wide the passageway addition will be, and if the existing exterior wall is to be removed. Mr. Collins said the passageway foundation will be 5' wide, and it will be built next to the wall which will then separate the forklift traffic in the existing hallway from the new pedestrian-only passageway.

B. Easom asked how the floodplain actually works in the vicinity of the dam. Mr. Collins and Mr. Pine explained the floodplain contours and dynamics near the dam.

O. Lathrop asked if erosion controls would be installed. The applicants said silt fence will be installed at the Screen House location, while straw wattles would be used at the passageway site.

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

VOTED: to issue a Negative Determination (#2 & #3) for the Screen House & Passageway project at H&V, subject to the following special conditions:

1. Appropriate erosion controls to be utilized during construction.
2. All construction debris to be removed from the sites.

The vote was unanimous (6-0).

It was noted that Mr. Pine has prepared a presentation on climate change that is well worth viewing. The presentation takes about 1 hour.

7:32 p.m. – Public Hearing (cont'd): NOI, Boulder Wall, 60 Valley Road, MassDEP #169-1125
Applicant/owner: Paul Johnson
Site Walk: 6/6/2015

Paul Johnson presented a copy of an email he received from J. Kasper-Dunne of MassDEP, in response to his question about the status of his NOI. The email reply from MassDEP states that the decision on his NOI is to be made by the local Conservation Commission. Mr. Johnson interpreted this to mean that his application had been approved by MassDEP, and he asked that the public hearing be closed.

Members of the Commission advised Mr. Johnson to continue his public hearing until the Central Regional Office of MassDEP has had a chance to review and comment on his new NOI plan, most recently revised on 5/10/24.

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

VOTED: to continue the hearing for 60 Valley Road, MassDEP #169-1125, to 6/14/2016.
The vote was unanimous (6-0).

7:42 p.m. – Discussion: 2016 Herbicide Treatment Update, Lost Lake/Knops Pond Weed Management, MassDEP #169-1086

Brad Harper, President of the Groton Lakes Association, provided an update on weed management efforts in Lost Lake/Knops Pond. Solitude Lake Management (formerly known as Aquatic Control Technology) conducted a weed survey on 5/6/2016 and identified areas of Variable Milfoil and Curly-leaf Pondweed growth in Lost Lake/Knops Pond, as well as significant Fanwort growth in Springy Cove. Mr. Harper said the recommendations from Solitude Lake Management are to spot treat the Milfoil and Pondweed areas with Diquat

herbicide, and to treat the Fanwort with Sonar herbicide. The treatment with Diquat will be a one-time application, while the treatment in Springy Cove will require multiple applications of pelletized Sonar to maintain the proper herbicide concentration during the Fanwort growth season. The date of the treatment is TBD, but Mr. Harper said Solitude Lake Management and the GLA will post the required notification signs.

Mr. Harper also noted that Solitude recommends the use of copper sulfate to treat algae blooms if it is observed to be a problem after the herbicide application. The GLA will hand pull a small area of Fanwort plants observed in Martins Pond.

S. Black asked about the change in consultants. Mr. Harper explained that the previous consultant, Aquatic Control Technology (ACT) merged with its major competitor, Lycott Environmental, to form Solitude Lake Management. The personnel haven't changed.

E. McHugh asked for clarification of the treatment areas. Mr. Harper pointed out the areas, including Springy Cove.

B. Easom asked if they knew the source of the Fanwort regrowth. Alex Woodle, member of GPAC and GLA, explained the regrowth is from remnant plants. It is difficult to eradicate. B. Easom said he was glad they weren't seeing Fanwort at the public boat ramp.

O. Lathrop asked about the procedure for requesting approval of the treatment. The procedure is outlined in the Order of Conditions for weed management, MassDEP #169-1086.

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

VOTED: to approve the 2016 follow-up herbicide treatment in Lost Lake/Knops Pond under MassDEP #169-1086. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

7:55 p.m. – Discussion: Fallen Tree, Groton Country Club

T. Tada presented photos and a map of a fallen tree along the edge of the 8th Fairway at the Groton Country Club. The Country Club would like to remove the tree by hand. The tree is located within the 100' buffer zone.

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

VOTED: to approve the removal of the tree by hand. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

7:58 p.m. – Public Hearing (cont'd): NOI, Sewer Connection, 116 Boston Road, MassDEP # not issued

Applicant/owner: Dorothy Janes & Shane Grant
Representative: David Erickson, attorney

MassDEP has not issued a file number for this NOI.

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

VOTED: to continue the public hearing for 116 Boston Road, MassDEP # not issued, to 6/14/2016. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

8:00 p.m. – Discussion: Eagle Project, Painting Conservation Signs, Brandon Sickles

Mr. Sickles was not present at this time. The Commission discussed the work done by Mr. Sickles to repaint and repair ten conservation area signs. Mr. Sickles did not give himself much time to do the painting. According to Paul Funch of the Trails Committee, some of the signs require a second coat and/or touching up in order to be considered complete. Chairman Smigelski and P. Morrison insisted the job needs to be done right, and Mr. Sickles should be asked to revisit the signs.

Moving on to other General Business – Land Management updates, T. Tada reported that he and Tom Orcutt of the Water Department were finalizing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Forestry Services. The Town's contract with Bay State Forestry has expired.

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

VOTED: to designate Susan Black for the Forestry consultant selection committee.

For Community Preservation Committee (CPC) updates, B. Easom reported that all of the Warrant Articles recommended for funding were approved at Annual Town Meeting. The CPC is waiting for announcement of the state match for next fiscal year.

8:14 p.m. – Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Easom, it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session and enter into Executive Session pursuant to MGL Ch. 30A, Sec. 21(6), with the possibility of re-entering into Open Session. The roll call vote was unanimous (6-0).

8:53 p.m. – Upon a motion by B. Easom, seconded by P. Morrison, it was

VOTED: to adjourn the Executive Session and re-enter into Open Session. The roll call vote was unanimous (6-0).

8:53 p.m. – Discussion: Eagle Project, Painting Conservation Signs, Brandon Sickles

Brandon Sickles, Groton Troop 3, arrived and gave a PowerPoint slide presentation of his sign painting Eagle project. Mr. Sickles refurbished 10 conservation area signs. He said all the paint

supplies were donated by Moison Ace Hardware, and a family friend donated material and labor for replacement of a damaged board on the Hawtree Conservation Area sign on Raddin Road.

The Commission mentioned that some of the signs needed touching up and asked if Mr. Sickles was willing to revisit them. He said he would do so in coordination with Paul Funch. The Commission thanked Mr. Sickles for his project.

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

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Notes taken by Takashi Tada
Conservation Administrator

Exhibits on file at Conservation Commission Office:

1. NOI, Baddacook Pond Weed Management, MassDEP # 169-1138
2. RDA, Screen House & Passageway, H&V
3. OOC, Lost Lake/Knops Pond Weed Management, MassDEP #169-1086
4. NOI, 60 Valley Road, MassDEP #169-1125
5. NOI, 116 Boston Road, MassDEP # not issued
6. Meeting Minutes, 4/26/2016

Approved 7/12/2016