



TOWN OF GROTON
Conservation Commission
Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 28, 2018



Present: Bruce Easom, Marshall Giguere, Laurence Hurley, John Smigelski,
Peter Morrison (Arrived at 6:43pm)

Absent: Eileen McHugh, Olin Lathrop

Others present: Nikolis Gualco, Conservation Administrator
Beth Faxon, per diem minute taker, Town of Groton

Chair Smigelski called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

B. Easom read the legal notice aloud to open the public hearing for an:

RDA, 207 Gratuity Road, for paving of a dirt driveway.

Mr. Petros (Applicant) presented the proposed paving of a dirt driveway to facilitate a disabled family member to safely move from vehicle to the existing ramp accessing the home. Mr. Petros stated his preference as asphalt material. Commission members agreed that asphalt would be a reasonable choice. M. Giguere questioned whether or not it is jurisdictional as floodplain of the Nashua river as depicted by Assessor's data. With the exception of the parking area nearest the house, the rest of the driveway was considered as outside the jurisdictional area after the map was referenced.

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

VOTED: To issue a Negative #2 Determination of Applicability to perform the work as described on the condition that the grade will remain the same. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Upon a motion made by M. Giguere, seconded by L. Hurley it was;

VOTED: To approve the meeting minutes of August 14, 2018. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Commission attended to signing an invoice from the Groton Herald in the amount of \$49.50 for legal notice expenses.

The Commission then continued to a discussion session to consider formulating feedback on Conservation goals which has been requested by the Master Plan Implementation Committee.

C. Perkins, Groton Planning Board, was present. Judy Anderson, a member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) was also present. C. Perkins explained that the MPIC is undertaking the task of looking at the goals and objectives in all areas of the Master Plan and documenting what has been accomplished. In preparation for the next Master plan revision in 2020, the committee seeks to collect data, analyze, and document progress on goals. She is requesting a response from the Commission by September 15th. C. Perkins noted the work in progress on the Open Space Recreation Plan and stated they would not want to interfere with this process. It was noted E. McHugh is a lead in the OSRP and absent from the meeting. M. Giguere noted that many of the goals recorded on the Master Plan document are being addressed in the OSRP. N. Gualco offered to share the excel sheet compiled by the OSRP committee and identify any overlap of goals. B. Easom revealed he is on the Sustainability Commission and asked how climate change is addressed in the document. C. Perkins states that it is in the sustainability section and clarifies that she is working off of the goals and recommendations

document. B. Easom asked for more of a public input in the decision of the framework of the Master Plan. C. Perkins explained the extensive public input process involved in the creation of the Master Plan. B. Easom acknowledged both the Master Plan and OSRP are comprehensive efforts of public outreach, extremely valuable exercises, and accurate representation of what people find important. Perkins stated it would be helpful if the GCC can answer and comment prior to September 15th.

The Commission then continued to a discussion of a minor site plan change, 25 Whitney Pond Road, MassDEP#169-1157

Presenting; Ian Ruben, Civil Engineer

The engineer surveyed existing conditions as of two weeks ago. The drywell has been redesigned to receive overland flow effectively. Mr. Ruben reports the depth of the bottom of the drywell will be 2' lower and the finished grade over the drywell will be at an elevation of 80'. Inverted pipes will be placed entering the drywell to make sure that the trenches are directed to the drywell. The driveway will be regraded to accommodate the change. P. Morrison confirmed the plan is to drop the drywell 2' and invert the pipes to ensure proper function of the design. L. Hurley stated there appears to be adequate room to accomplish the grading downhill to the drywell, and the plan is improved with the changes. M. Giguere asked for minimum of one foot of top cover and a pre-construction meeting occur with the contractor, he concurred that the plan is an improvement.

B. Easom notes a benchmark nail in tree is in good shape and survey points are also based on some concrete markers. He stated this is a good solution and a minor change.

Upon a motion made by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was;

VOTED: to accept the plan dated 8/28/18 as a minor change in plan. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

After the vote, Julie Aucoin, land-owner, from the audience expressed interest in the location of her water pipe with respect to the project. She then reported that the rip rap located at the top of the drive is full of sand and in need of maintenance. She was directed to contact T. Delaney, DPW to request assistance with the clean-up.

The Commission then discussed Shattuck Homestead under section 2.2.1 of General Business. N. Gualco stated that Darcy Donald had volunteered to organize a stewardship group focused on the area of Town containing and including Shattuck Homestead. The Stewardship group would perform various duties such as invasive species management and support for other land management activities determined by the Commission. Her efforts were commended and encouraged by the Commission. Discussion ensued as to training Commission members to apply herbicide treatments on Town parcels for invasive species management. Olin Lathrop (absent) was named as a potential organizer for a class and preparation sessions for such persons to obtain their applicator license. Chair Smigelski asked for a contact with Tom Delaney, DPW to ascertain who may currently hold an applicators license in Town. N. Gualco plans to meet with D. Donald on-site this week to identify areas in urgent need of invasive species treatment. Mowing was opined to be the most effective way of slowing the process of invasive species spreading. L. Hurley noted the problems encountered with mowing including restrictions in place by Natural Heritage, turtle habitat, volunteer time and equipment. Two possibilities for land use of the parcel were considered; 1. organizing a community garden 2. leasing to a Community Share Agreement (CSA) farmer. Judy, MP Committee member (audience) added that these sorts of activities may be in alignment with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. Chair Smigelski added that a farmer would be under the constraints of Natural Heritage and must be prepared to work around existing land use limitations. B. Easom suggested that the trees may be trimmed and that unsound management of the heavy infestation of Black swallow wort will ultimately destroy habitat for most species. Chair Smigelski suggested a conversation with

Natural Heritage and a consultation with a staff herpetologist. Chair Smigelski, B. Easom, and N. Gualco agreed to meet with Natural Heritage on the matter.

2.1.2. Eliades Conservation Area - no update

2.1.3 Reedy Meadow Estates - GPS Survey

B. Easom reported concern that the landscaping activity has encroached on the land owned by the Commission (the old sand pit, Assessor's Parcel: 228-59). He reports he conducted a GPS land survey and discovered two errors on the certified plot plan. He reported confirmation of his findings with Dan Wolf, and further asked the developer to correct the plan and record with the Registry of Deeds.

B. Easom stated he plans to conduct another land survey in the area of the Olivia Way subdivision to ascertain correct placement of the turtle barrier and verify the Conservation parcel boundary has not been encroached upon.

2.1.4. Conservation Area signs – review materials costs.

N. Gualco reported that the conservation area signs for Fritz and Helen Walker and replacement Longley II signs are completed. He added that on behalf of the Commission, he will seek a sign permit from the town board and will need to purchase some posts and hardware to erect the signs.

Upon a motion made by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was;
VOTED: to authorize the Conservation agent to spend up to \$200 for erecting two signs. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

2.1.5. Other land management business; Surrenden farm

Chair Smigelski reported the area is very wet to work his equipment. He intends to remove fencing on the south side of the parcel as discussed earlier. He reports a large "wash out" in the area near Shirley Road, near the sign. He reports heavy rains and subpar hay quality yields.

Discussion turned to formation of a comprehensive land use permit for the Town properties and collating various permits already existing for example camping on public lands. A public outreach campaign regarding allowable and permissible land use on Town lands would benefit citizens and create stewardship. Paul Funch was named as a possible organizer for this action item. N. Gualco agreed to invite Mr. Funch to a Commission meeting for discussion on the matter.

2.2.1 Land Acquisition the Commission noted and endorsed the Deed for both parcels 205-41 and 234-02.

2.3 Correspondences the Commission discussed a request from a member of the Massachusetts Rescue and Recovery K-9 Unit to train the service dogs at Williams Barn Sorhaug woods. Commission members remarked that this activity is agreeable provided there is no interference with the farmers market and that signs will be posted to inform the public.

Upon a motion made by M. Giguere, seconded by L. Hurley it was;
VOTED: to approve the Massachusetts Rescue and Recovery K-9 handlers to train service dogs at Williams barn on Thursday 8/30/18 and sun 9/16/18. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Commission discussed a request from Old North Bridge Hounds organization to hold their mock fox hunt at Surrenden Farm parcel on October 9th with a rain date of October 10th, 2018. B. Easom suggested posting signage to inform the public prior to the event and removal upon completion.

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

VOTED: to approve the request for use of Surrenden Farm for the mock fox hunt on October 8th or October 9th, 2018 with signage posted and removed following. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

2.4 Fitch's Bridge collapse - The Commission heard an emergency certification was granted for work to repair a collapsed wall of Fitch's Bridge. N. Gualco issued the certificate.

Upon a motion made by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was;

VOTED: to ratify the emergency certification to the Groton DPW for repair of Fitch's Bridge wall collapse.

Order of Conditions MassDEP#169-1179, 135 Mill Street

Upon a motion made by P. Morrison, seconded by L. Hurley it was;

VOTED: to approve the Order of Conditions for MassDEP #169-1179 135 Mill Street under the Wetlands Protection Act with the conditions listed. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Upon a motion made by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was;

VOTED: to approve the Order of Conditions for MassDEP #169-1179 135 Mill Street under the Town of Groton Wetlands bylaw with the special conditions and correction to condition #10. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Commission heard the following committee updates;

- B. Easom reported that the CPC was looking forward to the release of the Community preservation plan next month and working on updating the budget. He reported \$150,000 available funds and encouraged members to consider application submittals for projects in need of funding for the Fall.
- L. Hurley reported correspondence from E. McHugh regarding distribution of a community input survey for the Open Space Recreation Plan.

Beth Faxon left the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was;

VOTED: to close the open meeting and move to executive session to pursuant to M.G.L. CH. 30A, Sec. 21 (6) To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body." The motion passed (Yes: B. Easom, M. Giguere, L. Hurley, P. Morrison, J. Smigelski).

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Faxon

Items on file:

1. RDA 207 Gratuity - Application + Photos.
2. RDA 207 Gratuity - letter from Commission on Accessibility
3. RDA 207 Gratuity - Site plan.
4. RDA 207 Gratuity Rd - Scope of Alternatives
5. Master Plan Implementation Committee Letter to GCC
6. NHESP 18-37719 Eliades 2018 mowing autumn olive.
7. GCC Sign materials - cost estimates
8. GCC Sign template & specs
9. Sign Permit Application
10. Letter from Paul Funch

11. Deed for John Carr - Throne Hill 2018
12. Deed for Regalas Trust - lowell+Schoolhouse 2018
13. Email from Elisabeth Newbold - K9 training at Williams Barn request
14. Email from Wendy Good - Old North Bridge Hounds Surrenden
15. Fitch's Bridge 08-24-2018 repair collapsed wall bridge
16. OOC 169-1179 135 Mill Street Act
17. OOC 169-1179 135 Mill Street Bylaw
18. GCC Minutes 08-14-18

Approved on: September 11, 2018