



**TOWN OF GROTON
Conservation Commission**

173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450
(978) 448-1106
Fax: 978-448-1113

ngualco@townofgroton.org



**Groton Conservation Commission
MEETING MINUTES
March 19th, 2019**

Present: Olin Lathrop, Vice Chair; Marshall Giguere; Laurence J. Hurley, Eileen McHugh; Peter Morrison

Others present: Nikolis Gualco, Conservation Administrator, Town of Groton.

Not present: John Smigelski, Chairman; Bruce Easom, Clerk

6:30 PM Standing in for Chairman Smigelski, O. Lathrop called the meeting to order.

1. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS*

6:30 p.m. - NOI (cont.), 29 Reedy Meadow Road, for the construction of an accessory apartment, MassDEP#169-1184. The applicant, Kevin Stone, provided a letter from the builder stating that the existing plan is the best plan for the needs of the apartment. If the plan were scaled back, it would affect the 5' turning radius required by the ADA, diminish mobility around the apartment, and affect access for the fire department and home care providers. M. Giguere questioned about the style of the ramp and it was answered that it will be a temporary/mobile ramp. L. Hurley expressed that he was satisfied with plan. P. Morrison questioned if an elevator would be installed. The applicant responded that it was out of their current budget. O. Lathrop expressed that he was satisfied with the plan.

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

VOTED to close the public hearing.

The commission then moved to the **GENERAL BUSINESS** section of the agenda and item 1.1.1 Reedy Meadow Estates, Olivia Way flooding discussion, review stormwater plan. It was reported that the residents petitioned / presented at the most recent select board meeting. N. Gualco did further research on article 97, spoke with Bob O'Connor of Massachusetts EEA and confirmed that they need a land replacement for this parcel. N. Gualco remarked that there is a not a requirement for a 30-day notice for the article 97 discussion. It was recommended at the recent select board meeting that a third party review the engineering plan presented by the developer. The Storm Water Committee meets on April 2nd. E. McHugh commented that the developer needs to attend this meeting with the proposed replacement plan and suggested a letter be sent to the developer informing him of the April 2nd meeting. L. Hurley had questions about the proposed plan that will need to be addressed with the engineer. At the most recent Storm

Water Committee meeting it was voted to use CEI as the third-party engineering reviewing firm. They are a reputable firm out of Merrimack New Hampshire. Conservation Commission and Storm Water Commission have a joint meeting scheduled for April 2nd and a regular business meeting of the Conservation Commission is scheduled for April 9th. E. McHugh recommended requesting the presence of the developer and engineer at both meetings.

The commission moved on to item 2.2.1 Baddacook Weed Treatment, MassDEP#169-1138 – request for 3-year extension. The applicant James Luening is requesting the renewal of mechanical harvesting. The existing 3-year plan has been funded by CPC and this evening he requested an extension of the 3-year NOI. It was questioned if he was satisfied with the mechanical harvesting method. He answered he is reasonably satisfied. They are unable to use herbicides. Fragmentation makes the weeds spread around. Mechanical harvesting needs to begin aggressively. L. Hurley inquired about their disposal methods. It was answered that different contractors handle disposal differently, most recently by filling trucks with weeds and removing from the site. M. Giguere noted there is no good permanent solution to address the weeds. The applicant noted that they've worked to clear access points most recently and have been able to reach sandy bottom. Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded by P. Morrison it was

VOTED to approve the 3-year extension by a unanimous vote.

The commission moved to item 2.1.2 Forestry Contract – Update. N. Gualco has been working with E. McHugh and Town Counsel on the bid. It will go through central register and will open next Wednesday March 27 and will close on April 24. N. Gualco will propose a special meeting to review bids and vote. The proposed meeting date for this discussion will be evening of April 24th.

7:15 The commission moved on to item 2.1.3 Stewardship needs, discuss reviving the Stewardship Program. As the Open Space Committee is wrapping up, N. Gualco is proposing the committee become a Stewardship Committee. It is helpful for members of a Stewardship Committee to know CRs and stewardship history and activities related to specific properties. N. Gualco presented the commission with a map of the CR properties. He stated that the town has not been doing much monitoring, with the exception of parcels that are shared with DCR. L. Hurley inquired as to what are the requirements for stewardship monitoring. N. Gualco answered that it requires walking the GPS boundary, monitoring properties for encroachments, making notes of property conditions and ecological items of interest (i.e. vernal pools). It is a very time-consuming process. E. McHugh asked if all the boundaries are marked to which she was answered that all should be marked, but not always, particularly if they are very old.

M. Giguere talked about his involvement with a town stewardship committee in recent years. There is an infrastructure and guidelines available through a website he created M. Giguere and B. Easom started a monitoring committee and it is very time consuming. The commission talked about the possibility of getting area college students to do monitoring projects over the summer. P. Morrison commented that for his responsibilities as a steward for the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), he receives a periodic email requesting information on the property that he monitors. He commented that monitoring is often done by people that feel connected to the

properties. N. Gualco commented that he would like to see a renewed interest in volunteer monitoring in the town. He will add further discussion on this topic in in a future meeting.

The commission then moved on to item 2.3 Land Acquisitions. N. Gualco announced that the Commission officially owns 18 acres on Martins Pond. N. Gualco also reviewed a recent item related to Dan Wolf A&R and driveway configuration. The area was delineated to see how it will influence the driveway access. N. Gualco also updated on the Hayes property that Anne Gagnon from DFW will be reaching out to George in early April. There is another high priority property – the Silvestro property and Anne will also be reaching out to see how DFW could help out.

The commission moved on the item 2.9 Invoices and the commission members signed and approved invoices.

N. Gualco updated the commission that there is \$370k in conservation funds. There is a \$100k application for CPA for pending business remaining this year.

7:50 pm The commission moved on to item 2.5 Committee Updates / Announcements. N. Gualco announced that E. McHugh completed the MACC Fundamentals course. L. Hurley stated that he will be at the Sargisson Beach Committee meeting on 4/4. O. Lathrop announced that the finance committee approved funding for invasives control. He received the materials today.

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

VOTED to adjourn the conservation commission meeting by a unanimous vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Naomi Campbell Siok, per diem recording secretary, Town of Groton.

Approved on: April 9th, 2019