



Conservation Commission Meeting

Tuesday, October 08, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Town Hall: Second Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street Groton, MA

OPTION TO JOIN REMOTELY

Present: Bruce Easom, Chair, Larry Hurley, Vice Chair; Kim Kuliesis, Clerk; Peter Morrison, Alison Hamilton (7:22PM joined via zoom)

Absent:, Olin Lathrop, John Smigelski

Others Present: Charlotte Steeves, Conservation Administrator

B. Easom called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS

6:30 PM- Minor Change Request- Florence Roche Access Lane DEP#169-1223

Applicant: Town of Groton Representatives Steve Michener, Studio G, Leena Long, Brian Johnson, Leftfield, and Jeffrey Pilat

M. Haddad summarized that during the previous hearing, a request was made for a minor change. After consulting with his team, a revised plan has been submitted that aligns with the Conservation Commission's requirements.

S. Michener added that the final plan includes the updated drainage plans and allows for the construction of four 11-foot traffic lanes while maintaining the exact location for the pre-existing pedestrian path without encroaching on the wetlands.

J. Pilat identified the specific catch basins to be relocated on the plan and noted that the ponding issue would be resolved.

K. Kuliesis asked if the sidewalk would run directly to the curb side. J. Pilat confirmed that it does.

P. Morrison inquired if all four lanes would be repaved. S. Michener confirmed that the beginning of November is the anticipated timeframe for the repaving of the traffic lanes.

L. Hurley questioned the purpose of the sumps that were listed along with the catch basins. S. Michener explained that the sumps prevent debris and sediment from flowing into the pipes and entering the wetlands.

B. Easom questioned how the location of the original sidewalk was determined and expressed dissatisfaction with the late submission of the plans. J. Pilat said that an existing survey completed in 2019 shows the entire project scope. M. Haddad mentioned that preliminary plans were submitted last week.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by L. Hurley, it was:
Voted to accept the minor change of the additional traffic lane as shown in the plan dated October 8, 2024, for MADEP#169-1223.

The motion passed unanimously. 4-0

6:45 PM- Notice of Intent – 71-75 Shenandoah Road No DEP# 169-1273

Applicant: Jack Maloney Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group.

J. Maloney attended the meeting on behalf of his clients, proposing the installation of a new retaining wall along the water's edge. The plan includes removing the existing concrete retaining wall as well as any rocks that have fallen into the resource area. Erosion controls would be installed, and all stockpiled material would be removed off site. Additionally, the dock would be temporarily removed during construction.

P. Morrison inquired about the specifications of the blocks that would be used for constructing the retaining wall. J. Maloney responded that a Grave Recon Block would be utilized, noting that it features a textured surface.

L. Hurley asked if the retaining wall would remain in its current location, to which J. Maloney confirmed that there would be no changes to its position.

B. Easom asked if there were any comments provided by the MassDEP. J. Maloney stated that the comments had been forwarded to the Commission and would be addressed appropriately.

K. Kuliesis suggested utilizing some of the stockpiled material, if necessary, as fill behind the new wall.

B. Easom requested that the floodplain volumes be documented on the plan.

C. Steeves noted that the MassDEP comments have already been addressed.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by L. Hurley, it was:
Voted to continue the public hearing to the next scheduled meeting on October 22, 2024.

The motion passed unanimously. 4-0

7:00 PM- Request for Determination of Applicability- 38 Ridgewood Ave

Applicant: Raymond Roy

Homeowner R. Roy attended the meeting to request the removal and replacement of three deteriorating 30+ year-old decks that have become unsafe. The new decks would be placed on diamond footings and reduced in size.

P. Morrison noted the potential challenges of removing all materials from the site and inquired about the process for setting the new footings and what the composition of the deck would be. R. Roy explained that the materials would be transported using a solar cart and then trucked away. For the footings, minimal digging would be required—only a 5-inch hole—where pins would be driven in, and

the hole would then be refilled. The proposed deck is to be constructed using pressure-treated wood.

L. Hurley expressed satisfaction with the footing plan.

K. Kuliesis asked whether the type of pressure-treated wood was appropriate for the resource area.

R. Roy confirmed that the decks would be constructed with Type 1 pressure-treated.

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

Voted to issue a Negative 3 Determination under the conditions: 1. Work is to be completed as shown on the plan.

The motion passed unanimously. 4-0

A. Hamilton joined the meeting via zoom, the Chair announced going forward all votes were to be roll call votes.

7:15 PM- Retroactive Request for Determination of Applicability- 28 Ridgewood Ave

Applicant: Barbara Ruskin

B. Ruskin attended the meeting to propose the removal of a tree identified by a Tree Service as requiring immediate attention due to its hazardous condition and potential risk to the dwelling.

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

Voted to issue a Negative 3 Determination under the conditions: 1. All debris is to remain outside of the resource area.

The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Yes AH, KK, PM, LH, BE) 5-0

7:25 PM- Order of Conditions Extension Request- Hollingsworth & Vose DEP#169-641

P. Morrison recommended conducting a site visit before approving the extension, noting that the Order of Conditions remains valid until November 16th. C. Steeves mentioned that a representative was expected to attend the meeting, but no one was present.

The Commission requested that the Conservation Administrator draft a letter to Hollingsworth & Vose, seeking permission to access the site before making a decision on the requested extension.

7:35 PM -Continued Public Hearing- Request for Determination of Applicability- 63 Kemp Street

Applicant: Jeffrey & Sarah Gahan

The applicants submitted a detailed plan for the pool removal process, as requested by the Conservation Commission at the previous hearing. The plan includes dismantling the four sides of the pool, filling it in, and managing invasive species. The existing fence would remain in place to stabilize erosion controls and then be removed upon completion of the project.

The Commission expressed satisfaction with the submitted plan. A. Hamilton suggested coordinating with the Invasive Species Committee for assistance in removing the invasive vegetation.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by L. Hurley, it was:
Voted to issue a Negative 3 Determination under the conditions: 1. Erosion controls are to be placed on the inside of the existing fence. 2. The removal of the fence is to be the final step of the project.

The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Yes: KK, LH, PM, AH, BE) 5-0

2. GENERAL BUSINESS*

General Discussions/Announcements

Upcoming Site Walk at Gilson Conservation Area for October 19th

B. Easom proposed rescheduling the site walk for the Gilson Conservation Area to the Saturday before the first meeting in November to accommodate more Commissioners' availability.

54 Hill Road Upcoming Meeting

C. Steeves reported that Mr. Nutile will be invited back to the next meeting. After monitoring the site, she noted that there have been no improvements or progress made, despite Mr. Nutile's claims at the previous meeting. C. Steeves noted that while there are agricultural exemptions, work is still being carried out within the buffer zones, including alterations to the roadside slope. C. Steeves said that she informed the landowner that straw wattles must be installed and requested a planting plan to restore the disturbed areas. She said that there would be further discussion at the next meeting.

General Updates from Administrator

Dumping on Parcel 131-2

B. Easom mentioned that he had cleared vegetation away from the Conservation sign and observed a significant amount of debris and grass clippings. He requested that the Conservation Administrator send a letter to neighborhood residents, reminding them not to deposit debris on Conservation Land and to report any observed violations.

Dumping on Parcel 212-19

C. Steeves said that she was informed about a pile of yard scraps in the vicinity of the buffer zones. After discussing the matter, the Commission requested that a cease and desist order be issued and that the parcel be scheduled for a site walk.

Ongoing Projects Spreadsheet and Keeping Track of Projects

C. Steeves presented a spreadsheet designed to track ongoing projects that still require resolution. She informed the Commissioners that they will have access to the document and be able to input updates as needed. K. Kuliesis suggested revising the list and organizing it alphabetically for easier reference.

Committee Updates

L. Hurley reported that the Sargisson Beach Committee is organizing a beach cleanup this weekend, and would also have additional assistance from Groton School students on October 15th.

K. Kuliesis informed the Commission that the Stewardship Committee would be conducting a site walk tomorrow at Fitch-Best Woods along Longley Road.

B. Easom mentioned that during the Town Meeting, the Earth Removal and Stormwater Advisory Committee proposed a bylaw change allowing applicants working within both Conservation and Stormwater jurisdictions to meet solely with the Conservation Commission. B. Easom also said that the draft of the CPA preliminary proposal was ready to be submitted for the Conservation Commission's request of \$400,000. The submission is due on October 24th.

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

Vote to authorize and submit the CPA preliminary proposal application in the amount of \$400,000 to the Community Preservation Committee.

The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Yes: AH, KK, LH, PM, BE) 5-0

Land Management & Acquisition

Mowing at Pacer Way

B. Easom provided an update on the areas he has already mowed, including Pacer Way, Smith Street, Old Ayer Road, O'Neill Way, and Whistle Post Road. He noted that Nipmuc Meadows and the Priest Family Conservation Area are still pending and would be mowed after the restricted dates have passed.

Approve Meeting Minutes

The Commission tabled the meeting minutes until the next scheduled meeting

Approve Invoices

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

Voted to reimburse Bruce Easom in the amount of \$110.80 for fuel used to mow 6 Conservation Areas.

The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Yes: AH, KK, PM, LH) B. Easom- Abstain 4-0

3. **Open Session for topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting***
4. **Executive Session pursuant to MGL 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."**

Bruce Easom, Chair; declared that there was business that required the Commission to move to executive session.

5. Adjournment

7:55PM

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

Voted to move to Executive Session and not to return to the open session for the purpose of considering the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate, as the chair had declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission.

The motion passed by a roll call vote. (Yes: AH, LH, PM, KK, BE) 5-0

APPROVED: November 26th, 2024