

Shutesbury Conservation Commission
Minutes – November 14, 2024
Approved – December 12, 2024
Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present: Bob Douglas, Beth Willson, Janice Rowan, Scott Kahan

Commissioners Absent:

Other Staff Present: Matteo Pangallo (Land Use Clerk)

Others Present: Miriam DeFant, Sharon Weizenbaum, Kathy Salvador, Don Wakoluk, Mike Stotz, Leslie Cerier

Chair's Call to Order: 7:00pm

The meeting is being recorded.

Chair's Comments

PVPC and FRCOG offering "Dirt Road Project" to help small town DPW's do bundled NOIs for maintenance. They have reached out to Shutesbury Highway Department about this. Rowan suggests the Stormwater Committee should also know about this.

Jennifer Wells from Lake Wyola Stormwater Committee will be coming to ConCom's December 12 meeting, which is an opportunity also to review plan submitted previously by Mark Rivers.

Mark Wightman's CR was on agenda for tonight but he has been directed to different CR template from DEP so he has decided to come back to the Commission with a revised CR. This would be either at the next meeting or a special meeting before December 12. Kahan raises question about how Commission should handle costs of monitoring CRs. Wants how the Commission pays for monitoring to be handled consistently going forward and not to incur future costs for the town as more CRs are enrolled. Willson notes that there had been discussion about requiring future owners of a property to agree to pay for CR monitoring but questions about whether that is legal. Kahan notes two models: in one, when the restriction is taken money is put into an endowment and proceeds go toward ongoing monitoring; other model is the responsibility for cost of monitoring deferred to owners of the property. Prefers the former to the latter since it covers costs up front and avoids practical challenges. Miriam DeFant notes if owner is required to pay for monitor, hiring should be done independent of owner; in DiMare CR an escrow fund set up that new buyers have to replenish. Douglas adds that Harvard Conservation Trust requires cash donation in interest-bearing account when CR is accepted and they try to keep that fund going in perpetuity. Kahan advises keeping it as simple as possible, which means having the Commission control the financial resources to hire the monitor. Willson suggests putting this on agenda for December 12 meeting.

Review and Vote on Past Minutes

July 25, 2024. No changes.

August 15, 2024. No changes.

October 24, 2024. No changes.

September 12, 2024. Two corrections to street names.

Motion to approve all past minutes reviewed: Douglas; second: Kahan. Approved unanimously.

Site Visits Report from Janice Rowan

Dudleyville Pond Dam. November 6 to see if grass coming in and erosion controls working. Looks like won't have better idea if the controls are working until next spring.

Lot O-32. November 4 to follow-up on erosion controls. Everything in place now. Previous concern about demarcation line at south resolved. Another visit scheduled for next Tuesday. Willson asks if contractor is attentive; Rowan notes some reluctance but they are complying and have a lot of work. Douglas notes that line was tight other than some torn socks.

104 Lake Drive. November 4 for tree-removal project of about 20 trees. Owner willing to replace trees or bushes as needed. Will work with Ward Smith on submitting an NOI.

678 Pratt Corner Road. November 12 to see erosion controls. All in place and work can proceed.

7 Baker Road. Willson visited to see approved irrigation line trenching. Work has no wetlands impact and not prevented by Baker Fields CR.

2 Wyola Drive request. Kahan has availability this weekend and Willson and Rowan are free November 17. Pangallo will inquire with the owner about 10am on Sunday.

Conservation Land Management

Kahan updates on parking area for West Quabbin Conservation Area and plans for curb cut with Highway Department. Original plan was for smaller triangular lot but Kestrel Land Trust advised wider rectangle because of existing guardrail. 63'x18' area laid out, which is larger than original 20'x20' plan. Kahan has submitted Curb Cut application to the Commission for approval.

Pangallo notes that \$10,000 in CPA funding remains. Kahan thinks that is more than enough and remainder could be used for trails for access around the parking area. Work could be completed this year. Willson suggests split-rail fence around edges to keep vehicles off the surrounding vegetation. Kahan notes north end has guardrail already, west end has slope that falls off into the property, and south end bordered by trees and is town line. Fence might not be needed for safety but would make it more clearly demarcated as parking area. Willson says perhaps build the parking area and trails first and then we can decide about fencing based on funds remaining.

Motion to approve the Curb Cut application for West Quabbin Woods parking lot: Douglas; second: Rowan. Approved unanimously.

Bylaw Regulations

Willson has another meeting at 8:00pm and so Douglas asks that discussion of Bylaw Regulations be moved to a future agenda. Willson notes Commission can also have a special meeting this month for this discussion, perhaps along with discussion of Wightman's CR.

Unanticipated Business

Douglas raises need for finding a fifth member. Willson notes some people may be interested and will be pursuing those possibilities. Rowan prepared description of the role for the Town Birthday Party and Commission could use that for Town Announce email.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Rowan; second: Kahan. Approved unanimously.

Adjourned: 7:52pm

List of Documents Used:

- Curb Cut Application for West Quabbin Conservation Area parking area