



Bolton Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes



Date:	Tuesday, April 20 th 2021
Time/Location	7:00 p.m. Zoom (remote participation)
Commissioners Present:	Chair Brian Berube, Emily Winner, William Payne, Lori Stephenson (Conservation Agent, Rebecca Longvall)
Guests:	Betsy and Gordon Taylor Kennedy, Jim Geraghty, Richard Davis, Lisa Sheppple, Ed Sterling, Michael Gorr, Vince LaRosa, Paul McManus Wetland Scientist, Steve Brennan General Manager, Kelly Durfey Cardoza Consultant.
Next Meeting:	Tuesday, May 4 th 2021 7:00pm, Zoom Remote Participation

- 1. Presentation by Al Futterman of Nashua River Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council – NSN Wild and Scenic Rivers Forest Legacy Program**

Al provided a summary of the Forest Legacy Program. He also provided a summary of the pathways for participants there are two opportunities for a land owner where a fee simple is possible to sell the land or a conservation restriction which allows retaining some rights to the land. The NSN project will involve land/landowners from the 11 towns. At present there are about 23 landowners and over 2,000 acres of land involved. The properties must be 75% forested, not significant open water or fields. There are required Due Diligence steps as the team moves forward. The submittal will be due in July to DCR. Projects are ranked based on environmental importance, threat of conversion, and fit into national, regional or state strategic conservation plans, land owner interest letters of commitment, and the entity to hold the restriction to provide a letter. The land in the Town of Bolton would require a government agency to hold the CR. Therefore, this presentation is to provide information prior to the formal request that the Bolton Conservation Commission hold the Conservation Restriction. Al noted this project is brought forward by the Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council and funded through the Nashua River Watershed Association as its fiscal agent. Rona Balco and Rebecca Longvall are the Town of Bolton's representatives on the Stewardship Council. Chair Brian stated he does not feel there would be an issue holding a CR on properties related to this project. Al stated he will be coming back before the conservation commission for a formal letter of interest to hold the CR. Chair Brian opened to public comment Betsy and Gordon inquired about their recently acquired parcel off of Wattaquodock Hill Road, stating that there will be one application this year, then phase two will be next year. Then inquired further about the land and what land is applicable. Al stated that all land in town that would meet the criteria would be considered, not specific to land along the Nashua River.
- 2. 1141 Main Street, Request for Certificate of Compliance**

Conservation Agent provided a summary of the project. The site work had been completed in compliance. The As-Built has also been received. Amy highlighted all the steps had been completed then the right paperwork seems to have not been submitted at the end of the project therefore she is hoping to close out today. Chair Brian opened the public hearing to the public. The applicant will need to provide recording information after they bring it to the registry of deeds.

Chair Brian made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance with ongoing conditions for work previously completed and located at 1141 Main Street. Emily seconded; all unanimously, AYE.

Roll call vote to continue: LS, WP, EW, BB; unanimous, Aye

3.	<p>Minutes – Chair Brian made a motion to accept the minutes as drafted from the April 6th 2021 public meeting of the conservation commission. William seconded; all unanimously agree.</p> <p>Roll call vote on motion to continue: BB, EW, LS, WP; unanimous, AYE</p>
4.	<p>Conservation Property Maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Agent provided an update on the Taggart LAND acquisition project stating there had been a small ribbon cutting ceremony earlier in the day with the Secretary of EEA, Senator Cronin, Representative from Kate Hogan’s office, Grant Administrator, Division of Conservation services. Another grant has been received to support the trail that was proposed to connect the Forbush Mill Fields parking area through existing conservation land to the newly acquired Town Land (4.5 acres to be land banked for future Town use). The grant supports hiring a college or highschool student to assist leading the efforts for creating, planning and physically implementing this trail project. This grant was awarded by the Nashua River Watershed Association as the fiscal agent of the NSN Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Council’s Community Grant. This is the first year that this grant is being offered and Bolton was the only project application that was fully funded while others were partially funded. This project will include information about the recently designated wild and scenic river for educational purposes and the history of the property itself. • Volunteer Land Steward Position is still open • Invasive Species removal work day was held on April 14th by Jonathan Haarstick. • Garlic Mustard pull to be scheduled in the near future by a Bolton Trails Committee member in collaboration with Jonathan Haarstick • Conservation Agent is finalizing reimbursement items to be submitted for the LAND grant. • Town Wide cleanup is supplemented by encouraging individuals to clean up around and through conservation areas as well. <p>Bolton Trails Committee requested the authorization to use rebar to hold the downed logs in place which were installed to discourage erosion and direct individuals to stay on the trail away from the edge of the pond. Unfortunately, after delineating about half of the pond with downed logs, almost all logs had been removed. Therefore, the BTC suggested the use of rebar to further deter individuals from removing the logs from their locations of delineation along the property. The Commission provided comment being discouraged that individuals may be removing the logs, and hesitant to approve use of rebar. The commission inquired to the agent of other projects that have been successful in other towns. Conservation Agent stated she was under the same impression, she stated it is unfortunately that it has not become clear to user groups of the need and reason why the logs are in place. Due to the high traffic on this property if something is not done now to reduce erosion/impacts to the trail along the ponds there may come a time that the commission may be forced to close the trail. This is clearly what the commission wants to keep from occurring and ensure the trail remain open. There is not someone there full time to monitor. Commission member brought up the composition of the log in place where the rebar would eventually become exposed. The use of a compost wattle is there for a reason, obvious in protecting about erosion but also creating a material for seed to grow in and as the wattle decomposes it too will add to the material currently in place. The Commission stated this is the preferred method to address this issue at this time.</p>

5. **Continued Request for Determination of Applicability – Memorial Field**

Conservation Agent stated Bolton Youth Baseball will include a batting tunnel to replace what was existing as part of this Determination. The information was submitted by the deadline. Ed Sterling was present to discuss the Operation and Maintenance Plan there are some items that have been suggested since the last submittal to the Conservation Commission. The items were:

- Organic methods should be used when practicable
- Prior to the fertilizer application each season, soil tests could be performed to identify the soil needs and minimize unnecessary application of chemicals
- Ed provided a summary of existing approach to treatment.
- Herbicide should be spot applied vs blanket treatment
- Weeds to be hand pulled, and bare areas to be seeded to discourage weeds growing
- Assess if grubs are a problem prior to treatment (using sq. ft. of soil assessment process)
- Irrigation to be scheduled during evening or morning to reduce evaporation and ensure efficient watering

Therefore, overall reducing the chemicals on the field.

Chair Brian opened the hearing to public comment. Michael Gorr provided a summary specific to the batting tunnel. Ed stated that the tunnel has been approved by Parks and Recreation. Conservation Agent stated the area is replacing in kind with some increase in width toward the area outside of the commission's jurisdiction. The BYBB will be working on clean up specific to the areas along the perimeter of the field. The area would be seeded in fall prior to overwintering to ensure stabilization of the area within the tunnel between seasons.

Commission member Emily wanted to be transparent clarifying she had conversations about the field doing research on field maintenance as a member of Bolton Local communicating with DPW to see how the process could be improved upon overall. Therefore, she asked the commission if they would prefer, she recuses herself from any discussion on the OM plans specific to parks and recreation projects. Chair Brian stated he does not know ethically where the commission should fall on. He stated he does not believe she has not done anything wrong but if she wanted to recuse herself in the event there were any question in the future. Conservation Agent stated abstaining is also an option for the commission at the time a vote was taken. Chair Brian stated she has already publicly announced why she would abstain. She stated she would like to remain part of the conversation with Parks and Recreation.

Vince Larosa was present to request clarification on soil testing and associated cost. Conservation Agent stated that the cost would be discussed with the property owner/manager in this case Parks and Recreation not during the concom meeting. They would also have to inquire regarding the frequency of test to the contracted party. He further inquired when the last time fertilizer was applied to Town Common. Conservation Agent stated that would be a question for Parks and Recreation but that property will be discussed at an upcoming public meeting.

Vince shared concern about being proactive vs. reactive and the importance of being proactive highlighting Gatsby Grounds as a company that is proactive to ensure the field aesthetics. Richard Davis was present to express concerns about chemicals while also expressing a potential alternative treatment method.

Chair Brian made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Request for Determination of Applicability until the next meeting of the conservation commission Tuesday May 4th 20021 at 7pm.

William seconded.

Roll call vote to continue: LS, WP, BB; Aye. EW Abstains.

6.	<p>Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation – 159 Ballville Road</p> <p>Present: Paul McManus Wetland Scientist, Steve Brennan General Manager, Kelly Durfey Cardoza Consultant. Paul McManus provided a detailed overview of the wetland resource areas on site and the locations throughout the property. Conservation Agent requested clarification on how the Wetland Scientist establishes the stormwater infrastructure and the commission's jurisdiction.</p> <p>The Conservation agent requests a site visit.</p> <p>Chair Brian made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Abbreviated Notice of resource Area Delineation until the next meeting of the conservation commission Tuesday May 4th 20021 at 7:15pm.</p> <p>Emily seconded; all unanimously agree.</p> <p>Roll call vote to continue: LS, WP, BB, EW, Unanimously AYE</p>
7.	<p>Continued Notice of Intent – Century Mill Road Map 3D Parcel 75 – <i>proposed construction of three single family homes and widen and pave an existing gravel driveway</i></p> <p>Applicant requested a continuation via email until the next public meeting of the conservation commission.</p> <p>Chair Brian made a motion to continue the public hearing until Tuesday, May 4th 2021 at 7:50pm for the proposed project to be located at Map 3D Parcel 75. Emily seconded; all unanimously AYE.</p> <p>Roll call vote to continue: EW, LS, WP, JB, BB; unanimous, Aye</p>
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation and Maintenance Plans for Conservation properties are posted on the Conservation Town Website. • There is new regulations for mosquito control as on the mass.gov website and Commission member encourages those who have interest to provide public comment through the mass.gov website.
9.	<p>Chair Brian made a motion to close the public meeting of the Conservation Commission Tuesday, April 20th 2021. Emily seconded; all unanimously AYE.</p> <p>Roll Call Vote on motion: BB, LS, EW, WP; unanimous, AYE</p>