

## MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 MEETING

Virtual access via phone (646) 558 8656 or web at [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) with Meeting ID 898 9458 4532 / Password 572069

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order by Chair John Bresnahan at 7:02 P.M. on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and was conducted in a hybrid format, consistent with the July 16, 2022 Bill extending certain provisions that were previously held during the state of emergency.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair John Bresnahan, David Dumais, Patrick Carnahan, Andrea Chasen, Kimberly Barton. **Absent:** Patrick Gottschlicht, Kiernan Mulcahy.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Parson.

**MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:** Chair John Bresnahan made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Carnahan, to accept the minutes of January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 as presented. Roll call vote - Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Carnahan: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes; Ms. Barton: abstained; Ms. Chasen: abstained Motion passed 3-0 with two abstention.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Salary \$3,407.96; Maintenance: \$700; Office Supplies \$100; Miscellaneous \$-10; Wetlands Protection Fund \$7,877.15; ConCom Trust Fund \$9,656.75.

**RDA – TWIN HILLS COUNTRY CLUB IRRIGATION HOLDING POND:** Chair John Bresnahan disclosed that his employer manufactures products utilized by Twin Hills Country Club, therefore he will recuse himself from the matter to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Golf Course Superintendent David Parson explained that the man-made pond, built in 1965 with a clay-based liner (typical practice at the time) and a depth of 25', has a layer of sediment that has been settling in recent times and is compromising the intake line used for irrigation. The original design had a man-made over-flow stream that diverted water to the 16<sup>th</sup> tee box as needed, but said stream no longer exists; nowadays the pond does not have an outlet. The pond is fed with water from two 400'-deep wells, but also receives drained water from other parts of the golf course; it's drained every winter discourage illegal skating activity via a drain at its bottom that diverts the water to a drainage swale on property. The applicant wishes to remove accumulated pond and sediments down to the clay line without disturbing said layer and disposing the excavated material to an area within the country club that will allow the material to properly dry for reuse in the golf course's landscape. Stored material will be more than 200 feet from any wetland area. While there are no bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) associated with this pond, the applicant wishes to obtain input from the commission on the best practice to follow in this instance.

While a previous site visit by the commission had confirmed that, despite MassDEP's assumption, the pond does not have an outlet, an additional site visit was scheduled for Friday February 17<sup>th</sup> at 4pm in order for the rest of the commission to have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the terrain in question.

**DISCUSSION – REVISION TO WETLANDS BYLAW TO ACKNOWLEDGE DPW LAND DISTURBANCE PERMIT:** On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 the Select Board and Planning Board had a joint meeting to hear the presentation prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) on their review of the stormwater management regulations found in town bylaws and other applicable Rules & Regulations documents; Director of Planning Corrin Meise-Munns forwarded the meeting's recording for those commissioners that were unable to participate in the hybrid presentation. Due to a clerical error, Ms. Barton did not receive the January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 Conservation Commission meeting information and unfortunately missed the opportunity to participate in the original discussion and voting, therefore this evening she expressed concern over the recommendations that have been presented by PVPC as she ponders whether the consultant and town officials involved in this review have considered the more stringent approach possible that will benefit our environment, specifically as it pertains to Article 6/Chapter 800 (which is referenced in the language approved by the commission on its January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting to be included in the Wetlands Bylaw) while also stating that the commission may not be rightfully recognized. However, other commissioners see these recommendations as a step in the right direction that will allow the Town to comply with the latest MS4 permit requirements without compromising the commission's authority where it's applicable. It is not under jurisdiction or expertise of the Commission to comment on stormwater

engineering applications as they pertain to building and lot development. The Commission feels the DPW are better equipped to accept and manage MS4 permit applications.

Kimberly Barton made a motion, and was seconded by Andrea Chasen, to rescind the vote made by the commission on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (that approved the inclusion of paragraph on the Wetlands Bylaw as recommended by the PVCP) and provide the commission with additional time to discuss the matter. Roll call vote - Mr. Dumais: no; Mr. Carnahan: no; Mr. Bresnahan: no; Ms. Barton: yes; Ms. Chasen: no. Motion failed 1-4.

**OTHER BUSINESS** – The following items were discussed:

1. Ms. Chasen presented an estimate from GMH Fence for three gates valued of over \$7,000 to be installed on various points within the floodplains to deter illegal vehicle access and dumping. Due to the high cost of the products, the feedback obtained by third parties on the potential failure of these types of gates to deter illegal trespassing and the lack of financial resources to move forward with this procurement, the commission agreed to continue the research on the most practical and cost-effective solution to be installed in these areas with input from emergency response personnel.
2. The Longmeadow Earth Day Cleanup has been scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
3. Mr. Bruce Tyler has informed the commission of the hiring of a wetlands consultant that will assist him in the wetland delineation and restoration plan to be implemented to mitigate the wetlands violation found on Pondsides Farm LLC.
4. Mr. Carnahan shared images of design features (gravel trail, kiosks, maps) found at the Thomas and Palmer Brook (a nature preserve located in Great Barrington, MA) that can serve as inspiration for the beautification of various conservation areas, including the Riverfront Conservation Area currently under review thanks to a CPC grant. He also added that the MassTrails grant cycle he mentioned at the last meeting does not have the component of public outreach he wished to target, therefore he will opt out of this current grant cycle and wait for a more appropriate time.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bianca Damiano*