

LONGMEADOW CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2023

Members Present: John Bresnahan; Chair, David Dumais, Kimberly Barton, Patrick Carnahan

Members Absent: Andrea Chasen, Kiernan Mulcahy

Staff Present: Leah Grigorov; Tree Warden/Conservation Agent

This meeting was held virtually and in-person, pursuant to H58 Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

Chairman Bresnahan called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: Member Carnahan requested that the August 30th minutes be amended to add “in a good way” to the last item in “Other Business”. *Chairman Bresnahan made a motion to accept the minutes as amended for the August 30th meeting. Member Dumais seconded the motion and it passed with a 4-0 roll call vote.*

TREASURER’S REPORT: Member Dumais gave a summary of the current budgets. He continued by stating that the Commission’s Miscellaneous Account has an existing encumbrance of \$2080 on it. This account has been used to pay the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commission membership dues in the past.

AGENT’S REPORT: Chairman Bresnahan introduced the new Conservation Agent Leah Grigorov to the Commission. She has 3 years of municipal conservation experience and will be splitting her time between conservation work and Tree Warden work.

The Conservation Agent introduced herself, and asked the Commission how they felt regarding receiving electronic documents. The Commission agreed that they would like to give a shared Google Drive folder a chance, but would still like paper copies available for review if necessary. Members Carnahan & Dumais would still like hard copies of new filings mailed to them.

The Conservation Agent brought up the idea of an Administrative Approval form, which would allow the Conservation Agent the flexibility to issue approvals on de minimis and minor projects. She shared with the Commission an example of a hazard tree removal policy from the Town of Westborough. She explained that the process of these approvals would include a site visit with the homeowner, and would often involve conditions including no stump grinding and all cut material to be removed off-site. The Commission liked this idea of hazard tree policy and would like to look into it further. The Conservation Agent will draft a hazard tree policy which will be discussed at the next Commission meeting.

COMMISSION UPDATES: Chairman Bresnahan shared that there is a Community Preservation Committee meeting tomorrow but he will not be able to attend.

Member Carnahan shared that the Long Range Planning Committee will be meeting soon, and there are eagle scouts looking for projects to do. He mentioned that good projects could include kiosks, moving rocks/boulders, and invasive species removal.

OTHER BUSINESS: Chairman Bresnahan shared that he will be meeting with the Fish & Wildlife Services to get a key for the kiosk at the corner of Tina & West Roads.

Chairman Bresnahan shared that Member Chasen has been working with GMH Fence Co. regarding installing fencing at three locations near Riverfront Conservation Area to avoid unauthorized trail access by off-road vehicles. The quote from GMH was \$3,500. Member Chasen had reached out to the Town Manager asking if there was funding available in the Opioids Settlements Fund. The Town Manager encouraged using Conservation Commission funds. The Commission does have a \$5,000 budget for trail maintenance. Member Carnahan added that this could be a good contender for an eagle scout project. Chairman Bresnahan agreed, and would like to pursue this option while keeping the Fire Chief involved.

Member Dumais shared that he had met with GMH regarding moving the existing fence at Riverfront Conservation Area and was quoted at \$1,600. He has spoken with Northern Tree Service in this area as there are many native vines climbing and killing trees. Northern explained that in order to get machinery in this area, the existing fencing will need to be removed. The Conservation Agent will follow up with Member Dumais on this.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

CONTINUED HEARING: NOTICE OF INTENT – DEP FILE #205-340 - 82 DUNN ROAD:

Chris Karney from Pioneer Land Planning, LLC was present to represent this project. The revised *plans*¹ were presented. Comments from DEP and the Conservation Agent were addressed.

Chairman Bresnahan asked about the use of drywells in this area. Karney explained that due to the high groundwater in this area, a drywell would often overflow and infiltration in this area is not favorable. Karney added that downspouts have been added to the plan and are shown facing toward the river to allow for sheet flow. Member Barton asked if it would be better to add a pipe to facilitate roof run-off travel. The Conservation Agent explained that either grass or a stone swale would be best in this area as substrate will slow the flow of run-off and capture any contaminants.

A *letter*² was submitted to the Commission from Natural Heritage stating that the proposed work will not adversely affect the Resource Area Habitat.

Chairman Bresnahan made a motion to issue a waiver of the Town of Longmeadow Code, Chapter 304 Wetlands Control Bylaw Section 2 which states “For all projects, a buffer of naturally occurring, undisturbed vegetation measuring 50 feet from the edge of all wetlands is required.”. Member Dumais seconded the motion and it passed with a 4-0 roll call vote.

Chairman Bresnahan made a motion to close the Notice of Intent hearing for DEP File #205-340 under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Longmeadow Code, Chapter 304 Wetlands Control Bylaw and issue an Order of Conditions with Special Conditions 1-6 to Matthew Poisson & Sarah Lak for work located at 82 Dunn Road. Member Dumais seconded the motion and it passed with a 4-0 roll call vote.

CONTINUED HEARING: NOTICE OF INTENT – DEP FILE #205-341 – WEST ROAD:

The Conservation Agent explained to the Commission that after a phone call with the Western Region Circuit Rider for DEP, this work meets a few agricultural exemptions, and therefore an Order of Conditions should not be issued. The Circuit Rider suggested that the Commission issue a Negative 5 Determination. The Conservation Agent explained that by also issuing a Negative 3 Determination, the Commission will be able to attach a Special Conditions page still.

Chairman Bresnahan made a motion to Close the Notice of Intent hearing for DEP File #205-341 under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Longmeadow Code, Chapter 304 Wetlands Control Bylaw and issue a Negative 3 & 5 Determination With Special Conditions 1-12 to Tim Keane for work located at West Road. Member Dumais seconded the motion and it passed with a 4-0 roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Grigorov

Referenced Documents:

1. CONTINUED HEARING: NOTICE OF INTENT – DEP FILE #205-340 - 82 DUNN ROAD
“Conservation Filing Plan 82 Dunn Road Longmeadow, Massachusetts” with final revisions dated 9/11/2023.
2. CONTINUED HEARING: NOTICE OF INTENT – DEP FILE #205-340 - 82 DUNN ROAD
Letter from Massachusetts Fish & Wildlife; NHESP File No.:23-8496 dated 8/31/2023.