



City of Watertown

Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main St.
Watertown, MA 02472

Leo G. Martin, Chair
Maria P. Rose, Vice Chair
Charles C. Bering, Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member
Darya Mattes, Member
Rachel Danford, Member

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 3, 2023, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

Conservation Commission Members Present: Leo Martin, Maria Rose, Charles Bering, Darya Mattes, Rachel Danford

Absent: Jamie O'Connell

Also Present: Patrick Fairbairn, Tyler Glode, Councilor Nicole Gardner, Brian McCarthy

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent, Susan C. Jenness, Assistant

Martin chaired the meeting.

1. Informational Update - Patrick Fairbairn updating the Conservation Commission on the Mount Auburn Cemetery amphibian study.

Fairbairn was present and proceeded to introduce the topic to members of the CC, describing Dell Pond, a vernal pool at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, which after numerous conversations and much consideration, remains uncertified.

Fairbairn introduced some of the habitat background of the pool, explaining that Dell Pond has been part of a reintroduction program under the presidency of David Barnett. Over the years, Barnett assembled a consortium to monitor the pond and surroundings, studying the

area to ensure that it remains a good place for the habitat, with a particular focus on the spotted salamanders.

Fairbairn said the focus of his current discussion at this meeting, is to develop an official system for monitoring Dell Pond and the ecosystem in a formal arrangement to collect the data on a regular basis, although there is no regulatory obligation to do so. Fairbairn clarified there is far more of a moral obligation, that is good for everyone involved, to have an agreed upon discussion of the best course of action to follow in each consecutive year.

Martin stated he felt led to visit the cemetery, and Fairbairn agreed it is in everyone's best to go for visit the site.

Members of the CC agreed that a letter should be sent to the Mt. Auburn Cemetery by Conservation Agent Swan. She will work with Rose and Martin collectively on the letter, giving the incoming president of the MAC, a brief history of the collaboration between the Conservation Commission and the cemetery.

Swan will simultaneously look into speaking with someone at the MAC to close out a Notice of Intent filed in 2015, under the number Mass DEP 321-0161, that was never closed out.

2. Informational Meeting - DPW Discussion and Presentation on Walker Pond

Tyler Glode, Engineer for DPW was present to update the members of the CC.

Glode has been on a site visit with Swan to the Walker Pond site, which has been flagged for a previous delineation. The DPW is preparing for some roadway improvements, and at this time, they are setting up protection of Walker Pond, near the access road, via Manley Way, just outside the 150-foot buffer zone.

The DPW will be installing jersey barriers on May 5th, to cut off roadway access and for protection of the catch basins, from roadway milling. As far as the service vehicles and equipment being utilized in the improvements to the roadway, there will be no refueling allowed, and zero tolerance for any violations from the protocols adopted to protect the buffer zone.

All work taking place is outside the resource area, and there will be a DPW representative inspecting the site, which will be monitored on a regular basis. Glode agreed to update members of the CC of any violations that occur will be reported directly to the Conservation Commission.

3. Public Hearing - (Continued to the May 3, 2023, meeting) - Request for Determination of Applicability - for the proposed parking lot improvements and utility upgrades located at

10 - 30 Manley Way, Watertown, Massachusetts. PPF Industrial 20 Seyon, LLC, Owner, Christopher M. Lucas, Representative/Applicant

Brian McCarthy was present to update the members of the Conservation Commission about the progress they were making with the DPW as to the RDA, filed in 2022.

After receiving numerous comments from the DPW, more site improvements were necessary such as a reduction in impervious space, addition of a pedestrian walkway, addition of new drainage in compliance with the codes of the city, as well as the increase of landscaping on the site. The site has already been flagged on a previous occasion.

The site plan review is currently taking place in the city, and it has been determined a Notice of Intent will be required as the scope of the project has evolved through numerous discussions with DPW.

Rose asked McCarthy to investigate the rectangle section on the plans located over by the Repton Place site. She cautioned McCarthy to look into the subterranean right turn around. McCarthy replied that he had a city letter regarding an easement for that location on the proposal.

Motion: Rose made a motion to close the public hearing. Bering seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members agreed with the motion made by Rose.

Motion: A motion was made by Mattes for a positive determination and for the filing of a Notice of Intent. Danford seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and all agreed with the motion made by Mattes.

4. Public Hearing - (Continued to the June 7, 2023, meeting) - Lot located off 0 Arlington St.

Notice of Intent submitted for the construction of a 41,289 square feet (sf) of pervious parking area to grade and pave the north side of Sawins Pond, extending from the existing paved parking lot, located off 0 Arlington Street, between 71 Arlington Street and 15 Arlington Street taking place within the 100 foot Buffer Zone of Vegetated wetlands and Inland Bank and locally regulated 150 foot Buffer Zone. Polina Safran, Representative from SWCA, Max Hatziliades, Owner

Martin clarified that the public hearing had been continued by request of the applicant/owner.

5. Acceptance of Minutes -

Review and acceptance of Minutes from the February 1, 2023. Some modifications were requested by Martin.

Motion: Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Bering seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and all agreed with the motion made by Martin.

Review and acceptance of Minutes from March 1, 2023.

Motion: A motion was made by Bering to accept the minutes as amended. Danford made a motion to accept the minutes as amended.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and all agreed to accept the motion made by Bering.

Review and acceptance of Minutes from the April 12, 2023.

Members of the CC agreed to table the minutes from the April meeting to the June 7th meeting.

6. Agent Report

- CPC Update by Jamie O'Connell - The four projects that were selected to move forward by the members of the CPC will be going before the City Council for review.
- Vote on Authorization for electronic signatures of Conservation Commission members-

Members of the CC agreed to allow Swan to apply their electronic signatures for use during meetings that were held virtually, until such time as they revoke the authorization.

Motion: Mattes made a motion to allow for electronic signatures for virtual meetings until they agree to revoke the privilege. Danford seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call was taken, and all members agreed with the motion made by Mattes.

- GSA Site - Swan reported she had attended a site visit in March that was held for the Five-Year review of the site. She reported that a report will be issued this summer and she will share it with members of the CC when she receives it. Rose said she was concerned over the lack of access for the public at the site. Members discussed that the DCR owns the site now and some have heard there may be an issue with lack of funding

from DCR. Rose suggested there may be an opportunity to use Community Preservation funding to move things such as public access along at the site.

- 99 Coolidge - Swan reported she has been on a site visit with Gideon and on her own. She said she will remain in touch with the team for updates and will provide members of the CC when she has some news.
- Mt. Auburn Cemetery - Willow Pond - Mass DEP 321-0161 - Swan said she went on a site visit to Lake Halcyon, for a Notice of Intent. She said she would be getting in touch with Mt. Auburn Cemetery about closing out the OOC for Willow Pond project.
- Whitney Hill Update - Rose has been in touch with Bryce from the Student Conservation Association (SCA). She spoke with Bryce about the plan for the students to come and work on the soil and erosion control project at Whitney Hill. They have allocated time to do ten (10) days of work, and it looks like that will take place in August. Housing will be necessary for up to 5-6 people and they would like to camp outdoors. Rose has looked for camping accommodation and has not been successful. She asked other members to help her come up with some camping options for the work crew and she emphasized they would need a water source, showering utilities as well, and power source for cooking as well.
- Martin announced he has been very busy lately and would be interested in having a member of the CC take over as chair. Rose indicated she would be interested. They will place an item on the agenda for the following month, so they can discuss options for a new chair, and hold a vote for a replacement for Martin.