

Southampton Conservation Commission
Meeting – March 15, 2021
Via Zoom - Meeting ID: 860 0638 0239

Present via Zoom: Marla Hanc, Art Lawrence, Joy Piper, Brittany Taylor, Dan LaValley, Mike Reed, Anna Breen

Absent: none

Public Present via Zoom:

Chris Fowles, Select Board
Diana Federman, Associate ConCom Member
Charlie McDonald, Associate ConCom Member
Robert Levesque, Landscape Architect / President, R. Levesque Associates, Inc.
Ryan Nelson, Environmental/Soil Scientist, R. Levesque Associates, Inc.

6:01pm Meeting called to order.

Open Time to the Public

No items.

6:01pm New Business

Discussion with Rob Levesque regarding permit application process review

-Site address assignment/changes

-Discrepancies in paperwork

M. Hanc noted that address changes after paperwork had been filed and recorded for properties with RDAs or NOIs can make future research in the files more complicated. Several property addresses have changed in the past few years. While addresses are not generally under their purview, R. Levesque said he will coordinate directly with the Planning Board chair moving forward on address assignment issues. While paperwork discrepancies had been resolved, the goal is to avoid them up front whenever possible. R. Levesque said he will work with staff to clarify the paperwork and details associated with their filings. During the time of previous filings they were adjusting to a remote working environment. He explained that sometimes there is a disconnect between the firm and their clients regarding the clients familiarity with paperwork and the subsequent process. To mitigate the disconnect, R. Nelson created an example cover letter for an NOI further detailing the process for clients to follow. The letter clarifies what can or cannot be done outside of certain conditions.

D. LaValley mentioned that he has requested that the topic of address assignment be added to the Planning Board agenda so that this can be remedied as it tends to have a ripple effect through multiple town committees and departments when property addresses change.

6:35pm Stewardship Projects

Vernal Pool Certifications

In 2020, B. Gutermuth certified two vernal pools on Gilbert Road per requests from the property owners and one of the vernal pools at the Alice Brown Conservation Area. She plans on certifying a second vernal pool at the Alice Brown Conservation Area in 2021. She has asked the Commission to let her know of any other potential vernal pools on town owned properties for review to certify this year as well as if they knew of any private property owners who would like their vernal pools certified. It was brought up that there is a possible vernal pool behind the Norris School that is unfortunately getting trash thrown into it. Possible other vernal pools at Whittemore and Pomeroy Mountain conservation areas.

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Conservation Restrictions

Pete Westover, Conservation Works LLC, completed the monitoring report for the Wolf Hill Sanctuary CR including communications with Barry Searle. P. Westover offered the use of his trail camera near the beaver dam. Other than patches of invasive species, there appear to be no problems at the site.

Forestry Work update

Awaiting the Forest Cutting at the Alice Brown Conservation Area going out to bid. Anticipate opening bids on April 5.

Manhan Meadows Sanctuary RTP Grant Projects

2020 RTP Grant

Town Administrator Ed Gibson put the project out to bid on March 15. The Commission will have to hold a special meeting on April 12 to open the bids and award the contract. The Project Status Report to MassTrails due March 15 was created and uploaded by D. Federman. Janet Brown will have the entry sign refurbished by RJM. One bench was completed at Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School. M. Reed will check out trails for more downed trees/branches from the latest windstorms.

2021 RTP Grant

Nothing new.

Trail work elsewhere

Fairy house possibilities - A. Breen proposed construction of “fairy houses” out of natural materials to encourage community engagement and invoke children’s imaginations in the outdoors. Could do some themed trails.

Alice Brown Conservation Area – someone cleared some large fallen trees from the path. Should consider reapplying purple paint where it is fading, put up boundary markers medallions. Start thinking about replacements for crossings for wet areas.

Pomeroy Mountain conservation property – suggestions for name, (e.g. Pomeroy Mountain Conservation Area?) since Durell’s Path is seemingly unrelated. SCA crew coming to build trail most likely in October. Their scheduling has been more challenging because of COVID-19. Working on contract and insurance concerns. Chris Fowles is going to do more research into the property before the Commission decides on a name for the property.

Szczypta Farm Conservation Area – tree down over trail that goes along the river. A. Breen is going to try to remove it this coming weekend. While M. Hanc was not sure which culvert is under consideration for removal, D. LaValley noted it was the larger culvert. A section of the Ed Nied memorial sign has been peeled off. Jacquie Sears is looking into replacement costs.

7:28pm Regular Business

Wetlands Protection Bylaw –update

The KP Law review comments did not address all of the AG comments. The quorum change is straight forward. The suggested changes for the fines for the violations do not meet the Commission’s intent to have the fine amount be outside of the bylaw itself so it can be changed

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by the Select Board without going to a Town Meeting. Also removed was the language the Commission had hoped to use to be reimbursed for recording some Enforcement Orders at the Registry of Deeds. Further questions will be sent to KP Law seeking recommendations for changes for approval at the Annual Town Meeting.

Updates from Other Boards

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness

Representative B. Gutermuth – no meetings in March.

Open Space Committee Update

Representative D. Federman – C. Palmer is meeting next week with Mass Fish & Wildlife and Easthampton officials to discuss the Cook Road parcel that the owner wants to sell for conservation. The Barnes Aquifer pamphlet is nearing completion, will require CPC and Town Meeting approval for funding for printing. The Neighborhood Outreach program is set, with 4 town wide events and 2 landowner-directed events in April and May.

Master Plan Implementation Committee Update

Representative B. Taylor – no meetings in March.

Community Preservation Committee Update

Representative J. Piper – no items for the Conservation Commission.

Review minutes from March 1, 2021

7:57pm Motion to accept March 1 minutes as amended made by D. LaValley, seconded by M. Reed.

Lawrence (aye), Piper (aye), Taylor (aye), LaValley (aye), Reed (aye), Breen (aye), Hanc (aye).

Treasurer's Report

Balances as of March 13, 2021:

Conservation General Fund (Act # 015171.700) = \$3,059.18

Conant Wildlife Fund (Act # 825200.701) = \$33,670.94 (Interest Payment)

Hazel Young Memorial Fund (Act # 825912.200) = \$19,179.14 (Interest Payment)

Trail Gift Account (Act # 264018.00 Rev/265500.018 Exp) = \$4,617.92

Signatures

- Trail Gift Account (Act # 264018.00, SCC-FY21-P18)
 - Payable to Fleury Lumber for bench materials, \$632.08
- Conservation General Fund (Act # 015171.700, SCC-FY21-P19)
 - Payable to Conservation Works LLC for 2021 Monitoring Report for Wolf Hill Sanctuary CR, \$550.00

8:02pm Motion to accept Treasurer's Report made by D. LaValley, seconded by A. Breen.

Lawrence (aye), Piper (aye), Taylor (aye), LaValley (aye), Reed (aye), Breen (aye), Hanc (aye).

8:02pm Correspondence

- March 2, 2021, from MassWildlife – regarding Spring Trout Stocking, New License Fees Proposed, and More

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- March 2, 2021, from MHP – regarding Still time to sign up for MHP's statewide listening tour
- March 3, 2021, from MHP – regarding Last week to apply for MHP's new technical assistance program for trusts
- March 4, 2021, from Michele Grzenda - MSMCP - March Brownbag and other conservation news
- March 4, 2021, from Matthew Nowak, PWS, Kinder Morgan - regarding Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C.: Notification of Hazardous Tree Removal
- March 5, 2021, from Pete Westover, Conservation Works LLC – regarding Riggs C/R closing
- March 5, 2021, from Joey Wigglesworth – regarding MACC Winter 2021 Conservation Quarterly Member Magazine
- March 9, 2021, from Joey Wigglesworth – regarding Registration Is Open - MACC's Virtual Annual Environmental Conference 2021
- March 10, From Ed Gibson, Town Administrator – regarding KP amendments to Wetlands Protection Bylaw from attorney General Comments
- March 12, 2021, from Oleg Yermakov – regarding 28 crooked ledge site plan
- March 12, 2021, from Lindsay Martucci – regarding MACC Annual Environmental Conference
- March 12, 2021, from Joy Duperault (DCR) - BRIC/FMA FY 2021 application development assistance
- March 12, 2021, from Chris Volonte – regarding Kestrel Nest Boxes – Monitoring Begins Now
- March 14, 2021, from Amanda Lewis – regarding MassTrails GRANT PROGRESS REPORT Form
- March 15, 2021, from Kevin Kraus – regarding 78 Fomer Rd.
- March 15, 2021, from Roz Terry, R. Levesque Associates Inc. – regarding Complete recorded OOC w/ Special Conditions for 289-0232
- March 15, 2021, from Ryan Nelson, R. Levesque Associates Inc. – regarding OOC Cover Letter

Hard Copy

None.

Any other necessary business that cannot await the April 5, 2021 regular Conservation Commission meeting.

None.

Other Site Visits

None.

Upcoming Meeting Dates (subject to change)

04/05/2021, 4/12/2021 (special), 05/03/2021, 05/17/2021, 06/07/2021, 06/21/2021

Adjournment

8:08pm Motion to adjourn made by J. Piper, seconded by D. LaValley.

Lawrence (absent), Piper (aye), Taylor (aye), LaValley (aye), Reed (aye), Breen (aye), Hanc (aye).