



## **TOWN OF PELHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Pelham, Massachusetts

### **Minutes for December 9, 2021**

Present: Dana MacDonald, David Gross (online), Janice Gifford, Timan Lukas, Richard Seelig

The meeting was held in person at the Rhodes Building. A link to a Zoom meeting was published as part of the regular Commission agenda. The meeting was held under guidelines from the Attorney General and the Governor.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:02 pm.

#### **Public Meeting for a Request for Determination submitted by Lewis Goff located at 78 Buffam Road for a garden shed in the 100-foot Buffer Zone**

Chair MacDonald opened the meeting at 7:04 pm. He described the RDA, the newspaper ad published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette and the abutter mailing. He noted that the first presenter will be the applicant, then Commissioners can ask questions and make comments, then abutters can comment, and finally the general public can comment. Commissioner Lukas pointed out that the notice to abutters did not go out in time. He suggested that the Commission continue the RDA meeting to a subsequent Commission meeting.

It was moved that the RDA meeting be continued to January 13, 2022. Second. Approved 5-0. (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

#### **Outstanding invoice for the Daily Hampshire Gazette legal ads**

The Commission reviewed an invoice forwarded by former Agent Borenstein from the Daily Hampshire Gazette for the RDA application of Lewis Goff in the amount of \$221.49.

It was moved that the Commission pay the Daily Hampshire Gazette invoice of \$221.49. Second. Approved 5-0. (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

### **Minutes for November 18, 2021**

The Commission reviewed the draft minutes for the November 18, 2021 meeting.

It was moved to approve the November 18, 2021 draft minutes. Second. Approved 3-0-2. (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – abstain, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – abstain).

#### **Town Bylaw on Dog Walking**

The Commission discussed the minutes for the 2019 Fall Town Meeting that Commissioner Gross had copied to other Commissioners via email. He noted in the email that the Warrant

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article that would have amended a bylaw to require all dogs on town property to be leashed had been defeated. Chair MacDonald asked Commissioner Gross to send an email to Selectman Agolia and Town Clerk Burgess conveying this finding.

**Signage at Buffam Falls Conservation Area**

Commissioner Seelig noted that trail signage at the Buffam Falls Conservation Area needs to be updated. Chair MacDonald said that he has not yet contacted Kestrel Trust to get their input on sign language design. Commissioner Seelig volunteered to contact them. Chair MacDonald suggested contacting Stu Watson and Chris Volonte. It was agreed that it would be useful to have either or both of them attend the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Seelig suggested that the Commission's change in rules about dog walking at Buffam Falls Conservation Area be published in the Pelham Slate. He also brought up the ad-hoc entrance off of North Valley Road that is down a steep embankment which is eroding. He suggested that the Commission erect a sign indicating the entrance up the road and additionally block off the ad-hoc trail. He suggested that the sign might read "Access entrance 100 yards ahead."

**Update on 59 Meetinghouse Road**

Commissioner Seelig said that a tree fell on the siltation fence and into the adjacent intermittent stream at 59 Meetinghouse Road that has an enforcement order for remediation of the illegal driveway at the property now owned by the Bank of America (BOA). Chair MacDonald asked Commissioner Lukas to contact the BOA representative to inform them that the Commission will modify the enforcement in order to require completion of the restoration by springtime. The Commission expressed the understanding that this property involves a number of issues not solely concerning the noted violations of the Wetlands Protection Act, and thus the timeline for restoration may not be possible to meet.

**Items for the Next Commission Meeting**

The Commission agreed that at the next meeting a job description for replacement of the Conservation Agent should be written. There was discussion about the level of assistance that will be required of the new agent. Chair MacDonald felt that the amount of work would require a 1/3 time person. He suggested that the Commission invite the chairs of the Shutesbury and Leverett Conservation Commissions to the next Commission in order to discuss the possibility of a shared Conservation Agent between the 3 towns. He felt that the Commission should be able to contribute \$15k toward an agent. Commissioner Lukas brought up the federal infrastructure money that the town has received and the upcoming town board chairs meeting with the Select Board. The Commission discussed potential items that will cost money and could be appropriate for the infrastructure money: a Conservation Agent, a refresh of the Pelham Open Space Plan, and conservation areas trail work.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.



Respectfully submitted by David Gross