

MINUTES
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
HYBRID PARTICIPATION
August 29, 2022

OPENING: The additionally scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission opened at 7:00 via hybrid. Chairman MacWilliams announced the names, time and date of the meeting, and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

ATTENDANCE

David MacWilliams, Chairman	Present
Mehmet Mizanoglu, Commissioner	Present
Brian Drenen, Commissioner	Present
Jerry Patria, Commissioner	Absent
Kevin Solek	Present
Andy Reardon	Present

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michelle Pratt 152 Berkshire Avenue Mrs. Pratt made note of the CRC annual golf tournament on September 17th. Mrs. Pratt also mentioned the possible removal of the beaver lodge at Tri-PBJ Marina. There is a volunteer who has heavy equipment and is willing to help with its removal. Mrs. Pratt further suggested the Select Board conduct a survey of all Board and Committee members relating to reappointments.

Eric Muller, 12 Shore Road, stated that he would answer any questions about E.coli issues in the lake. E.coli needs a source to enter the lake. The testing to date has been just to measure the amount of E.coli. Oxygen destroys E.coli, a large factor of the current high counts could be contributed to the lack of rain and the high temperatures.

Chairman MacWilliams read a letter from Maryann Philo, 11 North Pond Road as a matter of record concerning activities at the North Pond Land Preserved.

XXX somebody 19 North Pond, commented about the fire and the relative location to her property. The cause of the fire has not been determined.

MINUTES

Commissioner Drenen made a motion to accept the minutes of August 15, 2022 with minor corrections. Commissioner Solek seconded the motion. The roll call vote of the Commission was unanimous in favor.

David MacWilliams	yes	Brian Drenen	yes
Andy Reardon	abstained	Kevin Solek	yes

Mehmet Mizanoglu was not present for the motion of the minutes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

RDA 157 Feeding Hills Road Chairman MacWilliams opened the Public Hearing as a matter of correction from the previous meeting concerning the vote. To officiate the RDA, a negative determination will be needed for the play scape, and a positive determination will be needed for the nature walkway as it will require an NOI due to its complexity.

Commissioner Solek made a motion for a negative determination for the play scape portion of the RDA. Commissioner Drenen seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

David MacWilliams	yes	Brian Drenen	yes
Andy Reardon	abstained	Kevin Solek	yes
Mehmet Mizanoglu	yes		

Commissioner Solek made a motion for a positive determination for the walkway.

Commissioner Mizanoglu seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

David MacWilliams	yes	Brian Drenen	yes
Andy Reardon	abstained	Kevin Solek	yes
Mehmet Mizanoglu	yes		

Mark & Teresa Tulyholowycz Property Owners

RDA 8 Shore Road Proposed Tree Removal Chairman MacWilliams opened the Public Hearing by reading the legal ad as posted in The Reminder Publication on August 18, 2022. Mr. Tulyholowycz stated that there are two large oak trees one of which leans toward the house. Coordinator Pooler presented pictures of the trees. Chairman MacWilliams noted that the trees, being within 100 feet of the lake, may be a benefit to shoring up the slope and shade that benefit species that live in or around the lake. However, the first concern of the Conservation Commission is safety relative to the potential of the trees damaging property. The trees will be removed from the roadway and the stumps will remain. A site visit was scheduled. Commissioner Mizanoglu made a motion to continue the Public Hearing. Commissioner Solek seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

David MacWilliams	yes	Brian Drenen	yes
Andy Reardon	abstained	Kevin Solek	yes
Mehmet Mizanoglu	yes		

NEW BUSINESS

26 Island Way The property owner requested a meeting with the Conservation Commission and the Select Board concerning LPP fees. There was no representation for the property in person or on Zoom.

Betty Ayotte & Rick LaBarr Owners

TRI-PBJ Marina Beaver Dam Ms. Ayotte, 537 Griffin Road West Suffield explained that the dam has expanded close to the docks which eliminates the ability to use 4 or 5 of the marina boat slips. Coordinator Pooler presented pictures of the dam. Acting Coordinator Clark stated that research has been done on the issue and it appears that beavers nor their lodges can be removed. The Board of Health did water samples and concluded that the beavers are not a source of E-coli in the lake. Removal of the lodge and beavers will need approval from Fish & Wildlife, or the Board of Health can allow trapping during the off season. Mr. Eric Muller, 12 Shore Road, agreed with Acting Coordinator Clark and further stated that once beavers are trapped, they must be killed. However, once the beavers are removed, then the lodge can be dismantled with approval from the Conservation Commission. The removal of the lodge would be a benefit to the potential of opening up the access area to the culvert. Mr. Norn Cheever, 100 Berkshire Avenue, noted that the issue was at the Select Board meeting this evening. The property owner can trap beavers, however it was agreed that the State is the owner and Fish & Wildlife could determine the next course of action.

Jon Goddard, DPW

Fred Jackson Road Drainage Upgrade Mr. Goddard stated that DEP is the holder of an Order of Conditions that allow work within a Right of Way that may be in a buffer zone, riverfront areas and BVW relative to infrastructure work. There is a southern portion of Fred Jackson Road that would fall within Conservation jurisdiction. DEP plans on upgrading the drainage system for storm water. The catch basins are designed to convey outfall to the Klaus Anderson intersection near Tuttle Brook. Commissioner Solek noted that the hoods o the manhole covers stop large debris, however there are no oil water separators as required for private installations. Mr. Goodard stated that this is not a new project, just a repair improvement from the original system and the cost is also a factor. Commissioner Solek noted that the Conservation Commission held other projects to a higher standard and the Town should be no exception. The repair will improve the water quality entering Tuttle Brook.

Correction August 15, 2022 Agenda The agenda had 141 College Highway, which should have been 141 Congamond Road. Commissioner Drenen made the motion to note the correction for the posted agenda. Commissioner Mizanoglu seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows:

David MacWilliams yes
Andy Reardon abstained
Mehmet Mizanoglu yes

Brian Drenen yes
Kevin Solek yes

Emergency Certifications for Tree Removal Coordinator Pooler made note that there have been several recent calls concerning tree removals. An Emergency Certification can be issued to allow for tree removals. The stump must remain. Coordinator Pooler questioned if the Commission

would require a replacement for the removal. Chairman MacWilliams noted that the recent requests are more for a better site line to the lake, and not a situation of safety. Chairman MacWilliams suggested “take a tree plant a tree”. Acting Coordinator Clark noted that special conditions can be placed on the Emergency Certifications for tree removals for replacement of similar planting.

Trail Cameras on Noth Pond Chairman MacWilliams was concerned that the cameras are often stolen. There is also the issue of enforcement at the time of a violation as opposed to having a picture without the ability of identification. Lisa Bailey commented that it would be helpful if water vessels or vehicles could be identified by their registration number. The subject will be addressed at the Fish & Wildlife meeting on August 30th.

Conservation Land Maps Sona tubes have been installed at the Gorge. Once the signs are received the Commissioners will schedule a work day for the installation. Coordinator Pooler presented a map of North Pond, the Gorge, and Sofinowski properties that can be outlined on a kiosk to better identify the trails. It could be included with a QR code that can be interactive. Funding could be taken from a gift account or the trails grant which could also include printing a paper map of the trails on conservation properties.

Invasive Species on North Pond Coordinator Pooler contacted Mr. Ben Mazzei, Habitat Biologist for Southwick WMA and discussed the removal of Autumn Olive, an invasive species. There may be a possibility of obtaining a grant for the removal of all evasive for conservation lands. Another option would be to get volunteers to help eradicate the species. Acting Coordinator Clark stated that Southwick may be automatically eligible for the grant as part of the Conservation Restriction on North Pond. More information will need to be researched.

Granville Gorge Issues Coordinator Pooler received a call about trash and fire rings at the location. Coordinator Pooler and Commissioner Drenen conducted a site visit and found very limited trash. Chairman MacWilliams related that the building maintenance department has someone cleaning the property. Fires at all conservation properties are and have been an issue.

MACC Fall Conference There are online courses, and a meeting date of October 15th at Fort Devens. Coordinator Pooler will be attending the conference.

Sub Committee Coordinator Pooler was of the opinion that the Conservation Commission members do not have the time to adequately manage the conservation lands. The former Open Space Committee accomplished several issues and some solutions. The current focus is only on North Pond. The potential sub-committee would be members

that are not necessarily members of the current Conservation Commission. It could be appointed by the Select Board. Chairman MacWilliams will contact Michelle Hill, Town Clerk to discuss how the committee could be created.

13 North Pond Plans are being reconfigured and will be presented at the next meeting.

141 Congamond Road A letter was submitted to Ms. Hopps with comments from the Conservation Commission requesting that there is a limitation on the dock length and/or limiting it to only 1 transient dock. The letter was read in full by Chairman MacWilliams as a matter of record.

Noble Steed Violation Coordinator Pooler stated that Mr. Saltmarsh has been working to correct the issues at the location.

14 Shore Road Coordinator Pooler stated that there is no update on that issue.

Mr. Burt Hansen, Chairman Agricultural Committee
SOMEBODY 173 Mort vining

Sofonowski Site Visit Coordinator Pooler and Commissioner Mizanoglu and Solek conducted a site visit at the location. Commissioner Mizanoglu noted that the Community Garden was still nice, and the signage is still prevalent. The entire area was open with minimum maintenance. However, there is currently no access to the ponds. Vista pruning is desperately needed. There is funding available to possibly take care of the evasive species, however, getting people to assist may be an issue. Mrs. SOMEBODY will help with the removal of brush along the ponds but would appreciate help. Acting Coordinator complemented Mrs. Somebody on all the work that has been accomplished and appreciate a continuation of clearing around the ponds. Sage Fury, 91 Granville Road, was also on the site as a member of the Agricultural Commission and volunteered to help in any way including funding.

Building & Facilities Chairman MacWilliams had a discussion with Mr. Sutton concerning trash pickup. It was agreed that funds will be transferred to the Maintenance Department from the Conservation budget for land maintenance at a rate of 2 hours a week during the summer and 1 hour a week during winter.

Commissioner Mizanoglu made a motion to adjourn at 9:01 p.m. Commissioner Patria seconded the motion. The roll call vote of the Commission was unanimous in favor:

David MacWilliams yes
Andy Reardon yes
Mehmet Mizanoglu yes

Brian Drenen yes
Kevin Solek yes

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Nilsson, Secretary

cc:
Select Board
Town Clerk

Dave MacWilliams, Chairman

Norm Cheever, Vice Chairman

Jerry Patria, Commissioner

Mehmet Mizanoglu, Commissioner

Brian Drenen, Commissioner

Kevin Solek, Commissioner

Andy Reardon, Commissioner

Date