

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 9, 2008 MEETING

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM on January 9, 2008, in the Community Meeting Room located at the Longmeadow Police Station, Williams Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Albert Laakso, Jim Simon, Stephen Gazillo, Peter Bouvier, and Karen Chadwell. Absent: John Bresnahan and Scott Foster.

OTHERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Scuderi and Michael Mocko.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: The minutes of December 12, 2007 were accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Salary account: \$3,466.63; Maintenance: \$385.00; Misc.: \$456.01.

Commissioner Laakso announced that the bill received from Michael Mocko for his services rendered in determining whether wetlands exist on the property identified as 52 Twin Hills Drive will be paid from the wetlands filing fee account.

Commissioner Laakso also notified the present Commissioners that on January 8, 2008, GMH began installing the 12 foot metal swing gate. Access keys to the gate will be provided to personnel at the fire station, police station, and the Department of Public Works.

NOI 205-284 – 1482 LONGMEADOW STREET. The NOI is for the construction of an addition to an existing single family residence. The addition includes adding on living area and a garage. An existing covered porch will be replaced by a deck. The currently existing garage will be retained as a shed. A portion of the existing driveway will be redirected to enter the new garage, and the remainder of the existing driveway will be removed, and the resulting uncovered land will be restored to a grassy lawn. Silt fencing will be placed on the back side of the pavement to retain the slope. Provided that the Commission allows the NOI, it is anticipated that the project will commence in the springtime of 2008, and will take approximately 5 – 7 months to complete. A portion of the project will occur at least partially within 200 feet of a riverfront area, namely within 200 feet of Raspberry Brook. The new garage and driveway will be outside of the riverfront area. Because the project will occur on a lot created prior to August 1, 1996 (the home was built in 1915), it is exempt under the riverfront redevelopment exemption, which allows for the redevelopment of homes within previously developed riverfront area.

In a correspondence dated December 18, 2007, The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (“NHESP”) of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife found that, under the MA Wetlands Protection Act, the project meets the state-listed species performance standard for the issuance of an Order of Conditions. Additionally, in the same correspondence, the NHESP stated that under the MA Endangered Species Act (“MESA”), the project is exempt from MESA review pursuant to 321 CMR 10.14 which exempts “the maintenance, repair, or replacement, the vertical expansion, or additions that do not exceed 50% of the footprint of an existing single family or two family home within existing paved and lawfully developed and maintained lawns or landscaped areas.”

To better assess the NOI application, the Commissioners agreed to hold a site visit on January 17, 2008 at 8:30 AM. Having obtained the applicant’s consent, the public hearing on the NOI will be continued.

OTHER BUSINESS.

Land Acquisition – 1657 Longmeadow Street. The Commission discussed the desirability of acquiring a certain property which abuts conservation land, and which is identified as 1657 Longmeadow Street. The property is located on a residential street, and currently holds a single residence home. With the exception of Commissioner Gazillo who recused himself from the discussion based on a possible conflict of interest, the Commissioners agreed that, although the Eastern side of the property would provide a valuable access way to the Pomeroy Plots, the overall costs of purchasing and maintaining the property would be beyond the Commission's budgetary allowance. Additionally, the Commission does not believe that the acquisition of the property would uphold any viable conservation interests. Accordingly, Commissioner Laakso made a motion to decline procuring the property located at 1657 Longmeadow Street for conservation purposes; the motion was seconded; and all the present Commissioners, with the exception of Commissioner Gazillo who abstained from voting, were in favor of the motion to decline the acquisition of the property. Commissioner Laakso will prepare a letter to Town Manager, Robin Crosbie, notifying her of the Commission's disinterest in acquiring the property.

COC – 15 Meadowbrook Road. Based on the comments made by Commissioner Bouvier following his site visit on December 14, 2007 to the property, the Commission was in agreement that the owner had satisfactorily complied in all respects to the Order of Conditions dated October 28, 1998 and assigned to DEP File No. 205-200. Accordingly, the present Commissioners unanimously agreed to certify in its entirety the completion of the project.

Jim Simon – Application for Community Preservation Act Funds for Open Space Acquisitions. Commissioner Jim Simon, acting in his own name and as a resident of the Town of Longmeadow, submitted an application to the Community Preservation Committee ("CPC") asking in essence that 70% of available funds be kept in escrow for future use by the Conservation Commission. Such funds would be used by the Conservation Commission for the purpose of acquiring desirable open space to be preserved and maintained for conservation purposes. Commissioner Simon sought the opinions of the other Commissioners on his application. All of the present Commissioners thought that the application had strong merit and would provide a much needed economic resource for future land acquisitions. To make the request for funds more persuasive to the CPC and to the Town of Longmeadow, Commissioner Simon was encouraged, with the assistance of the other Commissioners, to generate a list of past, present, and future tracts of land that have been, or could have been, acquired by the Conservation Commission, and to assess the costs associated with acquiring such lands. On or about January 23, 2008, Commissioner Simon shall appear before the CPC on his own behalf to personally address his application.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Karen K. Chadwell, Commissioner**