

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10th, 2021 MEETING

Access via phone (646) 558 8656 or via web at www.zoom.us with Meeting ID 938 8883 8182 / Password 726192

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:01 P.M. on February 10th, 2021 and was again conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth related to the Covid19 pandemic.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Al Laakso, David Dumais, Andrea Chasen, Stephen Gazillo, Christopher Nolan. **Absent:** Roman Berman, John Bresnahan, Kiernan Mulcahy.

OTHERS PRESENT: James Rivers from DPC Engineering; Cynthia Sommer, president of Friends of Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: Ms. Chasen made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Dumais, to accept the minutes of January 27th, 2021 as presented. Roll call vote: Ms. Chasen, yes; Mr. Laakso: yes; Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Gazillo: yes; Mr. Nolan: abstained. Four (4) in favor and one (1) abstention, motion passed, minutes were accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Salary \$3,959.99, Maintenance \$774.80, Office Supplies \$100, Miscellaneous \$-21.00, Wetlands Protection Fund \$7,690.65, ConCom Trust Fund \$9,593.22.

NOI – DEP 205-334 – PONDSIDE ROAD RESURFACING PROJECT: Since the hearing was first opened, MassDEP provided a number of comments. For full compliance with the Stream Crossing Standard worksheet submitted with the application, the new culvert at the Longmeadow Brook location would need to be approximately 15' in width; also, with the Longmeadow Brook being a cold water fishery resource, preventing sediments during construction from entering the water is important to protect its integrity.

Mr. Rivers explained that, while the worksheet's calculations indicate that culvert at the Longmeadow Brook crossing must be 15' in diameter, he considered that such a size change would be counterproductive as it would drastically alter the characteristics of the habitat and would likely drain the pond located east of Pondsides Road; he has been in communications with MassDEP to voice these concerns. He stressed that the current culvert size of 4' in diameter has been in place for over 80 years without issues, with the only flow constraint at the moment is beaver activity in front of the culvert; this was addressed last year with the installation of a beaver deceiver and DPW periodically checks the location to clean up debris if necessary. As a final comment, the matter has been thoroughly discussed with DPW and its Engineering Department, with the final deliberation being that the size of the culvert, for the sake of the habitat, must be maintained and not enlarged. Chair Al Laakso stated that the current culvert size of 4' has performed adequately in the past and feels confident that maintaining the size will be adequate.

Mr. Nolan and Ms. Chasen raised concerns of the emergence of invasive species plants after work is completed on all disturbed areas and proposed some conditions to be included. With that said, Chair Al Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Ms. Chasen, to approve the Notice of Intent for the DEP 205-334 Pondsides Road Resurfacing project based on plans and documents dated "January 2021" with the following conditions:

1. The inlet and the outlet to the Longmeadow Brook culvert at Pondsides Rd. are to be maintained by the DPW or its agents as an ongoing condition to ensure unimpeded stream flow. This includes maintaining the beaver deceiver to remove obstructive debris and vegetation.
2. The applicant or its agents are required to replant and stabilize all disturbed areas, with additional monitoring every six months for a period of two years after project completion to

inspect potential growth of invasive species and report findings to the commission; should invasive species be detected at any time, best management practices must be utilized as mitigation.

Roll call vote: Ms. Chasen, yes; Mr. Laakso: yes; Mr. Dumais: yes; Mr. Gazillo: yes; Mr. Nolan: yes. All in favor 5-0, motion passed. The applicant was informed of the steps that must be taken after receipt of the Order of Conditions and prior to work commencement, which will be outlined in the Order's cover letter.

OTHER BUSINESS – The following items were discussed:

1. Ms. Sommer, as president of the Friends of Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge, explained that the group has been considering ideas for expanding the trails to include access to river and improve overall accessibility, as well as increase viewing locations. There is also a desire to improve the portion of West Road that intersects with Longmeadow Brooks, which has been a topic of discussion in the past, as Chair Al Laakso explained, as Tennessee Gas Pipeline has expressed a desire to have vehicular access to nearby valves from Birnie Road and turning left on West Road. Both groups expressed interest in working together in the future to brainstorm improvement ideas.
2. Ms. Chasen announced that the Town will hold a socially-distant cleanup event on April 11th (rain date to be May 2nd) to celebrate and is being organized by DPW, LPRD, LHS students and various town residents. Information will be release in the coming weeks.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano