

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12th, 2020 MEETING

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on February 12th, 2020 in the conference room at the Longmeadow Police Station.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Al Laakso, John Bresnahan, David Dumais, Christopher Nolan, Stephen Gazillo **Absent:** Andrea Chasen, James Ryan.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ozgur and Jocelyne Muslu, David Askew, Melissa Coady

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: Chair Al Laakso made a motion to accept the minutes of November 13th, 2019 as presented and John Bresnahan seconded the motion. All in favor 4-0 with one abstention (Stephen Gazillo), minutes were accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Salary \$3,556.58, Maintenance \$425.26, Office Supplies \$100, Miscellaneous \$-182, Wetlands Protection Fund \$7,360.65, ConCom Trust Fund \$9,407.69.

NOI – MORNINGSIDE DRIVE CULVERT REPLACEMENT (CONTINUATION): The applicant has requested additional time to provide signoffs from all the property owners, therefore the public hearing will be extended to March 11th.

WETLAND VIOLATION 45 TWIN HILLS DRIVE: Property owners Dr. and Mrs. Muslu apologized for the wetland violation and deemed it an unintended mistake as their main goal was to address a mosquito infestation that had plagued their property over the summer due to ponding water and were unaware that portions of their property were subject to the jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA). That said, Mr. Laakso provided a 2006 aerial image showing water near said property and indicated that the presence of water and wetland identification on the property have been documented over many years. It was the expectation of the Commission that the property owners and/or a representative would appear this evening with a remediation plan per correspondence sent in December 2019; they have been instructed to do so for the March 11th meeting. While it is the commission's understanding that the professionals that have evaluated this enforcement order have sufficient knowledge of the area and its jurisdiction under WPA, Commissioner Bresnahan offered to provide further guidance to the property owners' consultants if needed.

Documents presented: Aerial images of 45 Twin Hills Drive and its surroundings.

RDA – EVERSOURCE: Melissa Coady from Tighe & Bond presented maps showing Transmission Line 1858 and the specific areas where structure replacement and overhead maintenance activities (which are exempt under Code of Massachusetts Regulations CMR) as well as the proposed access road improvements within the 100-foot buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW). Said line runs along the CT/MA border, therefore the access points for this project will be Campania Road in Enfield, CT and Wolf Swamp Road in Longmeadow, MA; access road improvements on the latter location were part of an RDA submitted in April 2018 and approved by this commission, however it was never materialized. Due to gas pipelines running in portions of the area, Eversource is in constant communications with gas companies and follows their recommendations on the installation of air bridges over the underground gas lines wherever necessary.

Due to the extent of access road surface that this project generated, Commissioner Bresnahan will prepare a formal request to Eversource for assistance in a mitigation plan or funding of invasive species control programs in the area to offset the impact.

Chair Al Laakso made a motion to issue a Determination of Applicability with Negative Determination #3 and #6 and Commissioner Nolan seconded the motion. All in favor 5-0, motion approved.

Documents presented: complete RDA application with maps.

DISCUSSION – LONGMEADOW WETLANDS BYLAW REVISIONS: The revisions were developed years ago by commissioners but were never completed. Chair Laakso’s language proposal included updating terminology and procedures based on today’s standards as well as the inclusion of a definition for “Isolated Wetlands”.

Chair Al Laakso made a motion to accept the language proposed for the Longmeadow Wetlands Bylaw revisions as presented for further inclusion in the May Town Meeting and Commissioner Bresnahan seconded the motion. All in favor 5-0, motion approved.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES ON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE WORK: A draft with comments requested by the Open Space committee had been recently sent to Commissioner Andrea Chasen recently as she continues to represent the commission on said committee.

DISCUSSION – INVASIVE SPECIES PRESENTATION OPTIONS: Chair Al Laakso discussed Commissioner Chasen’s efforts to develop and formalize an “Invasive Species in Longmeadow” presentation at Storrs library on April 14th.

OTHER BUSINESS – The following items were discussed:

1. Mr. Laakso recently discovered old documents showing a conservation restriction issued by the Conservation Commission for land deeded to the city of Springfield by O’Connell Engineering in the Villas at Glenmeadow. Pecousic Brook flows through this land.
2. In a letter sent recently, the Native Plant Trust thanked the commission for allowing access to conservation land in the floodplains for the purposes of conducting a survey on sensitive plant species population, specifically “Arisaema Dracontium” (commonly referred to as Green Dragon).
3. The Commission received notification from Eversource regarding this year’s ROW vegetation maintenance program under their high voltage transmission lines.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano