

MINUTES OF MAY 13th, 2020 MEETING

Direct access link: <https://zoom.us/j/98338789674?pwd=YU1saUtSaldoMFFjZmtqeUZ3TTROdz09>

Access via phone, (646) 558 8656, or via web at www.zoom.us, with Meeting ID 983 3878 9674 / Password 293205.

A meeting of the Longmeadow Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:01 P.M. on May 13th, 2020 and was conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth enacted due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 Virus. To mitigate the transmission of said virus, the Commonwealth has advised and directed municipalities to suspend public gatherings. As such, the Governor's Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. The Order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting; ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. For this meeting, the commission convened virtually via Zoom as posted on the Town's Website identifying how the public may join. Each person was required to announce themselves for identification purposes and to mute their telephones when not speaking to eliminate background noise.

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

OTHERS PRESENT: James Rivers from DPC Engineering; Melissa Kaplan and Marc Smith from BSC Group, Inc.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING: Chair Al Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Ms. Chasen, to accept the minutes of March 11th, 2020 as presented. Roll call vote: Ms. Chasen: yes; Mr. Laakso: yes; Mr. Nolan: yes, Mr. Dumais: yes, Mr. Gazillo: yes. All in favor 5-0, motion passed, minutes were accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT: No report submitted this evening.

Mr. John Bresnahan joined the meeting at approximately 7:15pm.

NOI – MORNINGSIDE DRIVE CULVERT REPLACEMENT (CONTINUATION): The scope of work has remained intact since the last time the applicants appeared before the commission. Around the same time that the last of the property owners' signatures was collected earlier this year, an easement for the project's location was discovered in the Registry of Deeds under Book 2839 and Page 55, therefore superseding the requirement of property owner signatures set by the commission last year; nonetheless, all signatures will be kept on file. Mr. Dumais suggested, based on information from an unrelated DPW presentation about storm drains, that a simple stenciled sign be added to the new storm drains to deter residents from throwing any form of trash in them, thus contributing to ease the burden of town infrastructure maintenance and stream water quality. While this was not part of the original scope of work, Mr. Rivers indicated that such request would likely be accommodated.

Mr. Laakso made a motion, and was seconded by Mr. Bresnahan, to approve the project DEP 205-330 "Morningside Drive Culvert Replacement" project with revisions dated September 25, 2019 and included the following special conditions:

1. All areas disturbed by the project in the bordering vegetated wetland shall be restored with native species and stabilized free from invasive plant species; the native species planting plan is to be submitted and approved by the Conservation Commission.
2. The use of herbicide by a licensed applicator to eradicate invasive species is authorized.
3. The Conservation Commission must be notified when erosion control devices are installed and the MassDEP number sign is installed for a pre-start meeting with DPW and the contractor.

Roll call vote: Ms. Chasen: yes; Mr. Laakso: yes; Mr. Nolan: yes, Mr. Dumais: yes, Mr. Gazillo: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes. All in favor 6-0, motion passed. The applicant was reminded that the Order of Conditions will be delivered with a cover letter stating specific instructions to be followed prior to work commencement.

RDA – EVERSOURCE LINE, W CHESTNUT ST.: Ms. Kaplan explained that the scope of work consists of the following key points:

1. Replace the existing direct buried underground cables (3 circuits) with new underground conduit in PVC duct banks as well as improve overhead distribution lines by replacing, removing and installing new poles near the Franconia Substation with the purpose of relieving the existing heavily loaded circuits in Longmeadow, MA. Note that some cables will remain overhead.
2. The new conduit will be installed within 10-foot wide trenches. Horizontal directional drill (HDD) technology will be used for the portion of the underground conduit that will run beneath Williams Street.
3. Some of the work will be conducted within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) and Inland Bank to an intermittent stream but the majority of this work will be performed within and adjacent to a paved road, which is deemed an exempt minor buffer zone activity under the WPA. Other portions of the work do not fall within the exemption, hence the application herein.
4. The installation process of the conduit will mostly take place within roadways. The line will leave the roadway and traverse a small upland area where one tree will be removed.

Mr. Laakso praised the quality of the application and proceeded to make a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Bresnahan, to issue a Determination of Applicability Negative #3 and #6 with the following conditions:

1. The commission must be notified when erosion control devices are in place prior to work commencement.
2. Eversource must make a donation to the Town tree fund (to be coordinated with Tree Warden) to compensate for loss of tree.
3. Disturbed areas are to be seeded and mulched per the applicant's cover letter.

Roll call vote: Ms. Chasen: yes; Mr. Laakso: yes; Mr. Nolan: yes, Mr. Dumais: yes, Mr. Gazillo: yes; Mr. Bresnahan: yes. All in favor 6-0, motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS – The following items were discussed:

1. The Town Manager is spearheading a proposed code organization project for town bylaws.
2. The loam donation for the Community Gardens is on hold pending the resolution of flooding in a portion of the lot.
3. Remediation work at 45 Twin Hills will resume following the lifting of stay-at-home order; the wetlands consultant that was retained in March has been unable to make any progress on the case due to quarantine. Mr. Nolan suggested that both Mr. Mocko and the property owners be made aware that possible emergence of invasive species in the area should be monitored.
4. Town landfill capping project completed and the area has been seeded; the applicant has been reminded that an invasive species management plan that is to be submitted in the near future per the Order of Conditions.
5. Ms. Ruth Desbichopp (100 Brookwood Dr) complained about her neighbors' tree and fence activities near wetlands. An inspection earlier today determined that no wetland violations had occurred.
6. Mr. Bresnahan and Ms. Chasen participated in the virtual meeting held on May 7 for the Sustainable Master Landscape Plan for Bliss and Laurel Parks; they indicated that many ideas were explored and they reminded those involved that many ideas could fall under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano