

Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) - Public Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2023
Approved: January 31, 2023

Members Participating: Joe Berman (Chair), Rees Tullos, Ellen Freeman Roth, Alison Barlow

Members Absent: Glenn Butcher, Josh Feinblum

Conservation Staff: Jordan McCarron, Joshua Baker

Notes: Pursuant to *An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations*, signed by Governor Baker on July 16th, 2022, which extends the expiration of the remote meeting provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2023, this extension allows public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings. No in-person attendance of members of the public was available.

Joe Berman, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with an opportunity for public comment.

Hearing none, the following hearings and meetings were taken up in order:

7:45 p.m. Cont. Notice of Intent: 57 Westcliff Road, DEP 337-1459; J. McGeough

The applicant has requested a continuance to January 31st, 2023 at 7:45 pm in order to finalize their stormwater design with the Town of Weston's Engineering Department and to prepare associated tree mitigation and restoration plans.

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 57 Westcliff Road, DEP 337-1459, to January 31st, 2023 at 7:45 pm was made by Ellen Freeman Roth; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

8:00 p.m. Row Tree Protection Plan Presentation

Chris Peiffer of PlanIt Geo provided an overview of the Town of Weston's draft Public Tree Maintenance and Protection Plan for feedback from the Conservation Commission. The overview was brought before the Commission as the plan would impact Public Right of Way trees in Conservation Commission jurisdiction. The Commission was reminded that they had no official involvement with the project and were providing insight as a stakeholder.

Since the plan could involve advising tree-removal and ultimately replanting, the Commission inquired about the planting of native species for any tree removed within the Commission's jurisdiction in accordance with its tree removal policy. Mr. Peiffer assured the Commission that native species and reasonably native (Northeast and mid-Atlantic) species would be prioritized in the replanting lists. For non-natives, the Commission urged that all replantings support a wide diversity of native wildlife.

Further, the Commission inquired how the maintenance plans will interact with Eversource and the Department of Public Works, who currently do the majority of tree maintenance. Mr. Peiffer answered that the maintenance plan would also include a section for best practices, some of which were directly related to pruning around primary wires, as well as how to conserve tree canopy while also maintaining the tree in sensitive areas.

The following Administration Matters were discussed throughout the meeting.

Approval of 1/3/2023 Conservation Commission meeting minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the 1/3/2023 Conservation Commission by Ellen Freeman Roth; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

Approval of letter of support to Planning Board for a trail easement at 0 Hemlock Road

A motion to approve sending a letter of support to the Planning Board for a Trail Easement at 0 Hemlock Road was made by Alison Barlow; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

Approval of the Invasive Plant Removal Request Form and Guidelines:

A motion to approve the use of the Invasive Plant Removal Request Form and Guidelines, with a scheduled review no later than January 2024, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Full Certificate of Compliance: 667 Wellesley St; 337-1397:

A motion to issue a Full Certificate of Compliance to 667 Wellesley Street, DEP# 337-1397, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Ellen Freeman Roth. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Partial Certificate of Compliance: 51 Cedar Rd; 337-1434:

A motion to issue a Partial Certificate of Compliance to 51 Cedar road, DEP# 337-1434, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Ellen Freeman Roth. Roll call vote 4-0.

Discussion: Weston Wetlands Bylaw:

- A webpage for the Bylaw is now live on the Conservation Commission's website
- The Commission discussed the differences between the bylaw and regulations and agreed that while Town Meeting would vote on the bylaw alone, having a complete set of draft regulations for the public to review as part of the bylaw outreach process will be important.
- The Commission expressed the need to develop an outreach/presentation plan and schedule- Jordan McCarron agreed to convene the Wetlands Bylaw Working Group to develop a plan and schedule.

Jordan McCarron updated the Commission on the following Land Management Issues:

- Stewardship Saturday to commence on 1/21 for the Annual Concord Rd Orchard Pruning
- Emily Schadler will present a new Meadow Management Guidelines document to Commission at the Commission's January 31st meeting.

Jordan McCarron updated the Commission on Other Matters:

- An upcoming NOI for resurfacing the tennis courts at Burchard Park will include a proposed Pickleball Court; the Pickleball Court will require an amendment to the MOU for Recreation use of Burchard Park. The proposed Pickleball site will require significant tree removal.
- New Commissioner interview with Sean Rush at the Commission's January 31st meeting.
- The Commission needs a liaison to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
- The Town's Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) is set to expire in April 2024. Chris Fitzgerald and Jordan McCarron are working to get a proposal together and some cost estimates with an aim towards putting in a request for Community Preservation Act funding for Fall 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

