

Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) - Public Meeting Minutes

January 31, 2023

Approved: February 14, 2022

Members Participating: Joe Berman (Chair), Rees Tullos (joined at 7:40 pm), Ellen Freeman Roth, Alison Barlow

Members Absent: Josh Feinblum, Ellen Freeman Roth (left at 7:50 pm)

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:

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

The applicant, John McGeough, introduced the project and updated the Commission on the progress since the last hearing. The stormwater plan, which delayed the hearing in previous meetings, was approved by the Town's stormwater engineer and a Stormwater Major Permit was issued.

Mitch Maslanka, Goddard Consulting, provided an update on the landscape plan, tree removal and mitigation details. Details included the removal of 8 medium trees and a proposed planting of 40 trees and 90 shrubs in the Buffer Zone as well as the removal of Japanese knotweed, and the installation of a rain garden in place of the current "yard waste" debris pile. A two-year monitoring plan for invasive species removal was proposed.

A motion was made to close the Notice of Intent hearing for 57 Westcliff Road, DEP 337-1459, and issue an Order of Conditions by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Notice of Intent: 269 Concord Road, Burchard Park, DEP 337-1460; Town of Weston Recreation Department

Patrick Maguire, Activitas, presented an overview of the project which includes the reconstruction of two existing tennis courts, the expansion of one basketball court, the addition of six pickleball courts, as well as general upgrades to walkways and site amenities along with landscape improvements. Only work related to the tennis courts falls within the 100-foot Buffer Zone and is under jurisdiction of the Commission in relation to the Wetlands Protection Act. However, Burchard Park is owned by the Commission, with existing recreational facilities allowed under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Maguire reviewed potential alternatives for the placement of the pickleball courts within Burchard Park as well as different locations across town, showing the Commission how the current proposal was developed. Additionally, Mr. Maguire presented a potential mitigation plan which included tree and shrub replacement as well as invasive plant removal along the edge of College Pond; the Commission requested a more detailed plan for inclusion in final project documents.

Megan Buznynsk, Activitas, then reviewed the stormwater management plan for the site. An infiltration system will be installed on the southern side of the proposed pickleball court locations to collect sheet flow from the courts. Drainage from the tennis courts will mimic current drainage and as such will require rip-rap or some form of anti-scouring in a small area where current drainage patterns have created erosion. Richard Sweeney, Stormwater Engineer for the Town of Weston, is currently reviewing the project for compliance with state and local stormwater standards.

Chris Fitzgerald, Town of Weston Recreation Department, reminded the Commission that an amendment to the current Memorandum of Understanding would be needed to allow the pickleball courts to be installed on the property. Alison Barlow, Conservation Commission, raised concern over whether the Commission should consider any extant issues that could derive from an amendment and if advice from Town Counsel would be pertinent before signing an amendment. In regards to potential conflict with neighbors, Melissa Crocker, Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee, notified the Commission that Burchard Park was chosen for its natural set back and absence of neighbors.

Mr. Maguire then informed the Commission that the courts would not be lit but a conduit would be installed during construction in case the desire to illuminate the courts arises in the future. The Commission then inquired if six total courts were necessary for pickleball to which Mr. Maguire confirmed the number was recommended by research and industry trends, and thus necessary to meet potential demands from the community.

It was concluded that more work was needed to be done regarding the application, including more detail on mitigation and tree planting, stormwater permitting, and a closer look at the Memorandum of Understanding and the drafted amendment.

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 269 Concord Road – Burchard Park, DEP 337-1460, at the request of the Applicant to February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 8:30pm was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Glenn Butcher. Roll call vote 4-0.

Presentation: Weston’s Conservation Fields: Guidelines for Managers

Conservation staff member, Emily Schadler, presented a new methodology for maintaining Weston’s conservation meadows, focusing on a management regime that enhances the biological diversity of these habitat areas while continuing to maintain the recreational and scenic value that these meadows provide Weston for residents.

A motion to approve the document “Weston’s Conservation Fields: Guidelines for Managers” for use as a general policy for the management of Weston’s conservation meadows was made by Alison Barlow; seconded by Glenn Butcher. Roll call vote 4-0.

**The following Administration Matters were taken up at various points throughout the meeting:**

Approval of 1/17/2023 Conservation Commission meeting minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the 1/17/2023 Conservation Commission meeting by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for full Certificate of Compliance: 15 Warren Place, DEP 337-1407

A motion to issue a full Certificate of Compliance to 15 Warren Place, DEP 337-1407, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

Recommendation of Sean Rush for Conservation Commissioner:

A motion to recommend Sean Rush for Conservation Commissioner was made by Ellen Freeman Roth; seconded by Glenn Butcher. Roll call vote 5-0.

Discussion: Waiver Request and Proposed Trail Easement- 0 Hemlock Rd

Jordan McCarron, Conservation Administrator, informed the Commission that it had received a letter from the owner of 0 Hemlock Road requesting that the Commission provide a written waiver for the construction of a subdivision road on 0 Hemlock Road, per Section 4.23 of the Planning Board Rules and Regulations. Section 4.23 requires that an applicant seeking zoning relief from the Planning Board for a subdivision road first receive written approval from all impacted abutters.

Gwen King, Nolan and King LLC, attorney for the Majority of Hemlock Road Owners, who are opposed to the development of 0 Hemlock Road, gave a brief presentation on the issue. Mr. King pointed out that, should the Commission deny the applicant's request, the development proposal at 0 Hemlock Road would not be buildable. Ms. King implored the Commission on behalf of her clients to think carefully about whether the proposed development would impact its abutting conservation land.

The Commission deferred discussion on the matter to a future date in order to confer with Town Counsel and gain a better understanding of the impact that the proposed subdivision road might have on its abutting conservation land.

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

- January's Stewardship Saturday event, Orchard Pruning at the Concord Road Orchard, will be postponed again to February 11<sup>th</sup> due to weather.
- The Stewardship Saturday schedule has been set for Spring 2023:

o Orchard pruning/maintenance	<i>February 2023</i>
o Woodland School bog bridge work	<i>March 2023</i>
o Trail relocation project off Orchard Ave- WFTA	<i>April 2023</i>
o Woodland School Japanese Knotweed Plot Experiment	<i>May 2023</i>
o Rotary Club-Sears Field and/or WPPA Sunset Corner	<i>June 2023</i>

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM