

Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) - Public Meeting Minutes
June 20th, 2023
Approved: July 11th, 2023

Members Participating: Joe Berman (Chair), Rees Tullos, Glenn Butcher, Alison Barlow

Members Absent: Ellen Freeman Roth, Sean Rush

Conservation Staff: Jordan McCarron, Joshua Baker

Notes: Under current state law public bodies may continue holding hybrid and fully remote meetings, without a quorum of the public body physically present, as long as adequate, alternative access is provided. As such, no in-person attendance of members of the public is available but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time including a dial-in option.

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: 4 Briar Lane, DEP# 337-1462; H. Lu

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 4 Briar Lane, DEP 337-1462, at the request of the applicant via email, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Minor Plan Change: 225 Winter Street, DEP# 337-1458; C. Casilio

David Cowell and Russ Tedford, Hancock Associates, provided an overview of the proposed changes. The current site has been permitted for a demolition and then reconstruction of a single-family home with the total prior permitted disturbance of the lot being 15,670 sq. feet or 9.4% of the total Riverfront Area. The proposed change slightly adds to the new dwelling's footprint, bringing the total disturbance to 15,770 sq. feet or about 9.5% of the total Riverfront Area.

A motion to approve the minor plan change request for 225 Winter Street, DEP 337-1458, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Determination of Applicability: 12 Wits End, RDA 2023-009; C. Hattabaugh

Bill Doyle, DEI Engineering, provided an overview of the project. The site is currently serviced by a non-title V compliant septic system built before 1995 and so the applicant is proposing to remove the old septic system and install a new one. The new system will be mostly outside of the 100-foot Buffer Zone of an onsite Bordering Vegetative Wetland, save for minor grading in the outer 50-feet. The project has received a septic permit from the Board of Health and Minor Project Stormwater Permit from the Engineering Division.

A motion to issue a Negative 3 Determination of Applicability for 12 Wits End Road, DOA 2023-009, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Notice of Intent: 120 Radcliffe Road, DEP# 337-1471; S. Meyers

Mike Novak, RJ O'Connel, provided an overview of the project which includes the demolition and reconstruction of a single-family home and associated driveway. The new home will be further back from the on-site Bordering Vegetative Wetland than the original dwelling, with reduced permanent buffer zone impacts.

In addition to the demolition and reconstruction of the home, Mr. Novak asked the Commission if it would be possible to conduct invasive plant removal along the tree/lawn line as well as spot clean-up of down

trees up to ten-feet beyond that line. The Commission commented that while invasive species removal is generally appreciated, the layout of the site and the fact that the 25-foot No Disturb Zone correlates with the tree-line in question would mean that the removal project would need to be carefully conditioned to make sure that the work done in said area is limited to invasive vegetation removal and then is reseeded with a conservation mix and demarcated to prevent mowing or encroachment by future owners. The Commission suggested boulders to be used to demarcate the tree-line; Steve Myers, owner, agreed to some form of demarcation. Further, the Commission explained that the conditions for the invasive removal wouldn't include grading or loaming and that they are generally not comfortable with removing downed trees and iterated the ecological importance of the down trees and asked the applicant to consider leaving them.

Mr. Novak then presented two options for how to lead the electrical conduit for the new house, one including a trench from the road and then up through a gathering of pine trees outside of the 25-foot No Disturb Zone, requiring some additional tree removal for the trench. The other option was to reuse the existing electrical pole inside the 25-foot No Disturb Zone and then trench perpendicular to the Resource Area, temporarily disturbing around ten feet of natural area before reaching lawn and then connecting to the house. Ultimately, the option of reusing the existing pole and a short trench with only temporary disturbance was deemed the least invasive and was suggested to be added to the plans.

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 120 Radcliffe, DEP 337-1471, at the request of the applicant, to July 11th, 2023, at 8:00 pm, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Cont. Notice of Intent: 169 Ridgeway Road, DEP# 337-1470; M. Harkins

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 169 Ridgeway Road DEP 337-1470, to July 11th, 2023, at 8:00 pm, by request of the Applicant, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

The following administrative matters were discussed throughout the meeting

Approval of 6/6/23 Conservation Commission meeting minutes:

A motion to approve the 6/6/23 Conservation Commission meeting minutes was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tullos. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 162 Winter Street, DEP 337-1432:

A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 162 Winter Street, DEP 337-1432, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 31 Green Lane, DEP 337-1413:

A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 31 Green Lane, DEP 337-1413, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 2 Legion Road, DEP 337-1464:

A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 2 Legion Road, DEP 337-1464, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 18 Skating Pond Road, DEP 337-1332:

During the site visit for 18 Skating Pond Road, it was discovered that more work than what was originally permitted in the Order of Conditions 337-1332 was performed. Specifically, areas within the 25-foot No Disturb Zone were scraped of debris left over from previous construction staging, vegetation was brushed,

and loam was brought in for grading and seeding of grass. The intent of the unpermitted project was to beautify the area from past debris, and due to the sloped nature of the area affected, the intent was to let some of the new grass area regrow naturally. A Notice of Violation will be issued for the unpermitted work requiring a landscape restoration plan and demarcation of the 25-foot No Disturb Zone as a “no mow” area; this restoration requirement and the Notice of Violation will follow the property through the sale of the house to ensure compliance with the restoration plan. The Commission directed the Conservation Administrator to work with the applicant’s landscape architect, Karen Sebastian, to verify and approve of a restoration plan that could be implemented as soon as possible.

Ultimately, all work that was permitted under the Order of Conditions was substantially completed. A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 18 Skating Pond Road, DEP 337-1332, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Alison Barlow. Roll call vote 4-0.

Jordan McCarron, Conservation Administrator, provided the following land management updates

- June 10th was the last Stewardship Saturday of the season; it was spent assisting the Rotary Club of Wayland and Weston at the Sears Driveway Field removing invasive plants and establishing several native seed mix plots.
- The Weston Forest and Trail Association (WFTA) Trail Manager has resigned. The WFTA has hired a part-time college student for the summer and a new volunteer-driven “Park Stewards” program has been implemented as an experiment to determine if the WFTA can continue maintaining Weston’s trails without the need for a new Trails Manager.
 - Joe Berman, Chairman, suggested that after the summer is spent without a Trail Manager, that a sub-committee of some of the Commission and the WFTA board should meet and discuss how the summer went and what is the best step forward for the trail system. Alison Barlow, Commissioner, agreed but stressed that the Commissioners who attend the sub-committee relay information so that there is an open dialogue between attendees and the rest of the Commission.
- The Conservation Meadow Management and Land Maintenance contracts for FY24 are currently out for bid; both were updated this year to include more field management related work under the Meadow Management contract and consequently less billable work under the Land Maintenance contract.
- Emily Schadler developed a field assessment worksheet for the Commission’s conservation meadows and assessments are underway.
- New Commissioner Interview: Rob Mosher. Mr. Mosher grew up in town and is passionate about the town’s conserved spaces. Mr. Mosher also lives close to Land’s Sake and is a Rotary member closely involved with the Sear’s Field restoration work. The Commission voiced their support of Mr. Mosher joining the Conservation Commission and unanimously consented to recommend his appointment.
- Other Matters
 - There have been three site visits for the water tank replacement project since the last meeting; Glenn Butcher and Rees Tulloss attended the Paines Hill visit, Rees Tulloss and Alison Barlow attended the Doublet Hill visit, and Rees Tulloss attended the Cat Rock visit. The Town received good feedback from abutters and members of the Commission and Planning Board on potential impacts to abutters from the proposed tank locations as well as the need to preserve as much of the existing tree cover and minimize the amount of Article 97 land needed for the new tanks.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.