

Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) - Public Meeting Minutes

July 25th, 2023

Approved: August 8th, 2023

Members Participating: Joe Berman (Chair), Rees Tullos, Glenn Butcher, Rob Mosher, Sean Rush (Joined 8:30)

Members Absent: Alison Barlow, Ellen Freeman Roth

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 was available but every effort was made to ensure that the public could 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.

Eagle Scout Presentation: Bat Boxes at College Pond; Tommy Kickham

Tommy Kickham, Eagle Scout Candidate, gave an overview of his project. The project consists of installing five bat boxes around Burchard Park and will potentially provide bat populations shelter, promoting their use of the area and generally benefiting the local ecology. The boxes will be constructed of cedar and are planned for installation in spring 2024.

The Commission suggested adding an educational element to the project, such as a flyer for the kiosk. Additionally, it was relayed that an appropriate adult candidate would have to be selected to oversee installation, as well as any repairs or replacements needed over time. Jordan McCarron, Conservation Administrator, offered to introduce Tommy Kickham to Chris Fitzgerald, Recreation Department, since the Recreation Department also utilizes the property.

Joel Angiolillo, Weston Forest and Trails Association, voiced his support of the project and encouraged an educational aspect as well.

A motion to approve Tommy Kickham's Eagle Project to place 5 bat boxes at Buchard Park/College Pond was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rob Mosher. Roll call vote 4-0.

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, to August 22nd, 2023, at 7:45 PM was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call 4-0.

Request for Determination of Applicability: 90 Concord Road, RDA 2023-010; C. Scott

Christopher Scott, applicant, provided an overview of the project. Around three years ago, beaver damming had caused flooding along Cherry Brook as well as the man-made pond on Mr. Scott's property, killing a number of evergreen trees. Due to this, Mr. Scott has requested the removal of 15 dead trees and permission to replant up to 3 of the trees. Of the 15 trees to be removed, 8 of them would be removed midway to create viable snags for wildlife. Rees Tulloss, Commissioner, encouraged Mr. Scott to keep more trees standing, as the dead trees provide ecological benefits.

The Commission inquired how the removals would be done or if there would be any soil disturbance from replanting. Mr. Scott responded that the trees would be removed by crane and the work would be performed by Marquis Tree, and that any plantings would serve to stabilize the soil.

A motion to issue a Negative 2 Determination of Applicability for 90 Concord Road, RDA 2023-010, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

8:30 pm Notice of Intent: 21 Warren Place, DEP 337-1475; M. McDade

Chris Frattaroli, Goddard Consulting, provided an overview of the project. The project includes the demolition of the existing home and construction of a new house. A 200-foot Riverfront Area is projected onto the site via an unnamed perennial stream; the new home will be constructed partially within the Outer Riverfront Area. Mr. Frattaroli explained that the septic system would be moved away from the Riverfront Area. To keep the total degraded area within the Riverfront under the 10% threshold required of redevelopment projects, the applicant is also proposing to remove a detached stone patio and debris pile already present within the Riverfront Area.

Jordan McCarron, Conservation Administrator, reminded Mr. Frattaroli that there are very specific guidelines for redeveloping Riverfront Area under 310 CMR 10.58(5). While the current project meets some of the guidelines, mitigation at a ratio of 2:1 for a portion of the proposed disturbance within the Riverfront Area will be required. These mitigation areas could be a re-naturalization of the extensive lawn on the property as well as potential invasive species removal. Mr. Frattaroli and his client were amenable to this and agreed to re-design the project to meet the Riverfront Area Redevelopment Performance Standards.

Mr. McCarron then relayed comments from Jamie O'Connell of the Cambridge Water Department, citing concern over the proposed septic system on site as well as whether the project meets redevelopment requirements for Riverfront Area under 310 CMR 10.58(5). The Cambridge Water Department asserts that the stream running through the site is tributary to their public water supply and as such, much of the site is subject to Zone A public water supply protection regulations.

Mr. Frattaroli informed the Commission that while drafted, no permits have been submitted through the Stormwater Permitting Authority (SWPA) or the Board of Health and requested a continuance to August 22nd, 2023 at 8:15 PM.

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 21 Warren Place, DEP 337-1475, to August 22nd, 2023, at 8:15 pm, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

8:45 pm Cont. Notice of Intent: 120 Radcliffe Road, DEP 337-1471; S. Meyers

Mike Novak, R.J O'Connell and Associates, provided an update on the project. Previously when discussing the demolition and construction of the house on site, Mr. Novak and his client presented the idea of invasive species removal to lessen invasive pressures along the wooded edge of lawn. The limit of work line on the updated site plan has now been moved to encompass this invasive plant removal work. Additionally, a wooden split rail fence is now proposed to demarcate the existing lawn. A stone infiltration area is to be installed at a low point in the lawn to prevent overflow into Radcliffe Road. The infiltration area will be subsurface with clean fill placed on top. An underground electrical connection to the house from the existing utility pole at the edge of the wetland was also added to the updated site plan- this was discussed and agreed upon by the Commission at its 6/20/23 meeting.

Rees Tulloss, Commissioner, inquired about a foundation drain. Mr. Novak showed the location of the drain on the plan and explained that it will be constructed with perforated pipe that will daylight prior to the 50' Buffer Zone to the Bordering Vegetated Wetland on site.

Rob Mosher, Commissioner, inquired about what variety of invasive plants are present on the site. Jordan McCarron, Conservation Administrator, listed bittersweet, common buckthorn, honeysuckle, and burning bush. Mr. McCarron then suggested having a site visit with Conservation Staff to identify invasive species prior to their removal. Steve Meyers, owner, agreed, saying that he expects to meet with himself and Conservation Staff before and after removal.

A motion to close the Notice of Intent hearing for 120 Radcliffe Road, DEP 337-1471, and issue an order of conditions contingent on a SWPA permit being in-place before construction and final plans approved by the Town's stormwater engineer with no substantive changes from the plan approved by the Commission was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rob Mosher. Roll call vote 5-0.

The following Administrative Matters were discussed throughout the meeting

Approval of the 7/11/23 Conservation Commission Minutes:

A motion to approve the 7/11/23 Conservation Commission minutes as amended was made by Glenn Butcher; Seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 17 Blake Road, DEP 337-878:

A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 17 Blake Road, DEP 337-878, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Glenn Butcher. Roll call vote 4-0.

Request for Partial Certificate of Compliance; 70 Jericho Road, DEP 337-824:

A motion to issue a Partial Certificate of Compliance for 70 Jericho Road, DEP 337-824, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Rob Mosher. Roll call vote 4-0.

There were no substantive land management updates for this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.