

Weston Conservation Commission (WCC) - Public Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2023
Approved: October 3, 2023

Members Participating: Joe Berman (Chair), Rob Mosher, Rees Tullos, Glenn Butcher,

Members Absent: Ellen Freeman Roth, Sean Rush, Alison Barlow

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.

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, to October 17th, 2023 at 7:45 pm, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tullos. Roll call vote 4-0 in favor.

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

Chris Frattaroli, Goddard Consulting, provided a brief overview as well as an update on the current status of the project. Specifically, Mr. Frattaroli updated the Commission on a proposed restoration and mitigation plan meant to meet the Riverfront Area redevelopment standards under 310 CMR 1058(d). For restoration, the Applicant is proposing 2,829 sq. ft. of restored degraded area, which includes removal of a stone patio and old brush pile and junk area. This would still leave 1,264 sq. ft. of the 4,093 sq. ft. of new disturbance within the Riverfront Area in need of restoration or mitigation. The mitigation proposal includes an approximately 5,000 sq. ft. invasive plant mitigation area and native planting plan that will require a 75% native plant cover to be considered successful. Mr. Frattaroli mentioned that the Cambridge Water Department, as well as Mr. Berman, were skeptical that the brush pile on site should be considered degraded area. Regardless, Mr. Frattaroli pointed out that the proposed mitigation would more than meet the intent of mitigation under the Riverfront Area Redevelopment Standards whether the brush pile was considered degraded or not.

Mr. Frattaroli then reviewed the current septic plan, which places the septic tank within the 100' Buffer Zone to a Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) and Outstanding Resource Water, is not permissible through Title V. The septic engineer is currently working on improving the design to meet Title V standards. The project is still awaiting final septic and stormwater approvals.

Jamie O'Connell, Cambridge Water Department, agreed that the proposed mitigation is sufficient to meet the needs of the Wetlands Protection Act. Further, Ms. O'Connell suggested adding a tree layer to the proposed planting plan which currently only includes an herbaceous and shrub layer. Joe Berman, chair, recalled that the area where the proposed plantings are to occur already has large canopy trees, but Ms. O'Connell and the Commission agreed that including a tree layer where possible would be ideal. Rees Tullos, Commissioner, asked if there would be any lawn reduction, citing any opportunity to reduce lawn, especially around the pond on site, would be appreciated. Mr. Frattaroli said that there is no current proposed reduction of lawn, but the concerns of the Commission are noted as they move their project forward.

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 21 Warren Place, DEP 337-1475, at the request of the applicant, to October 17th, 2023 at 8:15 pm was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0 in favor.

Cont. Notice of Intent: 12 Robin Road, DEP 337-1474; K. Zhao

A motion to continue the Notice of Intent hearing for 12 Robin Road, DEP 337-1474, at the request of the applicant, to October 3rd, 2023, at 8:00 pm was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rob Mosher. Roll call vote 4-0 in favor.

The following Administrative Matters were discussed throughout the meeting:

Approval of the 9/5/2023 Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the 9/5/2023 Conservation Commission meeting minutes as amended was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rob Mosher. Roll call vote 3-0-1 in favor.

Request for Certificate of Compliance; 676 Wellesley Street, DEP 337-1457:

A motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 676 Wellesley Street, DEP 337-1457, was made by Glenn Butcher; seconded by Rees Tulloss. Roll call vote 4-0 in favor.

Renewal of 44 Ripley Lane Revocable Trail License:

A motion to renew the Revocable trail License for 44 Ripley Lane for three years, set to expire on 9/19/2026, was made by Rees Tulloss; seconded by Glenn Butcher. Roll call vote 4-0 in favor.

Jordan McCarron provided the following Land Management Updates:

- Five (5) Conservation Commissioners have shown interest in attending the Trail Management Strategy Working Group in partnership with the Weston Forest and Trail Association (WFTA). Mr. McCarron will post it as a public meeting should more than a quorum of Commissioners ultimately participate.
- The WFTA voted to support the use of Class 1 E-Bikes with periodic review of impacts and issues on the contingency that there will be education and signage available on proper trail etiquette for trail users. Another public discussion will be scheduled with the Conservation Commission prior to any official ruling. Among things to be discussed, the Commission agreed they should revisit their regulations on where bikes can be currently used and to ensure that Conservation Trail regulations are aligned with the WFTA's on cycling usage.
- **Other Matters:**
 - An "All Committee Meeting" is scheduled for Saturday, November 4th at 9:00 am at Regis College. This was an annual event that was discontinued in 2020 which the Town would like to resume and presents an opportunity for representatives of all elected and appointed boards to gather and provide updates on each individual board and their work.

The meeting Adjourned at 8:28 pm.