

MEETING MINUTES
Belmont Conservation Commission
January 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Meeting
7:00 pm

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: May 4, 2021
TIME: 9:50 AM

Attendees:

Members: Jim Roth (Chair); Jeff North (Vice Chair); Miriam Weil; Christopher Morris; Peg Velie; Dan Nolan; Charles Chang; Mark Smith (Associate)

Others: Carolyn Bishop; Judy Singler; Alexander Wong; Judy Otto; Amanda McCarthy; Roy Epstein; Radha Inyengar; Deepchak Kothevade; Kelly Cardoza

Call to Order:

The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:05 pm by Jim Roth.

Discussion: Proposals for Seating Area and Pond Overlook Designs

Mary Trudeau noted that copies of the Scope of Work documents for the design of both the Theodopolis/McCarthy seating area and the Clay Pit Pond overlook were circulated to Commission members prior to the meeting. The proposals were prepared by Hatch, a landscape design firm. Mary Trudeau asked that Christopher Morris review the documents and reach out to Hatch to discuss the scope of work.

Discussion: Alex Wong Eagle Scout project

Alex Wong presented to the Commission, noting his recent work with the Historic District Commission has resulted in a determination that no filing with the HDC will be required. Alex noted that he is planning to present to the Selectmen, and that he hoped to finalize his designs for the free standing kiosks by the end of the month. Alex noted that he is working on sources of funding, and that he hopes to complete the project by June 2021.

Discussion: Improved Trail Head at Mill Street

Tom Grumble was unable to attend the meeting and the discussion was deferred until the February meeting of the Commission. There was some discussion of path conditions and concerns with overuse.

Discussion: Mowing and Maintenance at Rock Meadow

The Commission reviewed the actual maintenance costs for keeping Rock Meadow accessible during a fiscal year. Mary Trudeau noted that creating social distancing within the path system,

as well as the rental for port o lets, the fees for dog poop removal service, and the habitat mowing, annual costs are currently about 17K dollars per year. Roy Epstein noted that this was a considerable expense. Dan Nolan observed that 17K dollars was not a lot of money for the value that a well used public Conservation Land which provides the residents of Belmont and other regional users. Dan noted that the meadow is often over crowded, and has become an increasingly popular destination during the pandemic. The Commission supported Dan's comments noting that the 80 acre parcel is an integral part of the Western Greenway, a vast regional system of trails and openspace.

Certificate of Compliance: 7 Oakmont Circle 106-135

The Commission reviewed the applicant's request for a Certificate of Compliance for the work done at 7 Oakmont Circle, under the OOC issued for DEP file 106-135. Mary Trudeau noted that the As Built plan showed a slight discrepancy in the limit of work line, resulting in a loss of approximately 40 square feet of Isolated Vegetated Wetland. She described the boulder wall set along the limit of work line as being slightly off set from the approved limit of work. The Commission noted that there was no simple remedy for the encroachment, and that relocation of the boulders would likely cause greater harm than leaving the violation in place. The Commission reviewed the other mitigation required on this project, noting that the mandated tree planting had successfully been completed.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to issue a Certificate of Compliance for the DEP File 106-135.

Request for Extension: Order of Conditions 106-131

Kelly Cardoza represented Belmont Country Club in their request for a three year extension to the Order of Conditions issued for DEP File number 106-131. The OOC regulated a dredging project, along Concord Avenue, which ostensibly improved the flow of water from the golf course. Kelly noted that the work done under this permit removed approximately 250 tons of sediment from the tributary to the Clematis Brook, and stated that the Country Club believes that the work will need to be redone over the next few years.

Christopher Morris noted that the dredge work does not "solve" the problem of poor drainage, and is better described as the creation of flood storage volume. He noted that the volume of sand observed in the waterway is of unknown origins, and that the removal does not provide a long term solution.

The Commission questioned whether the Order was suitable for extension, as the work was technically NEW work, albeit similar to the work originally regulated. Mary Trudeau agreed to research the issue with the DEP. Kelly Cardoza noted that she believed a new Water Quality Certificate would be required for a second, or subsequent, dredging.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to agree to the applicant's request for a continuation of the meeting to the February meeting of the Commission.

Discussion of Conditions at Clay Pit Pond:

The Commission briefly discussed the Fall 2020 violations at Clay Pit Pond. Carolyn Bishop and Judy Singler reported on recent observations at Clay Pit Pond, including the apparent removal of stumps along the Bank of the pond. The Commission agreed to a site visit, to be made on February 2, 2021 at 12:30 pm

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:30 pm