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DATE: November 17, 2021
TIME: 8:44 AM

MEETING MINUTES
Belmont Conservation Commission
February 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Meeting
7:00 pm

Attendees:

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

Others: Carolyn Bishop; Judy Singler; Alexander Wong; Judy Otto; Amanda McCarthy

Call to Order:

The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:30 pm by Jim Roth.

Approval of Minutes of December 1 2020 and January 26, 2021 Meetings:

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to approve the Minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting.

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to approve the Minutes of the January 26, 2020 meeting.

Discussion: Proposals for Seating Area and Pond Overlook Designs

Chris Morris reported that he had reviewed the proposals from Hatch for the proposed Theodopolis seating area, as well as the Pond Overlook. He noted that Hatch had been advised that the Commission would handle the permitting aspects of the scope, and that the proposed fee schedule should be revised to reflect this change.

Discussion: Alex Wong Eagle Scout project

Alex Wong, Eagle Scout candidate from Troop BSA 304, reported on the status of his project. Noting that he will be pursuing grants to fund the project, he showed the Commission updated details and plans for the kiosk construction. The Commission

VOTED to issue a letter of support to the Board of Selectmen, endorsing this project.

Discussion: Mill Street Roadway Improvements

The Commission reviewed the proposed traffic improvements contemplated by the Town for Mill and Concord Streets. Noting that the roundabouts would require a land swap, for a portion of the Conservation controlled land known as Rock Meadow, the Commission discussed potential trades. The Commission expressed an interest in linking the parking lot improvements to the roadway improvements, noting economies of parallel construction.

Dan Nolan commented on the Wildlife Habitat values of the vegetated buffer at the perimeter of the meadow. Noting that this type of vegetation would likely be impacted by the roadway construction, he asked the Commission to consider the environmental impacts to the encroachment into Rock Meadow. He also note that the land is a piece of the Western Greenway, and that the Commission should take into account the meaning of the Greenway as an environmental resource.

Jeff North suggested sending a letter to the Board of Selectmen, asking for direction on governance of West Belmont (Rock Meadow, the McLean Barn, Lone Tree Hill) with respect to the proposed roadway improvements. He noted that a presentation from the office of Community Development, to the Conservation Commission, should be done well in advance of the Town Meeting Warrant article.

Tom Grimble 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 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 sedimentation along the Bank of the pond. Noting that the weather had cancelled the February 2, 2021 site visit, the Commission noted that the visit would be rescheduled once the snow melts and the surface of the ground is visible.

The Commission discussed the management of the Clay Pit Pond, as well as the obligations of the Town of Belmont in maintaining the health and stability of the Pond. Noting that the Pond serves to moderate and control storm water flows from the Wellington Brook watershed, the Commission stated that the Town has a vested interest in maintaining a stable environment. The Commission noted that the Town, as the land owner, is responsible for the maintenance of the Pond, and that the impacts of the recent cutting and clearing, are the responsibility of the Town, as well.

The Commission discussed entering Executive Session to discuss the violations at Clay Pit Pond, but determined that the Executive Session had not been included on the meeting agenda, as required by law. Mary Trudeau agreed to add this to future agendas.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:30 pm

