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

**MEETING MINUTES
Belmont Conservation Commission
May 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Meeting
7:00 pm**

Attendees:

Members: 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; Tom Grimble; Scott Rossi; Glen Wong; Hannah Miller; Jamie Atkins; Adam Glick; Sadie Forbes; Giovanni Fodera; Phillip Thomas; Mandy Minichello; Suzanne Mercury; Leonard Katz; Roger Wrubel; Marybeth French; Shea Brams; Sajni Sheth-Voss; Shanta Pa; Francesca Kitch; Frederick Rigoulot; Kiril Kueppenberg; Jean Devine; Phil Thayer; Joe Michaud; Beth Camilla

Call to Order:

The Meeting was Called to Order at 7:06 pm by Vice Chairman, Jeff North.

Approval of Minutes of March 30, 2021 Meetings:

Based on a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to approve the Minutes of the March 30, 2021 meeting, as amended.

Discussion: Proposals for Seating Area and Pond Overlook Designs

Chris Morris reported on recent progress on the Thea Cleodopoulis bench project, noting that discussions have included the proposed style of bench, as well as the proposed location. Mary Trudeau noted that efforts were made, in the Master Plan for Clay Pit Pond, to create uniformity in seating areas. Benches used at Clay Pit Pond are similar to those used in other parks and the Town center. She encouraged the Commission to review the aesthetics of any proposed additions to the park. Jeff North noted that the Commission should consider obtaining an endowment for the future maintenance of the bench. He reported that Habitat routinely charges 10K dollars for installation of a memorial bench on their property.

Discussion: Alex Wong Eagle Scout project

There was no discussion concerning the Eagle Scout project at this meeting.

Discussion: Trail improvements near Marsh Street at Rock Meadow

Tom Grimble and Adam Glick (current President of the New England Mountain Bike Association) continued discussions towards the proposed the restoration of a historic pedestrian/bicycle access point across from Marsh Street, and the abandonment of a similar access point currently located to the south of Marsh Street. Dan Nolan noted that abutters to the revised access point should be included in this discussion. Chris Morris reminded the Commission that the abutters have had issues with parking on Concord Avenue, in the past, and could be interested in the proposed change in access. The Commission agreed to have Mary Trudeau notify abutters/neighbors who could be impacted by this change, and to invite them to attend the next meeting of the Conservation Commission.

Belmont High School Climate Action Club:

Shea Brams, representing the Belmont High School Climate Action Club, discussed the potential of planting pollinator, or native plants, at Clay Pit Pond. She noted that the gardens would be self funded, and self maintained by the Club. Mark Smith noted that maintenance, for the long term, was a concern. Shea noted that the project has support from the faculty at the High School, as well as a permanent committee. Shea agreed to meet off line with Mary Trudeau to discuss potential locations for the project.

Public Hearing: Notice of Intent for 275 Marsh Street, Belmont

Hannah Miller and Jamie Atkins, as owners and developers of the property, presented their updated plans for a sewer line connection; addition, pool and terrace at 275 Marsh Street. Giovanni Fedor, the registered professional engineer associated with the project, attended the meeting to support his drainage analysis and stormwater mitigation plans for the site. Mr Fedor noted that the plan has been stamped; dimensional setbacks between the work area and wetlands added to the plan. He noted that the location of the sewer line may shift slightly to accommodate field conditions as the trench is dug.

At the request of the applicant, the Commission

VOTED to close the public hearing and issue an Order of Conditions allowing the project to proceed as conditioned. Special conditions include a requirement to inform the Commission if the septic tank can not be reused to house the pump station, as well as the standard Belmont Order of Conditions.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion: Mill Street Roadway Improvements

The Commission discussed the ownership of Rock Meadow, noting that the parcel is regulated as Article 97 land. The Commission noted that research is required to come to a better understanding of the process. .

Belmont Country Club: Request for Extension to Order of Conditions

At the applicant's request, the discussion was postponed to allow for the review of the comments from DEP concerning the appropriateness of the requested extension.

Discussion: Judith K Record Fund and endowment challenge for Rock Meadow

Jeff North reported that discussions with Roger Wrubel, representing the Judith K Record Fund, have focused on the sustainability of Rock Meadow in a period of Town budget austerity. Jeff noted that the fund has expressed an interest in establishing a matching endowment fund for the benefit of Rock Meadow maintenance. The Commission would be required to raise 100K, and the Judith K Record fund would match the donations. The fund would likely require that a Conservation Restriction be placed upon the property, to offer perpetual protection. The Commission expressed an interest in working towards creation of an endowment, and to continue discussion on the subject.

Clay Pit Pond Update:

Mary Trudeau reported that the DPW has agreed to attempt a repair of the failed drain below Concord Avenue, which has been causing ponding within the path. They have also agreed to cut and remove broken branches from the water body, and to remove a dying tree to the east of the Veteran's memorial. Mary noted that the DPW believes that there are (14) laurel shrubs available for planting within disturbed areas around the pond.

Carolyn Bishop noted that the pond is sick, and that she believes the Commission is responsible for the health of the waterbody. Judy Singler also expressed concern with the ongoing bank issues at Clay Pit Pond, noting that the Pond is Town infrastructure. She noted that fish from the Pond should not be eaten, and that water quality in the Pond is not suitable for swimming.

Lone Tree Hill and Rock Meadow:

Jeff North reported on Garlic Mustard pulling opportunities available at Rock Meadow. He also noted that Lone Tree Hill is funding three projects this year: Invasive Plant Species management; pollinator meadow planting; and forest restoration work.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Commission

VOTED to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:30 pm