

MINUTES: Belmont Conservation Commission Meeting

Minutes of April 5, 2011 meeting.

The meeting was called to order in Room 2 of Town Hall at 7PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2011.

Attendance: Mary Trudeau, Conservation Agent, Martha Moore (Acting Chairwoman), Margaret Velie, Jeffrey North, Jim Roth, Tino Lichauco, Associates William McCants, Barbara Gardner and Brian Kelder

REVIEW OF MINUTES OF March 1, 2011 MEETING

The minutes were not reviewed, and this discussion was postponed until the May 3, 2011 meeting.

Gardens at Rock Meadow

Mary Trudeau noted that the registration for the gardens was going well, and that very few gardens would be available to new gardeners this summer. She noted that there had only been four gardeners who had issues with the fee increase to \$40 dollars per growing season. Ms. Trudeau noted that three gardeners had applied for financial aid and were paying only \$25.00 dollars this summer.

50 Common Street – Enforcement Action

Mary Trudeau noted that a recent site visit to the 50 Common Street project had revealed several violations of the Order of Conditions. The applicant had removed all of the ground cover from within the portions of the Riverfront Area closest to the Brook, and had removed almost all woody vegetation from the same area. While the canopy remained largely intact, there is little shrubbery remaining. Desco has restored portions of the Riverfront Area with new trees and shrubs, and that work appears to be largely compliant with the Orders of Conditions for the site.

Tino Lichauco moved to issue an enforcement action consistent with the restoration of the ground to the expectations of the Order of Conditions. The motion was seconded by Jim Roth, and the vote approved the motion unanimously.

240 and 250 Somerset Street Minor Modifications to Orders of Conditions:

Mary Trudeau noted that she was meeting with Dan Soline to discuss the restoration plantings at these properties on Tuesday April 12, 2011.

Kestrel Nesting Box at Rock Meadow:

Roger Wrubel, of Habitat, and Florence DiTorro presented a request to install a kestrel box on the property at Rock Meadow. Ms. DiTorro noted that there will be a box installed at Habitat property, and that adding one at Rock Meadow could provide a second location for birds using the meadow.

Joe Finn discussed the impact of a kestrel box on his bluebird nesting program, and was concerned that enhancing a kestrel population could adversely impact the blue bird nesting program. The Commission noted that we currently have several “users” and programs concurrently at Rock Meadow that are designed to enhance various species of fauna and flora, noting that we do not have a management plan coordinating these activities.

Mary Trudeau noted that Martha Moore had suggested using the Lone Tree Hill property as an alternative kestrel box location. Martha agreed to discuss this option with the McLean Land Management committee.

Bluebird Nesting Project:

Joe Finn made a short presentation to the Commission, detailing the successes and issues with the bluebird nesting program during the 2010 breeding season. Joe stated that he had 17 boxes over the summer of 2010, and left 11 boxes standing over the winter months. He noted that he had two breeding pairs that fledged nine young over the course of the summer of 2010. Joe also trapped and removed four sparrows from boxes.

Joe also discussed his mowing of the northwest meadow and his willingness to assist in the restoration of the fire road at the north end of the site. The Commission thanked him for his work in the meadows.

Upcoming Work Parties:

April 9, 2011 – Garden work party
May 15, 2011 – Mitzvah event for Temple Beth El
Senior Service Day (date unknown).

Rock Meadow and softball field proposal:

The Commission discussed the school departments need to create a new softball field if the Library is relocated to the High School property. The Commission noted that creation of a softball field could be contrary to the USDA WHIP program in place at Rock Meadow. The Commission noted that the program has 6 more years of funding in place for meadow restoration work.

Name Tags

The Commission noted that arranging the table to be more “user” friendly to applicants might be appropriate, and that name tags would be helpful to members of the public.

Uplands Project:

The Commission discussed recent actions on the pending litigation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 pm