

MINUTES Belmont Conservation Commission Meeting

Minutes of May 4, 2010 at Room 2 Town Hall at 7:00 P.M.

Attendance: Chair: Miriam Weil, Vice-Chair: Martha Moore; Members: Margaret Velie; Nancy Davis; Jim Roth; Tino Lichauco; David Webster; Associate: Barbara Gardner. Agent: Mary Trudeau.

1. Madelon Hope
2. Joe Finn
3. Jarrod Goentel
4. Laura Vanderhart
5. Allison Lenk
6. Stephanie Liu
7. Charlie Agrillo
8. Gerard Natoli
9. Stanley Dzierzeski

Review Minutes of April 6, 2010:

Tino Lichauco moved that the Commission approve the minutes, as submitted, of the April 6, 2010 meeting of the Belmont Conservation Commission. Peg Velie seconded, and the vote was unanimous (7).

Cambridge City Council Resolution

The Commission discussed the resolution passed by the Cambridge City Council concerning the Blair Pond Dredging. The Commission asked Mary Trudeau to call the Cambridge Conservation Commission to get clarification on the resolution.

Joe Finn – Mowing Discussion and Bird House project

Joe Finn discussed his work in the meadows last summer. He noted that he had been mowing to control cowvetch; garlic mustard; horse nettle; buckthorn and swallowwort plants within the north west section of the meadow. He noted that he had pulled slash from within the meadow and stockpiled it in the woodlands. Joe noted that he had done some mowing of the meadows and that he did not feel that this mowing had adversely impacted the potential for creating habitat for ground nesting birds. He noted that spot suppression of invasives had also been done throughout the summer and he felt that this type of activity would enhance the grass component of the meadow.

The Commission discussed the grass cutting within the meadow, noting issues with leaving the grass too short. Jim Roth noted that a length of 4 to 5 inches would be appropriate. The Commission requested that Mary Trudeau send a letter to Joe Finn praising his volunteerism and approving spot suppression of invasive or alien species during the summer months. The motion was made by David Webster, seconded by Jim Roth and was passed unanimously.

Madelon Hope Boston School for Herbal Studies

Madelon Hope requested permission to harvest several plants from within the meadow: Nettle; Ground Ivy and Sumac. She also requested permission to plant native and endangered plants such as Bloodroot in the woodland portions of Rock Meadow. She noted that she lead 2 to 3 walks per year through the meadow. Jim Roth moved to allow the harvesting of the three plants noted by Ms Hope, the use of the meadow for educational walks and to allow for the woodland planting program to continue for another year. The motion was seconded by Martha Moore and the vote was unanimous to approve the motion.

96 Agassiz Avenue NOI Public Hearing (106-101)

Jarrod Goentziel presented his plan for the expansion of a single family house at 96 Agassiz Avenue to the Commission. He noted that there was no less intrusive location for the addition, with respect to the proximity to the Beaver Brook due to zoning constraints on this relatively small residential lot. He noted that an infiltration system to mitigate for the proposed increase in impervious area had been proposed, and that the installation would be by hand held tools. The Commission discussed the performance standards under the Riverfront Area regulations, and noted that the applicant was required to mitigate for all work within the first one hundred feet of the resource area. The applicant offered to replant an area equal to the additional impervious cover on the site, or approximately 200 square feet of restoration. David Webster motioned to approve the project with the following special conditions, in addition to the standard conditions:

1. Hand held tools shall be used to install the infiltration system;
2. Erosion controls shall be installed below the infiltration system;
3. The finished slope behind the dwelling shall be no steeper than the existing slope;
4. 200 square feet of Riverfront Area shall be restored with native, woody vegetation; and
5. There shall be no stockpiling of materials within the Riverfront Area.

The motion was seconded by Jim Roth and the vote was unanimous to approve the project.

Rock Meadow Earthwork Project Discussion and Update

Mary Trudeau noted that the work in Rock Meadow to restore meadowland and remove stones from the south end of the site was completed. She asked that the Commission approve the fee of \$6000 dollars requested by J. Flett company, noting that the project as completed was more extensive than that originally proposed. She felt that the Commission had received more work than they had been charged for, and that the cooperation of Peter Castinino and the DPW had greatly improved the project. She noted that up to 15 new gardens had been created, and that the southern mowing should be much less expensive now that the rocks have been pulled from the meadow. David Webster moved, seconded by Jim Roth, to authorize the payment of \$6000 dollars to Flett.

Mary Trudeau also discussed the need to expand the watering system in the new gardens. She agreed to research this task and report back to the Commission.

May 16, 2010 Work Day Projects

Miriam Weil noted that the Temple Work Day was scheduled for May 16, and that while she could not attend, Barbara Gardner would be supervising the event. Projects for the work day include rock moving; garlic mustard control; removing slash from the meadow and trash pickup.

Grant Writing and Planning:

The Commission discussed being proactive in researching grants. Miriam Weil noted that having ideas for projects in hand would facilitate the research for grant sources. Nancy Davis noted that rehabilitation of Clay Pit Pond trail system is a worthy project and could incorporate accessibility issues. David Webster noted that creating a town wide wetlands map would be a possible project.

Open Space Plan Update:

Miriam Weil , Nancy Davis and Barbara Gardner noted that they were organizing the rewriting of some sections of the Comprehensive Plan. Nancy Davis, Barbara Gardner and Martha Moore agreed to continue to meet and discuss the re write.

Uplands Discussion:

Charlie Agrillo, an abutter to the Uplands site, noted that the recent flooding event had resulted in raw sewerage entering his home. He stated that flooding in this area is problematic and has worsened in recent years. Stephanie Liu spoke about the problems in the Oliver Road neighborhood and the concern that flooding will worsen with the development proposed on the Uplands property. Stanley Dzierzeski spoke and noted that he is working to repeal the “40 B” regulations and that he was meeting with the Belmont Selectmen on May 17, 2010 to discuss the Uplands situation. Tino Lichauco noted the need to raise public awareness of the flooding issues in the Oliver Road neighborhood and made comparisons to the 9th Ward in New Orleans.

The Commission went into executive session at 9:50 to discuss potential litigation on the Order of Conditions issued for the Residences at Acorn Park project.