

Belmont Conservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday, February 6, 2007
Town Hall Conference Room #4
7:00 PM

Attendance: Chair Miriam Weil, Commissioners, Joe Curro, Nancy Davis, Peg Velie, David Webster
Associates: Darrell King, Tino Lichauco, Monica King
Agent: Mary Trudeau

Public: Thomas Reed of 62 Woodfall Road, Ann Heymann of 275 Marsh Street, Norman Kherlop for 70 Woodfall Road

Minutes of January 9, 2007 approved as amended.

MACC Annual Conference Registration:

Miriam Weil noted that the MACC Annual Conference is to be held on March 3, 2007. She urged all members and associates to consider attending the conference. Mary Trudeau stated that she would ask for the Town to sponsor the registrations for members wishing to attend, if they would fill out a registration form and submit it to her.

70 Woodfall Road:

The Chairwoman reopened the continued public hearing at 7:20 PM. Mr. Kherlop, the applicant's representative was in attendance, and discussed the current status of the project with the Commission. Mr. Kherlop noted that he had submitted, as instructed, the names of three Licensed Site Professionals. He stated that two of the firms were acceptable to the Commission as they employed Licensed Site Professionals, and that he had engaged the services of Paragon Environmental Services (PES) (with LSP Stephan Smith.) Miriam Weil confirmed that she had negotiated the scope of the testing with Mr. Smith, prior to the sampling. Mr. Kherlop stated that he did not have a final report on the assessment but that it would be submitted to the Commission upon completion by PES.

Mr. Kherlop discussed the well filtration system and noted that the Belmont Water Department and the plumbing inspector have agreed to consider locating the filtration system within the dwelling, with the condition that pipes be color coded to separate potable and nonpotable sources of water.

The Commission discussed the additional materials submitted by Mr. Kherlop. Mary Trudeau noted that there was an asbestos survey included in the materials, but that it did not appear that the observed asbestos was removed from the dwelling by a Massachusetts DLWD licensed asbestos abatement contractor. Mr. Kherlop agreed that the asbestos had not been removed by an approved abatement contractor, and noted that this information had been submitted to Paragon Environmental Services. The Commission asked that this information be submitted to the Belmont Board of Health.

The Commission reviewed the additional site plans submitted. The Commission noted that the roof drainage and perimeter drainage appeared to be linked, and asked that the separation be graphically shown on revised site plans. Mr Kherlop stated that the connection between the catchbasin and the existing perimeter drain has been “capped”. Mr Kherlop noted that roof runoff would be divided between the front and rear yard areas, mimicking the existing conditions.

Nancy Davis asked that the landscaping plan be modified to include a “hardwood” tree to mitigate for the vegetation removed by the applicant. Mary Trudeau noted that “burning bush” is a non native invasive and that the applicant should substitute for these plantings on the landscaping proposal.

Mr Kherlop requested a continuance of the Public Hearing until March 6, 2007. David Webster moved to continue the public hearing at the applicants request until March 6, 2007. The motion was seconded by Margaret Velie, and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Rock Meadow:

The Commission discussed the Rock Meadow subcommittee meeting that occurred earlier in the evening. Miriam Weil suggested that Tom Chalmers of the Weston Conservation Commission speak to the Commission concerning the use of sheep to maintain meadows. The suggestion was enthusiastically received and Ms Weil agreed to set up a discussion time.

The Commission discussed the membership of the Rock Meadow Subcommittee and agreed that all members of the Commission were members of the subcommittee, and should be copied on relevant correspondence.

The Commission discussed the management of the garden area at Rock Meadow. Ms Trudeau noted that the Commission is responsible for the gardens and that the management of the gardens should be formalized. Nancy Davis and Monica King expressed support for the current management team of Bruce Westgate and various volunteers. Ms Trudeau noted that the current practice of collecting fees for the use of the plots was not being done in accordance with usual Town policies and that the Commission must monitor the finances of the garden. Ms. Trudeau also expressed concern with the current management and the need to have equal access to the gardens for all residents of the Town. The members discussed placing an advertisement or article in the local paper to alert town residents to the availability of the garden plots.

The Commission agreed that a meeting should be set up between the gardening group and the Commission to evaluate the current practices.

Open Space Plan:

Miriam Weil discussed the ongoing revisions to the Towns Open Space Plan. She noted that a current Open Space Plan is necessary to ensure grant eligibility with the MassDCR. She stated that Jay Szklut is coordinating the process of revising the Plan, and that he has asked for comments on a town wide questionnaire. David Webster suggested that the questionnaire include reference to the railroad bike/walking trail that has occasionally been considered by the Town. Miriam Weil noted that a question concerning interest in a dog park, or off leash area, would be relevant. Nancy Davis and Peg Velie asked that walking and jogging trails be included in the questionnaire.

Role of the Conservation Agent:

Ms Trudeau discussed her experience with the Conservation Agent position with the Commission. She noted that she viewed her role as a technical advisor to the Commission, rather than a spokesman or lobbying agent for the policies of the Commission. She noted that she was a Town employee and would be representing the Commission with various boards and projects throughout the town.

David Webster expressed concern with the use of the agent position to represent the Commission, and it was noted that controversial correspondence should be signed by the Chair of the Commission. Ms Trudeau noted that she would always discuss enforcement actions with the Chairman, prior to taking written action, and that the full Commission would be required to ratify any actions taken.

Ms Trudeau noted that she did not view the Town wetland mapping as authoritative, and would always require a field delineation of wetlands when determining jurisdiction. The Commission also discussed creating an informational wetlands or environmentally sensitive areas brochure for distribution to local homeowners.

Funding of Consultants:

Margaret Velie discussed the need to establish a fund to allow for the processing of consultant payments. She noted that the law currently allows for the Conservation Commission to request an applicant to fund an impartial, third party review, but that the Town needs to have an established policy prior to making the request. Tino Lichauco agreed to research the issue and prepare a motion for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM Next meeting March 6, 2007 at 7:00 PM
Submitted by /M. Trudeau

