

APPROVED

Belmont Conservation Commission Meeting
Tuesday May 1, 2007
Homer Municipal Building Room #4
7:00 PM

Attendance:

Chair Miriam Weil, Commissioners: Carolyn Bishop, Martha Moore, Nancy Davis, David Webster and Peg Velie
Associates: Darrell King, Tino Lichauco, Monica King
Agent: Mary Trudeau

Public:

Debbie Hartman
Joe Finn
Bruce Westgate
Stanley Dzierzeski

Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of March 27, 2007 and made several minor changes to the text. Carolyn Bishop moved to approve the minutes as amended, the motion was seconded by David Webster, and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Bruce Westgate and the Victory Gardens at Rock Meadow:

Bruce Westgate, volunteer coordinator of the Victory Gardens discussed the current status of the gardens. He noted that there had been a successful garden cleanup and that the Belmont DPW had graciously picked up a large pile of trash and debris from the garden area. Mr. Westgate also noted that the DPW had dropped off a load of humus for the gardeners.

Mr Westgate noted that he had received approximately 25 requests for garden space from new gardeners and that he was currently assigning plots. He noted that approximately 110 gardens were available for rental, and that we were close to having assignments for that number of plots.

Mr. Westgate stated that he had been collecting rental fees for the garden plots, and had a private bank account established to hold these monies. He noted that there had been some unfavorable comments on the Commission's decision to raise the gardening fee to \$25.00 to cover the costs of water and maintenance of the gardens. Mr. Westgate noted that the fee was a good means of ensuring that gardeners valued their plots and were invested in the project.

Mr. Westgate noted that the parking lot was in disrepair. The Commission discussed the possibility of using rental fees to subsidize repairs. The Commission also discussed the newly established revolving account with Mr. Westgate. The Commission noted that upon the July 1, 2007 establishment of the fund, the Commission would switch from the private bank account to

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utilization of this municipal account. The Commission noted that all receipts and invoices would now be processed through the Town.

Joe Finn and the Bluebird Nesting Box Project at Rock Meadows

Joe Finn appeared in front of the Commission to discuss the status of his bluebird nesting box project in Rock Meadow. He noted that his program appeared to be successful and that he estimated that 4-5 chicks were fledged last year. He stated that he had 14 nesting boxes last year, and hoped to have approximately 22 boxes in the meadow this year. Mr. Finn noted that he has a permit to capture and euthanize sparrows found within the nesting boxes. Mr. Finn also requested permission to do a small amount of mowing, on an intermittent basis, around the nesting boxes. Mr. Finn noted that each cluster of boxes consisted of 3 nesting boxes: one for bluebirds; one for tree swallows and the third is used to trap the non native sparrows. He explained that long grass discourages the bluebirds from foraging and that by providing appropriate cover, he could improve the food supply for the birds.

Agents Report

Mary Trudeau went through recent correspondence with the Commission and distributed various brochures and conference literature to the members.

The Commission discussed Madelon Hope's request to use the meadow for the gathering of herbs and the planting of native herbs in conjunction with the Boston School of Herbal Studies. The Commission asked Ms Trudeau to ask Ms Hope to meet with the Commission to discuss her use of the meadow.

Notice of Intent filing : 112 Clifton Street, Belmont, MA

Mary Trudeau presented the Commission with the details of a proposed driveway culvert repair at 112 Clifton Street. The existing culvert has broken, and caused a large hole in the driveway. The Notice of Intent proposes to replace the failed culvert, in kind, with an 18 inch rep. The work is tentatively scheduled for a period of low stream flow, but the plan does include a strategy to bypass pump flows around the work area if necessary. The Town of Belmont will be the contractor for the project, and Mary Trudeau noted that she will provide supervision to the work crew.

The Commission discussed the inability of the project to meet the Army Corp of Engineer stream crossing standards, and noted that the project was a replacement of an existing culvert, and that options were limited by the existing site conditions.

David Webster moved to close the public hearing and issue a standard Order of Conditions. Peg Velie seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Stanley Dzierzeski

Mr Dzierzeski appeared before the Commission to discuss the possibility of a violation at the Uplands site. Ms Trudeau noted that she had viewed the site on two occasions recently, and had not observed any recent violations that would be subject to an Enforcement Act by the Conservation Commission.

Wetlands Bylaw Discussion

The Commission discussed the possibility of proposing the wetlands bylaw for consideration at the October Town Meeting. Discussion continued for several hours, and a motion was made, by Carolyn Bishop, to continue to work on the bylaw for submission at the Fall Town Meeting. The motion was seconded by Martha Moor. The vote was:

Miriam Weil – opposed
David Webster- opposed
Caroline Bishop – in favor
Nancy Davis – in favor

Margaret Velie and Martha Moore abstained.

Discussion continued. Miriam Weil asked for a motion to adjourn. There was no motion. Nancy Davis made a motion to reconsider presenting the bylaw at the Fall Town Meeting. There was no second. Martha Moore asked for clarification of the Commission's intentions regarding the bylaw in the future.

There was an additional hour of discussion, which included the need to educate and persuade townspeople prior to putting the bylaw on the warrant. There was no resolution.

Martha Moore made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by David Webster and the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM
Submitted by: M. Trudeau