

Minutes

Conservation Commission

March 14, 2023

Attendance: David Miller, Chair, Reed Pugh, Steve Cohn, Keri Layton, Martha Hoyt, Zeke Nims, Elaine Vreeland, Administrator.

32 Everett Ave.: Con't. Public Hearing, Notice of Intent. It is proposed to construct a swimming pool, tennis court, and associated hardscaping and landscaping. Con't. to April 11, 2023.

Minutes: It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous roll call vote to approve the minutes of February 28, 2023.

160 Johnson Road: Enforcement Order. Elaine explained that the property owner had ignored three requests to remove debris from a stream area over a period of months, and requested that an Enforcement Order issue to pursue the problem. It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to authorize the Order.

10 Converse Place: Update. David noted that a DEP site visit is scheduled for March 20 as the result of an appeal filed by the applicant. Elaine, Steve, and David will attend. He also stated that he had discussed the nature of the appeal protocols with Town Counsel and DEP.

Software Programs: Discussion. Martha Hoyt explained that she is organizing the outreach for Aberjona River Day and would like to use a software program that will allow people to sign up and express their particular interest. She also noted that some Google forms might be useful. Once adopted, the program could be used for other events. No decision was made and the discussion was continued to 3/28/23.

Aberjona River Day: Discussion. Reed Pugh discussed its new connection with the Cultural District, and how trash would be used in two outdoor sculptures. He noted that there are a number of students at the high school who might be interested in doing invasives clearing work behind the Arthur Griffin Museum. Elaine spoke of a proposal to host a photography contest of photos taken in conservation areas, to be posted at Town Day. Reed said that he would speak to the Griffin Museum to see if they are interested in participating.

Town Hall Minor Project: Discussion. Steve Cohn presented proposed conditions to be used for this and other projects. Commission members accepted the document, and it was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous roll call vote to accept the proposed work at the town hall as a minor project with the associated conditions.

Town Forest Update: Discussion. David noted the ongoing encroachment problems, taken from Reed's list based on his site visits. David noted that he had spoken with town counsel, who will draft a letter to each of the abutters who have been encroaching.

Eversource – Woburn to Wakefield Line: Discussion. David said that he had spoken to Chris Newhall from Eversource, who has scheduled a site visit to discuss rehabilitation of the Wedgemere Train Station site. He also said that he had discussed the lay down area at Washington Park. The restoration had originally been scheduled for spring 2023, but Eversource has been strongly encouraged by DEP to continue using the site instead of setting up a new one at Davidson Park for the work to be done at Cross Street. The Washington Street site will be restored in spring of 2024.

The Vale: Discussion. David said that he had spoken with former town counsel regarding the proposal to donate a 16+ acre site to the town for conservation purposes. He has requested an update on the status of that transfer and expects to hear back about Commission involvement.

Conservation Commission Logo: Discussion. David spoke about amounts in the Commission accounts, and how the money may be spent from each. He noted that money from the Conservation Fund may be used for the purchase and maintenance of land. It is under this account that we may use money for conservation area trail guidance, plant identification and other information, accompanied by a logo which would identify areas as being under the care of the Commission. Reed suggested that we make a list of proposed projects, and the discussion was continued to March 28, 2023.

Winning Farm Conservation Area: Discussion. David Miller said that he had researched grants, but none were applicable to this area, the obstacle being that there is no access over public land.

Bylaw and Regulations: Discussion. David Miller spoke of the need to promulgate regulations from policies and the existing bylaw. He requested volunteers for a subcommittee and said that he would look to other towns as a template. Steve Cohn and Keri Layton volunteered.

Submitted by:

Elaine Vreeland

