

Minutes
Conservation Commission
May 9, 2023

Attendance: David Miller, Chair, Zeke Nims, Steve Cohn, Martha Hoyt, Ann Storer, Elaine Vreeland, Administrator.

Minutes: It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to approve the minutes of April 25, 2023.

Cranberry Path at Middlesex Fells: Public Meeting, Request for Determination of Applicability. *It is proposed to construct a small bridge over an intermittent stream.*

Representative: Paul Galvin

Information Presented: Request for Determination of Applicability, plus plans.

The current bridge consists of a single 10' long 2'x 4' plank. The new bridge will be a 14' long plank, with two 4'x'4's 3' apart, with decking and rebar for anchors. Pressure treated wood treated for ground contact will be used. Members noted some problems with the design, including a risk that the span was too large and may break, and asked Paul to work with Commission Steve Cohn to improve the design. It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous roll call vote to continue to May 23, 2023.

18 Sunset Road: Con't. Public Hearing, Notice of Intent. *It is proposed to construct an addition on piers within a floodway.* It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous roll call vote to continue to May 23, 2023.

Eversource – Cross Street at Aberjona River: Con't. Public Hearing, Notice of Intent. *It is proposed to change the method for underground, trenchless cross of the Aberjona River at Cross Street from a jack and bore method to a horizontal directional drill methodology.* It was moved, seconded, and approved by unanimous roll call vote to continue to May 23, 2023.

Commissioner Led Updates and Discussions:

Miyawaki Forest in Winchester

- **Representatives:** Prassede Calabi - Grow Local,
Maya Dutta - Bio4Climate

The forest would be located on the Conservation Restriction portion of the farm. Prassede opened the discussion and stated that she had spoken to representatives of Wright Locke Farm, and that they had expressed support for the idea, but had not yet taken a formal vote, and are looking for a timeline and budget. She also noted that Bio4Climate is currently applying for federal grant money from the US Department of Forestry, for two communities, one Winchester, and the other Charlestown. Both communities would be partners as an example in a template proposal which could be used to scale up or down forests in many communities. Winchester could provide a platform for educational outreach.

- Maya Dutta continued the presentation explaining Bio4Climate's idea of a community-based hub for information and assistance, letting communities modify a plan as needed. In this instance, Wright Locke Farm and the Conservation Commission would provide the land, a scalable model, and volunteers, and plant material would be provided with grant money. It would be anticipated that planting would take place in spring of 2024. Bio4Climate will hold the funds, as it is a 501(C)(3) entity, and both towns could communicate with each other to their mutual advantage.

Town Day

Goals for the day include public education about near term initiatives, inspiring citizens to get involved, showcasing the Commission's efforts for invasives management. Bringing in plants was a suggestion, as well as preparing handouts regarding conservation areas, the herring run, land stewardship, and the Aberjona Initiative.

Lynch School

Steve has been working on Riverfront Area credits and is optimistic regarding balancing the calculations. David recommended that the consultants come in on May 23rd and have an informal discussion to aid them in meeting the performance standards. It was decided that there would be a special meeting to resolve the formula/template to members' satisfaction.

Davidson Park

A volunteer group comprised of high school students are interested in a fall project, and Commission members suggested removing invasive species at Davidson or Washington Parks. Elaine will notify their supervisor to arrange a work date.

Commission Branding

David said that he had met with the artist and suggested revisions, and the matter was continued to May 23, 2023.

MWRA and Trees

Members discussed the benefit of a staggered release of trees so they may be planted in an orderly fashion. Zeke will contact the MWRA to discuss possibilities.

37 Leslie Road: Request for Certificate of Compliance

This was a 2008 project, with all the necessary paperwork submitted. It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to approve a Certificate of Compliance.

Wright Locke Farm Report: It was reported that the farm had not been able to make progress on agroforestry.

Submitted by:

Elaine Vreeland