

**Minutes of the Ashburnham Conservation Commission  
November 9th, 2015**

Present: MD: Marshall Dennis  
CP Christopher Picone  
AH Andrew Henderson  
AA Alana Archangelo

Absent: None

**6:30 PM:** MD opened the meeting of the Ashburnham Conservation Commission under the MA Wetland Protection Act, M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40, and in accordance with the Ashburnham Wetlands Protection Bylaw and associated Rules and Regulations.

**6:35 PM Guests & Visitors**

Albert & Myrtle Allard (345 Lake Rd.) met with the Commission to discuss what they felt were issues associated with the lowering of the water level on Lower Naukeag Lake. They felt that lowering the lake four feet led to increased beaver activity with the formation of four dams in response to the lower water level. The beaver have removed vegetation from the property in order to build the dams. In addition the opening of Lake Watatic's dam has resulted in the silt and debris from above being washed down stream onto their property

MD thought that the rate of removal of the boards in the dam was perhaps too quick.

Mr. Allard felt that the lower water levels led to a loss of migratory birds and a slurry of water instead of a channel so that the river characteristics are destroyed and a loss of a waterfront view.

MD thought the Commission needed to see it and that it was a difficult situation as there are competing interest.

Mr. Allard felt that affected the property owners at the bottom of the stream channel from Lake Watatic and that the beavers are destroying the trees.

MD felt that the activities of the Lake Association are legal but the Commission will check to see if they are doing anything that is different this year and they will check with the Lake Watatic Association as well.

Mr. Allard stated that they had spoken to the Conservation Agent (Rich Turcotte) as well.

Linda Couture met with the Commission, she has recently moved to Ashburnham and would like to volunteer to become a member of the Conservation Commission.

**Other Business**

Bush Hill Field Restoration, Grant information is available.

Forest Cutting Plan for Fitchburg Sportsmen's Club has been approved by the State Forester.

DNI for 30 Lakeshore Dr., for fence installation, was approved by the Conservation Agent.  
DNI for 13 Spruce St., for tree removal, was approved by the Conservation Agent.

The owners (Catherine Spyropoulos, Trustee Charlene Schwint) of a lot on Lakeshore Rd. (Map 56, Lot 4) are moving and would like to donate the land to the Town for Conservation. It is approximately ¼ acre but it does abut land already owned by the Town. The Conservation Agent looked at the property and it does appear to be in good condition and in a good location. MD will speak to Heather & Sylvia.

CP opened discussion on filing requirements for herbicide application for aquatic vegetation control, Town Bylaw Fees and abutter notification requirements for Request for Determination Filings.

Possible areas to address for herbicide applications:

Map of where the weeds are located.

Description of target vegetation including genus and species.

Short term monitoring to include, dead weeds and fish kills. Also who will do the monitoring.

What is the goal. Are we attaining a long term goal. Is the herbicide or drawdown or the combination of both accomplishing the goal.

MD suggested a separate section in the regulations for manmade lakes. It should be codified, written down so that it is not just the Commissions policy. We should possibly look at what other towns, possibly coastal towns are doing, check their regs. Also how much of a burden would it be.

CP would like refuge zones be designated on the lakes. Three lakes already do but Sunset Lake doesn't.

Bylaw Fees:

Should bylaw fees be revisited, some are high compared to other towns.

MD in some cases such as a catastrophe (chemical spill, etc.) a lot of monitoring would be required.

Abutter Notification:

Under the Local Wetlands Bylaw the Commission has been requiring abutter notification for Requests For Determination.

Should this be a requirement, it is mentioned in the Bylaw Regulations.

MD questioned if the wording in the Regulations needs some updating in general?

Everyone will review the Bylaw Regulations.

Cushing Academy has a pile of dirt that is visible from Rt. 12, it doesn't have any erosion controls and is near a stream.

7:58 PM Adjournment.

MD motioned to adjourn the Meeting.

CP Seconded the Motion.

Approved 4-0, unanimously.