

Town of Becket
Conservation Commission Minutes
20 February, 2018

Commissioners in attendance: Alison Dixon (Chair), Barbara Brand, Cindy Delpapa, Karen Karlberg, and Becket Conservation Agent Laura Robbins

Commissioners not in attendance: Mary Stucklen

Members of the public: Rita Furlong, Shannon Boomsma, Mark Stinson, Emily Pfeiffer, Michael Pfeiffer, Mallory Larcom, Rita Furlong of Becket Parks and Recreation, Emily and Michael Pfeiffer, Mallory Larcom, Shannon Boomsma of White Engineering, Mark Stinson of MA DEP, Andres Saluce, Ken Wagner, David Frias, Anthony Limina, and Alice Limina.

Chair Dixon called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM, read meeting guidelines, introduced the Commissioners, and asked if anyone was recording the meeting. No one indicated they were recording.

Becket Conservation Commissioners welcomed newly appointed Becket Conservation Agent Laura Robbins.

Public input and comment for items not on the agenda.
None offered.

A Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by Emily Pfeiffer: The proposed activity is to install a dock and perform minor, manual aquatic vegetation management within the resource area of Long Bow Lake. Project Location is 569 Long Bow Lane West (Map 214 Lot 38-G). Commissioners visited the site. The homeowner wishes to install a twenty foot long, (two ten foot sections) floating, seasonal dock in a small cove. The cove has significant aquatic vegetation and the homeowner wishes to clear vegetation immediately adjacent to the dock to allow access to the water and increase the usability of the dock. Homeowner requested clarification on what constitutes 'routine maintenance' and Chair Dixon explained an RDA is generally good for three years allowing the homeowner to continue removal of vegetation adjacent to the dock. Another RDA would need to be filed in three years to renew authorization to continue vegetation management. The homeowner will only be pulling rooted aquatic vegetation by hand and has identified the species present based on the vegetation survey performed on Long Bow Lake by Solitude Lake Management. Motion made to issue a negative determination #2 for the installation of a floating seasonal dock (4 feet by 20 feet) and hand pulling of aquatic plants no more than five feet on each side of the dock at 569 Long Bow West (Map 214, Lot 38-G). Regarding the plant species to be removed, the Applicant will reference the Solitude report found in the lake and will follow the guidance in the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation's manual for hand pulling of plants, (Brand/Karlberg). MSV.

K Karlberg recused herself and left the meeting at 6:53 PM.

In response to an enforcement order issued 12/19/17, Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by Michael Tosch: The proposed activity includes maintenance of Beaver Brook Road within the resource area of Shaw Pond and associated tributaries. Project Location: Beaver Brook Road (Map 204, Lot 42). Commissioners visited the site. S Boomsma was present to represent owner of the private road. Mr. Tosch would like to maintain the road until an NOI is filed by

the deadline imposed in the Enforcement Order, (1 June, 2018). Currently the road floods frequently washing gravel into Beaver Brook, a perennial stream. The culvert carrying the stream beneath the road is undersized causing flooding issues and this is exacerbated by runoff from the Mass Pike and other roads. The property owner would like to remove rocks and debris from the 24 inch culvert to maintain stream flow and also proposes to fill in ruts in the road with gravel to allow vehicles to use the road throughout the upcoming spring. This proposed work will be done by hand and will not alter the footprint of the road. The property owner would also like to trim vegetation adjacent to the road to allow vehicles to pass freely. The area supports a state-listed species of bird, (American Bittern) as noted in a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game - Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Resource areas present at the site include buffer zone, flood plain, riverfront area and bordering land subject to flooding. The stream is also a state listed cold water resource, Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, and Priority Habitat of Rare Species. Chair Dixon would like to visit the site before the maintenance work begins and after the snow and ice has melted to allow measurement of the existing road. She also requested the proponent notify the Conservation Commission or the Conservation Agent before the maintenance work begins to allow the Conservation Agent to observe some or all of the maintenance work at the time it is performed. The MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program reviewed the RDA and provided a letter to the property owner and Becket Conservation Commission detailing time-of-year restrictions and requiring the work be reviewed again in one year. Motion made to issue a negative determination #2 and #3 for maintenance of Beaver Brook Road (Map 204, Lot 42) encompassing the removal of gravel and rock washed into the stream, removing debris from the existing culvert and the filling of road ruts with clean stone. All work will be done using only hand tools but may be aided by a small truck to transport gravel needed to fill the road ruts. Vegetation adjacent to the road may be trimmed to the edge of the road but not past the edge of the road footprint, and may not be uprooted. Commissioners and/or Conservation Agent will be allowed to visit the site prior to maintenance to measure road width and to be present during the maintenance work. The property owner, or their agent, will notify the Commission prior to beginning the maintenance work. This Determination is valid for one year, (Brand/Delpapa). Discussed if there should be any qualification about the frequency of maintenance, whether to qualify gravel not be used within a certain distance to the stream and the definition of clean stone to prevent bringing additional invasive plants onto the site. MSV. S Boomsma requested the paperwork be sent to her office.

Commissioner Karlberg rejoined the meeting at 7:18 PM.

Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent (DEP File # 102-0436) submitted by Center Pond

Restoration and Protection District: The proposed activity includes control of Eurasian Watermilfoil in Center Pond. Project Location: Center Pond (Maps 210 and 211).

Chair Dixon opened the public hearing at 7:19 PM. A Schrader, president of the Center Pond District, was in attendance in addition to K Wagner and M Larcom, consultants to the District. K Wagner explained the history of aquatic control of Eurasian watermilfoil in Center Pond. In the past *diquat* was used to treat Center Pond before the hand pulling began. Last year the Eurasian watermilfoil grew vigorously and the hand pulling could not keep pace. The NOI submitted by the District proposes to treat the Pond with fluridone pellets this coming season to regain control of the milfoil. K Wagner explained the pelletized form of fluridone is a fairly new formulation that seems to work well and does not impact other species. The District proposes disseminating the pellets in Center Pond early in the season and then applying one or two booster applications by June. The treated area will be 30 acres maximum. (The NOI asks for a much larger area, the full 125-acre Pond area, to be permitted because it is undetermined exactly where the chemical treatments will be needed.) K Wagner anticipated this chemical treatment approach should eliminate all visible milfoil. Hand pulling will also continue in the Pond. Commissioner Karlberg requested clarification about the fluridone formulation to be used as the State's registry of chemicals lists three formulations and also mentions the fluridone

state registrations expire this June (2018). K Wagner says the pellets are the granular formulation. Commissioner asked how the pellets are to be broadcasted. K Wagner explained they are dispersed from the back of a boat using a broadcaster. Commissioners asked if boats break milfoil plants into pieces will the fluridone kill the plant fragments? K Wagner felt the chemical treatment will likely still be effective. Commissioner asked why the sudden increase in the milfoil coverage? K Wagner said there are theories but no definitive answer. Plant fragments are the primary means of spreading and not boats. The plants in the pond could be fragmenting now- before the divers are able to begin pulling plants. The in-lake concentration of fluridone needed to be lethal is 2 ppb to 10 ppb with 4-6 ppb the target range. The chemical has a photo life of about one month. The District typically monitors in the spring and autumn but the timing of the water quality monitoring could be changed. Hand pulling will begin in April and continue through the fluridone treatments. Chair Dixon opened the hearing to the public at 8:46 PM. Andres Saluce explained he worked with Mercedes Gallagher as a volunteer in the Center Pond Weed project for many years. The hand pulling began in 2003 or maybe 2001. There was a concern about the timing of the booster applications of fluridone, as chemical application to Buckley Dunton just prior to the July 4th long weekend caused significant public outcry. A concern was raised that a booster treatment late June- at the height of lake use- could cause consternation among the public. M Stinson, (MA DEP) stated he did not see how the Commission can limit the number of chemical treatments or the timing of the treatments. He has never heard of any Commission limiting the timing of applications. As soon as the milfoil starts growing is when the application should happen- can't predict the date as the initial and booster application are weather dependent. Chair Dixon closed the public input portion of the hearing at 8:03 PM. Motion made to issue an Order of Conditions for DEP File # 102-0436 for the control of Eurasian watermilfoil in Center Pond (Maps 210 and 211) with an initial application of pelletized fluridone and up to two booster applications. The treatment areas will be based on an annual spring plant survey. The spring survey must be submitted to the Becket Conservation Commission with a final treatment plan prior to moving forward with the initial chemical treatment. The Center Pond District will provide the Becket Conservation Commission with the follow-up survey reports regarding the treatment effectiveness and all other data collected as part of the vegetation management project. The Becket Conservation Commission will be notified a minimum of 2 working days prior to the initial and booster applications. The autumn annual report will be submitted to the Becket Conservation Commission by the end of each January and will include the vegetation surveys, water quality data, and proposed treatment plan for the next year. Additional chemical treatments after the 2018 season must be approved by the Becket Conservation Commission based on the recommendations in the annual report. Hand harvesting activities are allowed using divers following the protocols of the Center Pond Weed Project with plant materials removed from jurisdictional areas and disposed of in an upland areas, (Brand/Karlberg). MSV.

Continued from January 16, 2018: Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by the Town of Becket for reconfiguration of shed and portable toilets at the Center Pond Beach Parking Area. Project location, 0 Mecum Way (Map 413 Lot 15). R Furlong provided a copy of the new design at the meeting. The proposed new structure will be increased to 10 by 20 feet to allow for a better roof pitch. Commissioners would like to have the roof shingles be made with environmentally friendly materials since the roof runoff will be flowing directly to an area adjacent to an intermittent stream. The building will be about 140 feet from the pond edge which is about thirty feet closer to the water than the existing structure. Additional work requested is the removal of three trees as two pose a safety issue and one removed to accommodate the new building. The existing concrete pad will be removed and a new pad poured for the new building. Commissioner asked to have the felled trees remain in the wetland to provide habitat and nutrients. R Furlong stated this would be unacceptable for safety reasons but the Parks Commission is considering planting some trees in memory of Mercedes Gallagher. The town will be contracting for the tree removal but R Furlong did not know the specifics of how the trees would be removed. Commissioners discussed the trees removal and how

best to avoid damage to resource area. *Commissioner Brand left the meeting at 9:04 PM.* Because the removal method is not known the Commissioners felt stymied on how to provide input on the best way to condition the tree removal. Consensus was reached to request an amended RDA to include tree removal and conduct another site visit since tree removal was not a part of the original filing and Commissioners did not consider this aspect of the project when on the initial site visit. R Furlong will contact the town to see if the tree removal can be done without heavy equipment. Motion made to repost the RDA, because of the number of changes to the proposed project, and resume consideration of this RDA at the 20 March, 2018 Becket Conservation Commission meeting, (Karlberg/Delpapa). MSV.

Issuance or Ratification of any Emergency Certifications or Enforcement Orders not anticipated at the time of posting. Motion made to ratify an emergency certification for repairs by the MA Department of Transportation at Mass Pike mile marker 21. Request from MA DOT a follow-up report about the work including the lat/long coordinates and a possible site visit to ensure future flows are not posing a road maintenance issue in this area of the highway, (Karlberg/Delpapa). MSV.

Approval of the minutes from the January 16, 2018 meeting. Motion made to approve the January 16, 2018 Becket Conservation Commission minutes with two minor corrections, (Karlberg/Dixon). MSV.

Miscellaneous:

Chair Dixon updated the Commission on the status of the Lancelot Lake dam repair appeal. DEP asked the proponent to revise the plan and is requiring the hydrology be modeled.

Borrego Solar inspections sent an update this past week. Chair Dixon said the account to fund the inspections is being depleted and the Commission should request additional funds to continue the inspections.

Commissioner Karlberg brought up an issue concerning Eversource Energy putting in a road off George Carter Road. No one remembers a new road being proposed- the RDA was about removing trees.

A letter about Yokum Pond was received from Amy Perlmutter expressing her opposition to hydroraking.

Motion made to adjourn, (Karlberg/Delpapa). Chair Dixon adjourned the meeting at 9:37 PM.