

BLACKSTONE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 19, 2011

James Plasse, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Senior Center of the Town Hall.

Present Were:

James Plasse
Lisa Brita

Maggie Plasse
Tamara Heiselmeyer

Absent Were:

James Pitler
James Sullivan

Beverly Wilson

Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) – Hearing for a Notice of Intent for reconstruction and rehabilitation of 4 bridges over the Blackstone River and Blackstone Canal, Canal St., Factory Pond inlet, Factory Pond outlet, and St. Paul St. The proposed work is in support of the Blackstone Greenway that will be constructed in the future. Daniel Driscol, Director of DCR, present as representative. Mr. Driscol said that the DCR is overseeing the Blackstone project for the bikeway path that will connect Worcester to Providence, RI. Segment 1 will be the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) railroad bridge restorations which will take place this summer through the fall of 2012.

Trish Donavan and Gene Crouch of Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) were also present. They presented for the board members a slide presentation of the bridges and what needs to be repaired or replaced. The project will be phased. They have received accelerated bridge funding to rehabilitate the 4 bridges addressed in the Notice of Intent. They are proposing work on the bridges and access to the bridges. The St. Paul Street bridge is in the buffer zone due to its location to the Blackstone Canal wetland area. The bridge will be moved to the former depot area on Canal St. and the proposed work done there. The bridge will be raised when it is replaced on it's abutments.

The bridge over the Blackstone River has no Bordering Vegetated Wetland area. The work will be elevated up above the bank. Docks or barges may be used for staging while work is being preformed. They will need to repair and replace concrete.

Accessibility at each bridge location is also being addressed. The bikeway will be gravel and there will be paved pads to each bridge. They will have to clean and open up an area for the contractor to work. The area will be allowed to re-grow after construction.

Mr. Driscol said that DCR will identify scenic vistas. They don't want growth taking over the abutments and the bridge areas. The vistas will be cleared out.
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They are proposing using silt fence and mulch rolls as erosion controls. Sub-drains will be used on either side of the Church Street bridge. They will drain out to two stone pads away from the river. Mr. Driscol said that silt sock has been used for erosion control in the past. They will also build containment areas for the debris falling from the bridges into the water. Ms. Donovan said that they could use a silt sock and if siltation is still occurring the contractor could install the fence after the fact.

The members agreed that they would like Natural Resource Services (NRS) to look at this project and do a walk through with VHB present. The secretary will contact NRS. Mr. Driscol said that the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Tourism Council would like permitting expedited. They are on board with the DCR project for the bike path.

Mr. Bruce Paterson, Blackstone Valley Boys and Girls Club, said that the bikeway is a great idea, but he is concerned with drainage issues. Ms. Donovan said that drainage shouldn't change from what's presently occurring. Mr. Driscol said that the quantity of water should not change.

Mrs. Brita made a motion to continue the hearing to Tuesday, May 10th at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Heiselmeyer seconded the motion. The motion was passed by Unanimous Vote.

All members present signed the secretary's payroll sheet.

Under Old Business Mr. Plasse and Ms. Plasse said that they will check out the status of Marc Daniels project and will report on their findings at the next meeting.

Also under Old Business Mrs. Brita will check out Stanley Irza's property.

Ms. Plasse made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Brita seconded the motion. The motion was passed by Unanimous Vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa A. Larue
Secretary