

Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee

MEETING NOTES

Date: September 22, 2010, 7:30pm
Place: Hildreth House

Members Present: Bruce Leicher (Chair), Jeff Ritter, Robert Blanck, Nick Browse,
Mark Hardy, Liz Swain (student member), Deb Pierce, Tom Gormley

Others Present: Bill Johnson (BoS), Janet Waldron (Conservation Commission)
Diane Switzer (EPA), Liz McCarthy (UMass Lowell graduate student)
Several pond-abutting residents (Frank Carlson, representative), Darrell Wickman

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Mr. Leicher.

Secretary's Report – Mr. Gormley

Minutes from our July and August meetings were reviewed and approved by motion, unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - Mr. Ritter

01490	Annual budget of \$33,500	Paid Nat. Grid, Horsley Witten	\$ 8,541.88
01489	CPC grant of \$119,104		\$ 0.00
27023	State reimbursement fund		\$ 59,389.83
	Gift account		\$ 238.00
	Total		\$ 68,169.71

1. State reimbursement for Stormwater project forthcoming, which will help our balance.
2. Q3 volunteer hours needed for the state reporting. Report to Mr. Gormley by 10/7, who will consolidate and provide to Mr. Ritter.

Grad Student Support through EPA for Water Quality Monitoring

1. Ms. Switzer of the EPA and Ms. McCarthy from UMass Lowell attended the meeting to introduce themselves and talk about McCarthy's planned participation in building and improving our water quality monitoring program, including the use of new monitoring equipment provided on loan by the EPA grant we applied for and won early in the summer. Efforts will include measuring the impacts of our Stormwater Treatment program, and supporting Bromfield students' projects involving the use of the equipment and water quality monitoring. Ms. McCarthy will provide data collected to a national system for studying water quality.
2. Ms. Pierce will be the point contact from the Pond Committee. We will include Ms. McCarthy in our communications.

Public Input

Several residents and pond abutters attended to report an increase in weed infestation in areas

where they live. These are their comments:

1. A resident who has lived on the pond for 54 years said the current condition is “the worst weeds ever”. He believes it has affected his well and decided put in a new one. “You can’t even row a boat there any more”. He said the area doesn’t freeze but stays soft through the winter, so the drawdown can’t kill the weeds there. He reported “thistle weed” there.
2. Another resident agrees with the first. In Sprigs Cove, the milfoil is penetrating further (into the shore?). Also near Thurston’s Cove. He doesn’t think the drawdown has helped at all. Snow cover keeps the ground warm there so the weeds don’t freeze. Boat props are chopping up the weeds, spreading them.
3. Another resident said the September 20 timeframe for starting the drawdown is too early, limiting residents’ recreational uses. Also, we start re-filling it too soon in February. Blue herons are feasting on the mussels when the water is down. He/she also thinks the frog population is down – “can’t hear them any more”.
4. One of the residents said we should be considering chemical treatments again, at least spot treatments in the areas most affected and not helped by the drawdowns. They were used years ago successfully. Perhaps try this only when the water level is down to limit spreading to other areas of the pond.
5. Frank Carlson, one of the residents, agreed to be the main contact for this group. We will follow up with him.

Pond Committee responds to public input:

- a. The drawdowns are definitely helping in some areas of the pond, but not as much in other areas (especially the east side, and beach), and we are interested in finding new ways to address those areas, with residents’ input. We will follow up with Mr. Carlson, and go see the affected areas.
 - b. Regarding the use of chemicals, most recently the town voted down their use, but it may be useful to study it again and raise it again with voters. It’s unclear however, how much we can localize the treatments. Also, we know that the chemical treatments are very expensive, which can affect town support.
 - c. Re the timing of drawdowns and re-filling, timing is driven by other factors such as the Rowing Association’s needs in the fall, and the need to ensure the pond re-fills in time for spring and summer recreational use.
 - d. Re the frog population, Mr. Ritter disagreed with the resident based on our frog counts which indicate no decrease in the population.
6. Mr. Wickman (resident) asked how we measure the daily drawdown vs. the 2” daily maximum. The committee responded by describing the new measuring stick installed by DPW.

Stormwater Treatment Project

1. Our CPC application for additional funds (\$73,750) is due Sept 30. Mr. Ritter and Mr. Browse will fill out the financial content, and Mr. Browse will handle the other portions. We will be required to present our application to the CPC in the next 8 days. Mr. Johnson said we should try to close out the prior funds from the 1st grant.
2. We (Mr. Browse, Mr. Johnson) met with two Horsley Witten engineers to begin identifying additional work we can do with remaining grant funds. We walked various locations around the pond. Good potential sites (forming the basis of our CPC request for additional funds; design cost estimate \$35-40k; construction \$150k) include:

- a. Several locations on Woodside Rd,
- b. A private lot on Tahanto where the owner expressed interest in working with us (using personal funds and/or resources for construction).
- c. Thurston's Cove area, down Peninsula Rd alongside a wetland area where a culvert is eroding (try to divert water back into the wetland).

Excavation Project

1. We will postpone any further excavation work for now until next fiscal year, but will continue with discussions and research on pursuing it next year.
2. We asked Horsley Witten for input on the excavation project. They said it is permissible, but will probably require help of the Corps of Engineers, and could be completed in six to nine months. We asked for an engineering proposal.
3. We also received input from Northeast Environmental, on Mr. Blanck's request. They also said we would need the Corps of Engineers, \$14k for permitting and assessment (not including engineering).

Outreach

1. We're not doing enough to meet our outreach commitment for the Stormwater grant. Ideas include:
 - a. Video on public cable channel (of our spring outreach event, or other activities).
 - b. Quarterly newsletter to pond abutters.
 - c. Door to door with pond abutters.
2. We agreed this needs the attention of a full meeting in the near future.

Other

1. Pond Committee goals were not presented to the BOS, as noone from the committee was able to attend. We will present later.
2. Mr. Johnson raised an idea for discussion, on whether we could find a way to generate electricity from water flows through the dam, and sell it back to the grid. This could be done as part of the planned work by DPW to overhaul the damn and spillway, and could offset the costs. We will check with the Energy Committee on their thoughts.

The meeting was adjourned by proper motion at 9:25PM.

Tom Gormley
Secretary

Documents Reviewed at this meeting (Attached):

1. Meeting agenda
2. Stormwater Project Budget through 2013.
3. Letter from Paul Willard of Cons Comm, dated 9/20/10, requesting an assessment of recent pond and weed management efforts, impact on ecology, and requesting the participation of a "consulting biologist" in the assessment.