

Bare Hill Pond Watershed Management Committee

MEETING NOTES

Date: January 24, 2011, 7:30pm
Place: Hildreth House

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

Others Present: Bill Johnson (BoS); Jaye Waldron (Cons. Comm.)

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 November, 2010 meeting were reviewed and approved by motion, unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - Mr. Ritter (provided via email)

01490	Annual budget of \$33,500		\$ 2,302.10
01489	CPC grant of \$119,104		\$ 0.00
27023	State reimbursement fund		\$ 85,108.71
26612	Gift account		\$ 238.55
	Total		\$ 87,649.36

Conservation Commission

1. Mr. Leicher spoke with Paul Willard of the Cons Comm, about their request for outside input on drawdown efficacy, from an objective expert. Mr. Willard said the Cons Comm is not in favor of the excavation project, but that doesn't mean they wouldn't approve it if the proposal is sound.
2. Mr. Leicher said his impression is there may be a trust issue with the Cons Comm, due to last year's initial excavation project not going as originally described.
3. Ms. Waldron confirmed the Cons Comm isn't convinced re the efficacy of our drawdowns, and wants an outside expert's opinion.
4. According to Liz Allard, Wendy Gendron is scheduled to meet with the Cons Comm on Feb. 14 as a first step, as our proposed expert. This is step one towards identifying whether they will accept Ms. Gendron as an objective expert.
5. Mr. Johnson suggested that members of the Cons Comm read the GEIR before the Feb. 14 meeting, and asked Ms. Waldron whether the Cons Comm would do so. Ms. Waldron said probably not – they'd prefer to just ask the expert questions.
6. Committee members agreed that our relationship with Cons Comm is more important than any one project, and therefore our approach will be to gain Cons Comm's agreement on proposals before moving forward. However, we won't simply stop pursuing any projects due to perceptions of Cons Comm concerns. We need to engage Cons Comm in a discussion of their concerns and agree on a plan.

Excavation Project

1. Mr. Leicher recommended that we stop further work on the excavation project, due to lack of Cons Comm support. Mr. Browse agreed with Mr. Leicher's recommendation.
2. Skipping this project will have an impact on our cash match for the DEP grant, so not doing it could cost the town money.
3. Mr. Hardy and Mr. Blanck said Parks & Rec are only marginally interested in the project, so it will be difficult to gain their support, despite the fact that they are the primary stakeholders as managers of the beach.
4. Mr. Johnson said the case for the project is three-fold:
 - a. Safety - Built-up sediment from years past, reducing the depth of the pond, is making diving less safe.
 - b. Safety – The deteriorating condition of the benthic matt is also creating a safety problem for swimmers who might get their feet caught in the material or weeds that are growing in it.
 - c. Weeds – The benthic matt has facilitated weed growth in the swimming area, increasing the prevalence of weeds there.
5. Mr. Johnson also said the DEP grant creates a timing issue for this project. We have a limited window to apply costs of this proposed project to the town match, which provides a significant discount on the costs. We will soon lose this opportunity as the grant runs out.
6. Hurdles to moving forward include:
 - a. Re-gaining the confidence of the Cons Comm.
 - b. Getting agreement from Cons Comm (and others – Parks & Rec?) that this is an important problem to solve.
7. Mr. Gormley said the project should be evaluated on its merits, rather than based on our ability to re-gain the confidence of the Cons Comm.
8. After further discussion of the benefits of at least having Horsley Witten do the initial analysis and proposal for the project, at a cost of roughly \$8,000, Mr. Browse made a motion to do so, including having HW present its conclusions to the Cons Comm (including best methods and permitting), which might increase the cost slightly. The motion passed 5 to 1, with only Mr. Leicher against.

Other

1. Mr. Leicher reminded everyone of the MA-COLAP meeting coming up on Saturday, January 29th. Mr. Leicher planned to attend and encouraged others to join him.
2. Mr. Leicher noted that Mr. Browse will not stay on the committee after his current ends in the spring, and asked others to think about new potential members. He thanked Mr. Browse for his contributions.

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

Tom Gormley
Secretary

Documents Reviewed at this meeting (Attached):

1. Meeting agenda