

**HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
NOVEMBER 6, 2014  
ARROVED: DECEMBER 4, 2014**

Chairman Paul Willard meeting to order at 7:04pm in the Town Hall Meeting Room under MGL Chapter 131 §40 The Wetland Protection Act and The Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 119 the Wetland Protection Bylaw

**Members Present:** Paul Willard, Don Ritchie, Wendy Sisson, Charlie Gorss, Jim Breslauer, Jaye Waldron and Jim Saalfield (Associate Member)

**Others Present:** Liz Allard (LUB Admin), George Watkins, Pam Durrant (Harvard Conservation Trust), Peter Dorward (Harvard Conservation Trust), Margaret Nessler (Harvard Conservation Trust), Molly Cutler (Harvard Conservation Trust), Marisa Steele, Jim Lee, Kate Toll, Faith Cross, and Mark Adams (Harvard Snowmobile Club)

**Discuss Potential Gift of Land 100 Shaker Road (Map 8 Parcel 18)**

Faith Cross and George Watkins were present to discuss a potential gift of land that abuts each of their properties on Shaker Road. As the parcel of land was once used by the Shakers, both Ms. Cross and Mr. Watkins would prefer the lot remain undeveloped. The parcel contains structures that have been neglected and would need to be removed. Ms. Cross and Mr. Watkins were present this evening to seek support of the Commission if they were to purchase the property and then gift it to the Town for the purpose of open space. They are not seeking any financial support in the purchase of the land. Wendy Sisson wondered if the area would have suitable parking for the Holy Hill conservation area. Mr. Watkins and Ms. Cross responded that it might. Paul Willard stated unless the land is contaminated, it is the Commission's policy to take a gift of land and pay the legal fees associated with that transaction. Ms. Sisson believes the parcel has value and should be considered for acceptance of a gift. Don Ritchie stated he agreed. Jim Breslauer made a motion that in the event the Commission is requested to accept 100 Shaker Road as a gift of land for the purpose of open space, the Commission will accept said request. Charlie Gorss seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

A letter will be sent to Ms. Cross and Mr. Watkins detailing the action taken this evening.

**Trail Improvements at Holy Hill**

Wendy Sisson stated she had reviewed the section of the trail along Holy Hill that is eroding due to heavy use by both foot traffic and snowmobiles. It is Ms. Sisson's suggestion that the area be blocked off, additional signage be installed to keep foot traffic on the designated yellow trail and allow the snowmobiles to access the area on a trail to the right of the eroded area. The installation of water bar on the steep slope will also aid in reducing erosion in that area. Additional signage should also be installed to indicate the trail to the right of the slope is for snowmobile use only, to avoid safety issues with foot traffic and snowmobiles. Members agreed to Ms. Sisson's suggestions. The Land Stewardship Committee will take care of the details.

**Executive Session**

Jim Breslauer made a motion that the Conservation Commission go into executive session With the Harvard Conservation Trust pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property in which a public discussion of these matters will have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission, only to adjourn the public meeting once the discussion is complete. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken; Paul Willard, aye; Don Ritchie, aye; Wendy Sisson, aye; Charlie Gorss, aye; Jaye Waldron, aye; Jim Breslauer, aye.

### **Discuss Proposal to Upgrade the Running Trails at Harvard Park**

Kate Toll, a senior at The Bromfield School, was present to discuss a potential project to improve the trails behind Harvard Park on Lancaster County Road. Ms. Toll explained this project would be completed as her senior project; as captain of the cross-county team, she very familiar with those trails and their need for improvement. Jim Lee, former member of the Park & Recreation (P&R) Commission, stated the proposal is similar to the Depot Road to Lancaster County Road trail completed by P&R a few years ago. The trail will require the installation of six to seven culverts. It was suggested that the final grade not be stone dust as that will easily erode and create additional issues for the abutting wetland areas. Ms. Toll will be seeking funding through the Community Preservation Committee for this project.

Members of the Commission were very much in favor of the project, but it was suggested that a site walk be scheduled so that members could review the proposed improvement areas. The type of filing required for this project was discussed; with the installation of culverts, long term maintenance and funding provide by Community Preservation funds, a Notice of Intent was suggested for this project. Ms. Toll thanked the Commission for their time and input.

Jim Saalfield arrived at 7:58pm

### **Certificates of Compliance**

Liz Allard stated the Commission has received several Requests for Certificates of Compliance. All sites have been reviewed and Ms. Allard recommends the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance for the following:

- 50 Westcott Road, DEP#177-540
- 12 Cove Road, Harvard#0708-01
- 15 Littleton Road, DEP#177-535
- 27 Willow Road, Harvard#0507-02

Don Ritchie made a motion to issue the Certificates of Compliance for the above mentioned locations. Jim Breslauer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Ms. Allard requested a Certificate of Compliance be re-issued for 210 Littleton County Road, DEP#177-524. Wendy Sisson made a motion to re-issue the Certificate of Compliance for 210 Littleton County Road, DEP#177-524. Jaye Waldron seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Master Plan Steering Committee Update**

Jaye Waldron stated the public forum for Devens has been postponed to December 6<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting of the steering committee will be the week of November 17<sup>th</sup>. The steering committee is still not satisfied with work done to date by the consultants. It seems as if the consultant has a different view on how to proceed with Devens as to that of the steering committee. Members of the Commission suggested the contract with the consultant be reviewed to determine if it is clear as what should be accomplished in regards to Devens.

### **Land Stewardship Committee Update**

Wendy Sisson stated the conservation fields have been mowed for the season. During mowing this year it was discovered that a pit has been uncovered with the removal of invasive plant species on the Williams land. Paul Willard stated it could possibly be the area which was used to bury animal remains as the area was once a pig farm. Ms. Sisson suggested the area be stabilized by covering with additional earthen material. After a brief discussion, Jim Breslauer made a motion to approve up to \$500.00 of community preservation funds for the purpose of covering the existing pit on the Willard's land. Charlie Gorss seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Other land stewardship updates included the removal of the buckthorn on the Clapp-Scorgie land under the invasive plant species control project; the Department of Public works did a fantastic job removing the tree on the Hoch land, just in time for this Sundays walk; the DPW will not be

able to remove the fallen tree along Maple lane, quotes received are in the range of \$1700.00; the tree in need of removal at the Bare Hill Wildlife Sanctuary may not be as bad as first thought according to Paul Willard.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Jim Breslauer made a motion to approve the minutes of September 18, October 2 and 16, 2014 as amended. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Approve Invoices**

Liz Allard stated the Commission has received an invoice for inclusion on the next bill warrant in the amount of \$5000.00 from Polatin Ecological Services as part of the invasive species control program. Don Ritchie made a motion to approve the invoice from Polatin Ecological Services for payment. Jaye Waldron seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **Fiscal Year 2016 Budget and Beyond Update**

Liz Allard stated the 2016 fiscal year budget for the Land Use Boards (Planning, Zoning and Conservation) were submitted on Tuesday to the Finance Committee (Fincom). The expense budget includes a request for \$1579.00 for Montachusett Regional Planning Commission annual fee, \$1000.00 for office supplies and \$1600 for purchase services, for a total of \$4179.00. The Fincom requested a level fund budget over the next five years also be included in the submittal. Ms. Allard stated those budgets show a one-percent increase over the next five years. As for the personnel budget, Ms. Allard explained she is at the top of her grade and will receive an annual cost of living adjustment each year.

Paul Willard and Jim Saalfeld left the meeting at 9:14pm. At this time, Don Ritchie took over to chair the meeting.

### **Executive Session**

Jim Breslauer made a motion that the Conservation Commission go into executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property in which a public discussion of these matters will have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission, only to adjourn the public meeting once the discussion is complete. Don Ritchie seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken; Don Ritchie, aye; Wendy Sisson, aye; Charlie Gorss, aye; Jaye Waldron, aye; Jim Breslauer, aye

### **Adjournment**

At the conclusion of the executive session (9:36pm), Jim Breslauer made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Jaye Waldron seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken; Don Ritchie, aye; Charlie Gorss, aye; Jaye Waldron, aye; Wendy Sisson, aye; Jim Breslauer, aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Allard  
Land Use Administrator/  
Conservation Agent