

**TOWN OF STURBRIDGE, MA
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Thursday, February 19, 2015
Sturbridge Center Office Building, 2nd Floor**

Meeting Called to Order: 6:00 – 6:45 pm Conservation Restrictions Review; working session for Commissioners
7:00 pm Reconvene Meeting for Regular Business

Quorum Check: Confirmed

Members Present: Ed Goodwin (EG), Chairman **Members Absent:** Calvin Montigny (CM)
David Barnicle (DB), Vice Chair
Donna M. Grehl (DG)
Joseph Kowalski (JK)

Others Present: Glenn Colburn (CG), Conservation Agent
Cindy Sowa Forgit, Conservation Clerk
Applicants and/or Audience Members: Leslie Duthie, Howard Fife, Ed Hood, Mike Snow and Siona Patistas

Committee Updates:

- CPA – (EG) Meeting held last night. Voted to bring Plimpton parcel to Town Meeting. The Town needs to provide a balance due of \$650K. Of this parcel, 18 acres on Allen Road is allotted for Parks and Rec use. Another portion is slated for a possible town well. It's an ideal parcel due to it being tied to Hamilton Rod and Gun and Cedar Lake.
- **Trails Committee – (DB)** Recent meeting held discussing open trail activity by end of March and continued to work on the budget. On Saturday, Feb 28th at 7pm a night hike will be conducted. Telescope will be out during the walk and hot cocoa served. The walk will be about an hour long. Vote: to grant permission to Trails Committee to use Heins Farm for a night walk on Feb 28th at 7pm. 4-0
- **Lakes Advisory Committee – (DG)** No update from Committee; however the Commission is putting together a list of "recommendations" for SLAC.

Walk Ins:

Wal-Mart snow removal and use of a de-icer. Mike Snow, MJS Excavating, is representing Wal-Mart. MJS Excavating is contracted to keep the Hobbs Brook Wal-Mart parking area clear.

Agent Briefing: Mr. Snow would like to discuss the use of geo-salt in his section of the parking lot, similar to the Kimco Realty practice. CM has previously pointed out that this is still a salt product. This geo-salt treatment uses beet extract, which is meant to enhance the melting properties of the salt and allow for reduced quantity of required salt. It doesn't eliminate salt, but this is a safety issue that needs our consideration.

- Mike Snow, MJS excavating – permission to use geo-salt in the parking lot. I'm currently using straight sand but lots of issues have occurred: ice build-up by the fire exits, numerous slips and falls suffered. GC: Kimco uses this geo-salt product. It works with lower temperatures. We gave permission for them to use it. **Motion: To approve MJS Excavating to use geo-salt sand mixture for this season. Wal-Mart's snow removal contractor will have to come back next season to request approval for use of Geo-Salt. This permission is granted due to unique and severe winter conditions this season: DB 2nd: JK Discussion: JK: What will be different next year? We currently allow Kimco, one tenant, to use this Geo-salt alternative without a time limit and now one tenant has a time limit. Geo-salt will allow you to reduce the amount of salt and still be more effective. MS: We can go to a 50/50 blend. GC: 1/3 salt to 2/3 sand is the ratio used by the DPW. Salt sand ratio can be altered even more. We request you use as little salt as you can, in order to protect the wetland but realize there is a safety issue. EG: Use the Geo-Salt in limited areas: emergency doors, icy footpaths and traffic areas along with the upper parking lot but you are not to go near the detention basin (the right side if you're facing bldg). Vote: 4-0.** GC: Will write a letter to the local Wal-Mart on the decision. You can start using the product immediately. DB: Concern that if we allow tenants to use salt we need to make a vote to change the OOC. 1 year exemption for No-salt use for Wal-Mart. GC: I have been in touch with Kimco that we are concerned with salt and that we can address next year. I will confirm that they are using a salt/sand mixture.

Public Hearings: None

Minor Amendments to Orders of Conditions:

DEP #300-819, 109A McGilpin Rd, Brad & Whitney Goodwin. Shift location of the house, garage, and septic system. All work is outside the 100-foot buffer zone. The original OOC was issued to Richard DiBonaventura in 2010. EG: recused self.

Agent Briefing: All work is between the 100' and 200' Buffer Zone. Change is shifting the house, garage and septic system. We are within the Town Bylaw jurisdiction, but it's outside of WPA jurisdiction.

BG: Septic is moved further away from the Buffer. **Motion: To accept the minor change to DEP#300-819: DG 2nd: DB**

Discussion: none. Vote 3-0; 1 abstained EG

DEP #300-902, W175 Reconductoring Project, NE Power. Off-site mitigation for fill in a vegetated wetland. NE Power is requesting off site mitigation for filling in a vegetated wetland resulting from the W175 Reconductoring project. The location will be within Wells State Park. Siona Patistas, VHB representing NE power.

Scope:

- Sent mitigation plan developed for pre application meetings to DEP with some changes.
- Off-site mitigation in Wells State Park for 14 sqft of fill.
- Diseased trees taken by the Forest Service.
- DCR collaborated with NE Power and requested work on the group site.
 - Want to modify 2 campsites into 1 campsite.
 - Proposing to remove sand that is encroaching the 25' BZ and put in plantings to help with sand erosion into the wetlands.
 - Install a berm with materials on site and put in conservation mix at campsite.
 - Grading of slope, want to remove some shrubs. Most existing shrubs to remain on site. Want a boulder berm to stop the foot traffic into the campsite. Recreational use area. I spoke with many entities about this work and there were no concerns. Natural Heritage had no comments. Requesting to submit this plan with the application of the 404. DG: Previously disturbed campsite. SP: Yes and there is no new cutting. Salvage cut was already done to remove dead trees, stumps will remain. DB: High water table. SP: Yes, it's a very rocky area. No work in the wetlands, just BZ work. SP: Want to start the work once snow melts. DEP will require that this work starts in the spring prior to the project start.
 - **Consensus to move forward.**

Forest Cutting Plans:

- **334 New Boston Road, Holly Tremblay, 33 acres. Mike Bartlett is the Forester.**

Agent Briefing: EG: logged 15 yrs. ago and we were fine with it. GC: Conducted site visit today to view the crossings. Due to the snow, I was unable to find the crossing, but found marked trees and boundary lines. Followed wetland up but unable to find the crossings. JK: It's a small commercial sale cut. GC: Now is a great time to cut due to frost line being at 18" per DPW.

Consensus to recommend approval.

- **Shepard Road & Main Street, Ariana, Inc, 50 acres. John Clarke is the Forester.**

Agent Briefing: Site visit conducted last week. I found crossings #1, #2 (old logging road), #3. DG: There is an intermittent stream. Landing by Sturbridge Auto and secondary landing is off Shepard. JK: Poled crossing? GC: Yes. DB: We should look at Art Allen's delineation and overlay. GC: Should we have the vernal pools flagged? EG: Yes, so we can protect them once identified. EG: Tell BOS about the logging plan once we have identified the perineal streams and vernal pools and give the setbacks. Once this is completed we can then release to BOS with our recommendation.

New Business: Discussed Landowner Goals as part of the Stewardship Plan

SLAC:

Table the Commissioners' recommendations until the next meeting. EG contacted Audubon Society. They recommended the same book we use, but feel that chapter 4 is especially good information for our use. DG: Feel we need to promote natural buffer zones. DB/EG feel we need to improve on the educational outreach, where the old premise was to not direct owners in designing their projects.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 pm Motion: DB 2nd: DG Vote: Unanimous

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 5, 2015 at 7:00 pm

A copy of tonight's meeting can be found on our Town's website or is available upon request via the Audio Department: 508.347.7267

The items listed, which may be discussed at the meeting, are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair.~ Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.~ For those items that will be discussed, the Conservation Commission will address its questions and concerns with a proponent before allowing the public to weigh in on the topic being discussed with the proponent.~ For public discussion of non-agenda items, such discussion will be handled during the Walk-in period or as allowed by the Chair.