

WAYLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes, Thursday, April 30, 2015 3:00 – 4:25PM

Location: Hearing Room 3, Town Building, 41 Cochituate Road, Wayland, MA

Present: Commissioners: Roger Backman, Joanne Barnett (3:15pm), Bob Goldsmith, Barbara Howell, Betty Salzberg, Chairperson: Sherre Greenbaum, Conservation Administrator: Brian Monahan

Not present: John Sullivan

Minutes: Assembled from audio recording

S.Greenbaum opened the meeting at 3:00PM noting that a quorum was present.

Items without a specific time noted may be taken out of order at any time during the meeting.

1. **Informal Discussion –Wayside Branch of Mass Central Rail Trail**

S.Greenbaum offered that this item will be discussed upon the arrival of Commissioner J.Barnett, who will be arriving shortly.

2. **Land Manager Position Update**

B.Monahan reported that a job description was prepared by J.Senchyshyn and presented to the Personnel Board to move ahead with the process. B.Goldsmith asked about a search committee. S.Greenbaum suggested revisiting. B.Monahan indicated the process he has used in the past reviewing resumes and interviewing all qualified candidates. Discussion ensued concerning advertising at local colleges along with other possibilities.

3. **Citizens Time: This is a time for input to the Commission regarding items that are *not* on the agenda.**

S.Sarkisian reported he was approached by an Eagle Scout for a project and will forward it on to B.Monahan.

L.Kiernan reported on a large amount of 10' x 3' pressure-treated wood that is available from a construction site at a Boston hospital that they need to discard should the Commission wish to use it.

4. **2015 Community Service Day**

B.Monahan addressed a plan to have student volunteers at the Community Gardens and Rocky Point was discussed as well for utilizing the two hours of volunteer help that day. B.Howell discussed work needed at Rowan Hill trail. R.Backman discussed the path at Greenways parking lot. S.Greenbaum summarized that the volunteer help can be used at Rocky Point, Lower Snake Brook, Rocky Point, Rowan Hill and Community Gardens.

5. **Informal Discussion –Wayside Branch of Mass Central Rail Trail**

Larry Kiernan and Sarkis Sarkisian were present for the discussion. S.Greenbaum asked for any new information that has arisen. S.Sarkisian reported that they have been working with Mass Historic as switch signals need to be protected even though outside of the historic district; Mass Historic is happy but wants to ensure that during construction the antiques and wheel are

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preserved and protected . S.Sarkisian noted they are waiting to get that out to bid as soon as possible (late spring) and noted they are skipping over the Depot and parking lot due to consensus not yet reached and needing to work with the Historic Commission; that phase is moving slower and does not involve the Conservation Commission.

L.Kiernan reported that from Town Meeting funds were allocated for the rail trail which will be available in July and allocated \$250K for the rail trail is available today. S.Greenbaum asked if that funding is for design and L.Kiernan said it is for building material – not feasibility funds from 2009 but for actual building. R.Backman asked if they will be leaving tracks at the Depot and warehouse. S.Sarkisian said yes and noted actually leaving more beyond that. R.Backman asked if filling is needed. L.Kiernan noted they will put aggregate and stone dust down aside of the tracks if that is considered fill, and they will be leaving one track all the way to Lloyds/Cook's Gas Station – about ½ mile of the trail.

L.Kiernan recognized the rail trail as a unique project – a three-mile long project overall – including the removal of contaminated material which will involve concerns for the environment during the construction phase. He described the net as an improvement to the environment once done but they first need to get through the construction phase, which involves the permitting process. B.Salzberg asked if this includes the other side of the Sudbury River, which L.Kiernan confirmed as about a mile past the river – all part of the first phase. L.Kiernan and S.Sarkisian confirmed the project phases. Phase I is from the Depot to Town Center and is already permitted. Phase II is the other 2.5 miles. S.Greenbaum suggested discussion on one section at a time, noting that the central section was approved through an RDA and we can discuss the east and west separately.

L.Kiernan commented that the amount of funds they have is 1/8 of what the State would require to build a rail trail so funding is limited; it is done by the State but using federal funds. S.Sarkisian reported that no federal funds are available for the next twenty years. L.Kiernan noted that he has seen four rail trails in the process of being built along with one in process right now in Needham which is the fifth. He noted wishing to share with the Commission what he has seen as well as the perceived environmental benefits along with discussing permitting options and what other towns have done.

L.Kiernan reported observing that they don't go any farther than 7-9' off the center of the trail which is for many reasons, including it being more efficient and safer to stay on the trail. First grubbing and clearing will take place, then they will pull up tracks with an excavator, cut them and will leave ties and pick up metal and spikes, drag the tracks on the ties and take them to salvage so now just the ties are left; they will put forklifts on excavators and pop up two or three at a time and stack them. Once cleared all are on forklift and put it in storage area or on truck or designated area and then the process is repeated. J.Barnett inquired about any eroded track/trail areas such as near Plainview and how those will be handled. L.Kiernan noted that he hasn't seen that type of area handled yet but made a note. L.Kiernan noted that next the scraps of ties are picked up manually by the team and loaded in a bucket loader and they dispose of all visible material, rough grade it (beyond the 7-9' section), fix erosion and drainage, and then in this case they will take center line of tracks and they'll put soil down 2' wide for edge of stone dust creating a cavity in the middle for 2-3" of aggregate and 2-3" of stone dust compressed on top of that. Concerning work over wetlands, they will have hay bales or equivalent. L.Kiernan reiterated that they always remain in the center of tracks and do not come up on sides.

Towns that L.Kiernan had visited were noted as Topsfield, Danvers, Holden, Wachusett and Cochituate with Needham the newest. J.Barnett raised the issue of NSTAR/Eversource vis a vis erosion problems. L.Kiernan responded that once the trail is there they plan to repair what might be damaged.

L.Kiernan reported on broad brush environmental benefits: (1) removing thousands of tons of contaminated material soaked with preservatives like creosote and rusty metal; (2) capping rail beds through DEP BMPs is significant improvement from contaminants traveling to resource areas. Risk is that during construction there is a need to ensure all is managed properly. B.Goldsmith asked what is done to manage and stabilize the disturbed area daily during and after work to protect wetlands from erosion, such as after a 5" rain, and noted that this should be addressed in the NOI filing. L.Kiernan noted that and mentioned that some towns would grant Negative Determination w/conditions under the Wetlands Protection Act and limited projects are exempt if they improve net environment overall, which is their preferred method to pursue while providing compliance with any conditions, noting that the cost of a NOI can be significantly more. S.Greenbaum asked if the TM funding isn't to pay for that cost, and L.Kiernan noted they received very limited funding and that any funds not spent can be given back to the Town. L.Kiernan noted that NOI filings were also used in some instances.

L.Kiernan noted six miles of surface edge (3 north/3 south) which may border wetlands; given the linear nature of the project they are hoping the Commission will allow Mass GIS to be used as a base plan and walk the stretch with those plans and a wetlands specialist and delineate any areas that might need modification to protect resources, noting that the other side of the Sudbury River is all wetlands. B.Howell noted that Wash Brook is a most valuable spot and work must avoid turtle nesting time. S.Sarkisian noted that for schedule purposes they should be clear on when the area is off limits. B.Monahan noted that the decision will be valid for three years once issued. L.Kiernan noted that NSTAR/Eversource work may be hurting Wash Brook. B.Monahan raised the issue of railroad companies and BMPs. B.Goldsmith commented on soil, ties, rails disturbance and possible release of contaminants. S.Sarkisian noted that with current conditions a person's foot can crumble them. S.Greenbaum asked if the bridge can be repaired yet not replaced, which L.Kiernan confirmed.

S.Greenbaum raised the question of whether a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) or Notice of Intent (NOI) is required and R.Backman responded that one NOI should cover the whole project. B.Goldsmith noted that an engineer would define resource areas and prepare the NOI. B.Monahan offered that wetlands could be flagged by himself or Peter Fletcher; B.Howell responded that she and B.Monahan could do it. B.Monahan noted that these are not challenging wetlands and money could be saved on that. L.Kiernan noted that the utilization of the trail is climbing in the eastern section. B.Monahan suggested breaking the project into two separate NOIs. S.Greenbaum asked about the advantage of that approach. B.Monahan said that issues with habitat area are much more complicated and there is a vernal pool near Reinhardt/Orloff properties toward Weston. L.Kiernan asked if splitting the project into two means adding cost and B.Monahan suggested he ask the person providing technical assistance. L.Kiernan revisited the matter of net environmental improvement. S.Greenbaum responded that the DCR letter during the EENF process set out the NOI requirement and the Commission is complying with that. In response to S. Sarkisian's and L.Kiernan's assertion that this is a Conservation project, S.Greenbaum expressed that this is considered either a Planning or Recreation project.

6. RFP Stewardship Study

B.Monahan asked if anyone wished to shepherd this item going forward. S.Greenbaum explained this was approved at Town Meeting as a land management study with a focus on Heard Farm. B.Monahan noted that the Harwich RFP was used for a model and that S.Greenbaum could rough it out and B.Howell could assist. \$35K of funding was noted. B.Goldsmith suggested exploring who they used and also exploring funding to get the RFP completed. S.Greenbaum agreed that was a good idea.

7. Participation in the COA/CC Committee

B.Monahan asked if there should be a representative of the Conservation Commission on that Committee and asked if there might be a volunteer (current or former commissioner) who is familiar with alternatives analysis. B.Monahan will discuss with Andy Irwin and will also provide response that the Commission does want to participate.

8. Proposed Planting Plan – 9 Reservoir Road

B.Monahan indicated a lot of work has been done to accommodate native plantings.

Motion to approve the proposed plant listing; Seconded 6-0

9. Update on 246 Stonebridge Road

S.Greenbaum announced the real estate closing scheduled for May 11 and the need to get updated on what is being left behind. There is a need for proposals for a Notice of Intent and plot plan/survey and suggestions included Sullivan Connors & Associated, Schofield Engineering and Metrowest Engineering. R.Backman asked if that was in the budget and B.Monahan responded that Gretchen Schuler, CPC chair, agrees that to do a demolition a Notice of Intent is needed. S.Greenbaum noted that after the NOI a demo permit will be needed, which is extensive and includes going out to bid and getting permits. R.Backman suggested getting the demolition in place. It was noted that prior to demolition the Fire Department may use the property to conduct a drill not involving fire. A Conservation Restriction will be addressed in the future.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 4:25pm; Seconded 6-0

The next **Regular** Conservation Commission Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, May 7, 2015** in the Wayland Town Building.

NOTE: Per changes to the Open Meeting Law, notice of any meeting of a public body shall include "A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting". AG's Office guidelines state that the list of topics shall have sufficient specificity to reasonably advise the public of the issue to be discussed.

