



**TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
Meeting Minutes**

Conservation Commission
June 2, 2021
7:30 PM
Zoom

Approved: June 16, 2021

Members Present: Dennis Reip (Chair), Dave Follett, Norm Hanover, Steve Schmitt, and Hoff Stuart

Members Absent: David Koonce

Others in attendance:

Liz Markiewicz, associate member, left meeting at 8:44.

Simon Corson, Town Planner, joined and left as needed

At 7:31 PM, Dennis called the meeting to order and noted this meeting is being conducted via Remote Participation, pursuant to Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of COVID-19 a.k.a. the Coronavirus.

The Commission discussed the following correspondence:

- 1) The Commission discussed the email from Rajon Hudson, Asst. Town Administrator, regarding the governor's pending legislation. The bill filed by Governor Baker will extend Covid provisions related to the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law until September 1, 2021, which will allow additional time to consider possible permanent changes to the open meeting law to provide for greater flexibility in conducting open meetings. After some discussion, the Commission concluded that
 - a) All members present want to return to "in-person only" meetings with no virtual attendance option.
 - b) The state of emergency expires one day before the June 16th Commission meeting and at this time it's not clear when or if the Covid provisions will be extended.
 - c) A decision was made to advertise the June 16th meeting as "in-person only".
- 2) An aggressive coyote was reported on Rolling Meadows by a hiker with a dog. Norm visited the area and found no activity. No action will be taken at this time.
- 3) Cindy Regan sent an email complaining that the parking lot expansion at the Littlefield Rd. trail head did not have a public hearing. It's not clear that this work required a public hearing but the Commission agreed that in the future we will post such hearings to obtain input and better communicate planned activities. Dennis will send Cindy a response.
- 4) Brian Morrison withdrew his request to farm the Patch Hill field on Hill Rd.

- 5) Boxborough Conservation Trust is considering a “I hiked Boxborough’s trails” challenge and asked if the Commission would partner with them. The Commission is supportive of the idea but will not take an active role. Dennis will communicate our decision to the BCT.

Land Stewardship Report:

Norm raised the concern that hiking trails are not being mowed. After some discussion we agreed that Norm would reach out to the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Chairman Report:

Dennis talked directly to the owner of 650 & 674 Mass Ave. about the enforcement order issued by the Commission. The owner brought to Dennis’s attention that 650 Mass Ave. has an “as built” for septic system work in 1999 that shows an existing “cart path” crossing the stream. This documentation references a requirement to file a NOI and obtain an OoC. This may change some of the details of the violation but not the primary content of the EO against the properties.

The following actions were agreed on:

- 1) Simon Corson and Liz Markiewicz will track down the missing documentation.
- 2) Dennis will agree on an NOI filing date with the property owner.

Zoning violations related to 650 and 674 are being pursued by the town.

8:01 Liz Markiewicz was present to discuss the removal of the constriction in the earthen dam sluice behind Blanchard school.

Behind Blanchard School is an earthen dam that forms a small skating pond. The dam’s sluice is relatively narrow which causes it to constrict as branches and debris flow downstream. On occasion the constriction is exacerbated by beaver activity in the pond. Every few years this debris is cleared by the DPW to manage the pond’s water level. Town meeting approved funding to rebuild a pedestrian bridge at this pond’s ingress so the constriction needs to be cleared. It is not immediately clear if the current constriction relates to beaver activity.

The following actions were agreed to:

If the current constriction is not beaver related, Liz will contact the DPW to remove the constriction. If there is beaver activity, Liz will apply to the Nashoba Board of Health for a beaver permit and then contact the DPW to remove the constriction.

At 9:06 PM, motion was made by Hoff, seconded by Steven, and voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn. Reip yes; Follett yes; Hanover yes; Schmitt yes; Stuart yes.

Documents used during this meeting:

Agenda

Draft Minutes May 21, 2021

Correspondence