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Chelmsford Conservation Commission
Town of Chelmsford
50 Billerica Rd. Chelmsford, Ma 01824
Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2021
Approved September 21, 2021

TOWN OF CHELMSFORD
PATRICIA E. DZURIS
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: David McLachlan, Marc Gibbs, Karl Bischoff, William Vines, John Swenson

Members Absent: Chris Garrahan, Chris Tymula

Others Present:

Meeting was called to order at 7:02PM by Mr. Bischoff.

All documents referenced in these minutes are available for review at the Community Development Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford Town Offices Building. This meeting was audio and hand recorded via the Recording Secretary, and televised via Chelmsford Telemedia.

Open Session / Citizen Concerns

Linda Barrington 27 Sixth Ave, asked for a status of Freeman Lake, and whether the lake was in the Commission's jurisdiction, and whether the lake could be made swimmable again. Mr. Bischoff said there are plans for herbicide treatment, and actions will be taken at Town Meeting for funding. Mr. McLachlan added that the Town Manager will speak with the same consultant firm used for Heart Pond, which is treated annually. The treatment for Heart Pond is paid for by the Heart Pond Association and the Town. Mr. McLachlan suggested a Freeman Lake Association be formed to help manage the lake. The Commission asks applicants not to use chemical fertilizers; however, everyone needs to work together, which is sometimes hard to coordinate.

Mr. McLachlan asked Ms. Barrington about what she thought of the condition of the Conservation area at the end of Sixth Ave., and she feels the area is kept pretty clean. Someone mows it, and people launch their boats from there.

Regulatory Hearings

Request for Determination – new

5 Noble Drive

Legal notice read.

Timothy Chase Jr. is requesting to construct an addition and new shed. The addition will be an in-law apartment for his elderly parents, and the garage will become the common area for the in-law apartment. The shed is to accommodate stuff currently in the garage.

The addition is to the right of the garage. Wetlands are toward the back of the property, in a swale. The shed is outside the 50 foot buffer. The home was built in 1964. Excess material will be removed from the site. Material storage will be stored in the front yard.

No comments were received from the audience.

Motion: by Mr. McLachlan to approve the Request for Determination for 5 Noble Dr., with a Negative Three Determination. Seconded by Mr. Vines. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Request for Determination – new

30 Fifth Lane

Legal notice read. Finbar McGrath is requesting to replace an existing deck. The work area is within 100 feet of wetland. Mr. McGrath explained that he bought the house in 2008 with a ground level wooden deck, with gravel underneath. The wooden deck has rotted. The new deck will be raised 6” from the gravel. The existing concrete pad will remain. The existing deck is about 25 feet from Heart Pond. The new deck will have seven piers, with stone underneath, and will be the same size deck as before. No machinery will be needed; installation will be all hand work.

No comments were received from the audience.

Motion: by Mr. McLachlan to approve the Request for Determination for 30 Fifth Lane, with a Negative Three Determination. Seconded by Mr. Gibbs. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Request for Determination – new

12 Kidder Road

Legal notice read. John Bikini spoke on behalf of Loop Real Estate Corp., and is requesting to construct a new parking area at 12 Kidder Rd., within 100 feet of wetlands.

Mr. Bikini explained a lot line dispute should be resolved in the near future. A Building Permit was previously issued, but it has expired, so he is requesting a new permit. The parking lot design is still the same; the wetland is in the top right of the property. The wetland was created by the construction of Rt. 495. The area of jurisdiction is for a portion of the parking lot, not the building. Catch basins are on the plan; there will be very little material removal. The Town Engineer has signed off on the proposed work. Snow storage area is in the back, and is very close to the wetland. Storm water review had no issues.

Motion: by Mr. McLachlan to approve the Request for Determination for 12 Kidder Rd., with a Negative Three Determination, and the condition that snow storage be maintained at a distance consistent with State regulations. Seconded by Mr. Gibbs. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

23 7th Ave – expired permit

No action requested tonight

Discussion.

Agent job posting

Mr. McLachlan & Mr. Bischoff met with Town Manager Paul Cohen, Evan Belansky and Jeanne Parziale. The position of Conservation Agent will be reposted as a full time position, more in line with Mr. McLachlan's proposed job description. The Recording Secretary's duties will not be a part of the Conservation Agent's duties. The Commission will be part of the interview process. There was guidance and feedback provided on all sides.

Continual Business

Land Management

Warren-Pohl – update

The proposed layout for parking area provided by Scott Ludwig was shown to the Commissioners.

There has been no feedback received on the Conservation Restriction document.

Grass has been cut, trail markers are to be installed, and Notice of Intent work/application is still to be done.

The parking area will have 15 spots, 2 of which are handicapped. There is some room to expand, if needed. The driveway would be 17 feet wide. Signage needs to be added, and a shed will be removed. DPW will need to do more work on the plan. There will be no asphalt, and fencing is to be added near the brown house. An existing gate will be removed and relocated. An additional gate will be required, and two kiosks are to be built. Two trails will be built. DPW will present the Notice of Intent application.

A future site walk will be scheduled.

Other:

Some clearing was started for additional parking at Russell Mill, more needs to be done over time. The existing overflow area is useable for a few vehicles. Work will continue.

The new park area in the front of Russell Mill near the old mill has been cleared a lot, and a new trail was created. A dedication will happen over the next 2 months, as a nature park. Commissioners were asked to think about what to name the park. Plantings will continue to next year.

DPW will be asked to fill in some areas of the Cranberry Bog Reservation entrance, as the asphalt drops off severely, and cars are having issues.

Similar issues regarding the need for fill exists at the Lime Quarry Reservation, and the boulders at the blocked entrance may need to be adjusted.

The new bridge at Crooked Spring still needs more work. COSS hasn't committed to doing any additional work at this time.

6th Avenue on Willis Drive – conservation property – resident inquiry

A schedule and map of all the lot numbers for parcels around Freeman Lake that are under the Commission's control was shown. One lot is almost 6 acres, and could be a small park.

Lots 175& 177 by the pumping station off Willis Dr. appear to being used regularly by residents across the street. There is a new pier, fire pit, chairs, picnic table, and stacks of firewood. This could be an enforcement issue. Evan Belansky will be asked to send a letter to abutters that this is a public area. Mr. McLachlan will draft the letter. The complaint is that the area is not being used as conservation land.

Ms. Farrell is requesting more signage be posted at the site at the end of 6th Ave. Mr. Vines reported that he was there this afternoon, and lawn had been freshly mowed. A couple of canoes were present, but he saw no issues. Abutters are voluntarily maintaining the site. People store their boats near the shrubbery, and in the past a raft has been stored there, over the winter. The site has its own set of rules and use regulations.

Plant removal on Freeman Lake will be expensive. A Report from 2018 will be forwarded to the Commission for review. The Town Manager is asking for the Commission's support at Town Meeting.

Agent's Report

Paperwork was signed as required.

Approve Minutes

Motion: by Mr. McLachlan to approve the Minutes of August 17, 2021 as amended. Seconded by Mr. Gibbs. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Adjourn

Next Meetings September 21st

Motion: by Mr. Gibbs to adjourn the meeting at 8:08PM. Seconded by Mr. Vines. **Motion carries, unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,
Vivian W. Merrill

Supporting documents:

- Applications for Requests for Determination of Applicability
- Resident E-mail
- Draft Minutes