



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

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| Date / Time / Location of Meeting | Monday, 11-5-2018/7:00 p.m./West Boylston Town Offices, Rm. 120/131 |
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| Members Present | William Chase (Chair), John Hadley (Vice-Chair), David Mercurio (Vice-Chair), Emily Eaton, Carl Haarmann (Associate Member, voted in by BoS as Full Member on 11/7/18), Katelyn Ivers (Associate Member)) and Clerk Toby Goldstein. |
| Members NOT Present | Mark Meola |
| Invited Guests | N/A |

Welcome – Call to Order

Time: 7:01 p.m. (Motion made by Mr. Mercurio, seconded by Mr. Hadley)

Approval of Previous Minutes

October 1, 2018 Meeting

Motion Originator Mr. Eaton

Motion Seconded Ms. Hadley

Treasurer – Financial Report

Mr. Chase looked over the latest report, dated 10/31/18.

Motion to Accept N/A

Seconded N/A

At 7:01 pm, Mr. Mercurio made a motion to open the meeting. Mr. Hadley seconded. All in favor.

Public Hearing, Thompson-Liston Associates, Inc. (agent for Checker Real Estate LLC), Request for Determination of Applicability, 216 West Boylston Street:

(Patrick Healy and Micah Chase represented). (Ms. Eaton read aloud the public hearing posting). Mr. Healy explained the applicant's proposal, which was to create several different tenant spaces but he also needed some accessible spaces and accessible entrances (he showed the Commission members a map of the site). He

pointed out the Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) which functions as a detention basin, and there is also reciprocal drainage from this and the neighboring property, and he pointed out discharge from the site drainage and the State highway. Mr. Healy explained that they need a 2% or less grade for the accessible parking spaces, and 5% or less for the sidewalk coming down. He also said that there needed to be a slight increase in impervious area for the two parking spaces, which will pitch back into the paved area. He noted that, since there will be a small amount of disturbance, they propose a continuous line of siltation control and believed that they can protect the wetlands.

In response to a question from Mr. Chase about maintenance and trimming of vegetation, Mr. Healy replied that Surabian probably would be handling that. In response to a question from Mr. Mercurio, Mr. Healy replied that there is a 800 to 1000 square ft. area of impervious, with the total exposed area just under 2000 square ft. In response to a question from Mr. Hadley, Mr. Healy replied that there will be one double-door entrance coming down (and he showed it to the board on the plan). Mr. Healy explained to Mr. Mercurio that the building is partially subdivided already to several tenants. He pointed out where various tenant spaces would be and entrances. Mr. Healy explained that they are proposing indoor adult entertainment with a liquor license at tenant space #2, and at space #3 will be a service agency for autistic people, and the other two spaces had not been leased yet. Ms. Eaton asked where the rest of the parking was located? Mr. Healy replied that there were 195 parking spaces on-site which will be shared among the tenants, they will paint a stripe along the side for walking to the entrance, and the trucking docks are now open; once they know who the other tenants will be, they can paint the other spaces. In response to a question from Mr. Hadley, Mr. Healy replied that there was only buffer zone work proposed, and there may be a small playground proposed but it would be outside the buffer zone, as well as another entrance to a tenant space that might be needed. In response to a question from Mr. Mercurio, Mr. Healy replied that they plan to repave the parking lot in the spring after receiving whatever permits they will need. (Mr. Chase and Mr. Mercurio then discussed that wattles would be all that is needed if the work will be within the 100-foot zone, and if the footprint will not change, Mr. Chase noting that the drainage will remain the same, and they commented that the parking lot had been there for many years; Mr. Chase noted that the applicant needed to start getting quotes for the work so he needed to know if he could move ahead).

With no further questions or comments, and none from the public, Mr. Mercurio made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Eaton seconded. All in favor. Mr. Hadley then made a motion to approve the request according to the plan submitted (Plan Showing Accessible Entrance and Accessible Route, Scale 1" = 30' (TLAI), dated 10/19/18), with the condition of wattles being used, and to issue a Negative Determination to the applicant. Mr. Mercurio seconded. All in favor.

Update on Mr. Chase's Plan for Trails:

Colleen Abrams and Rich Berry from Wachusett Greenways came to the meeting to discuss the Pleasant Street, West Boylston part of the Central MA Rail trail that they were proposing to build. They mentioned that the Board of Selectmen approved this work, DPW reviewed it along with other possible work in that area, and John Scannell of DCR looked at the whole layout; she replied to Mr. Mercurio that Pleasant St. is owned by the Town, but the property on both sides is owned by DCR, and regarding the Rail Trail itself, it is owned by the Town but DCR owns the adjacent lands. Ms. Abrams compared it to a partnership. They explained that construction will be on Pleasant Street, West Boylston; before they leave the area, there will also be an upgrade of the West Boylston section of the Central MA Rail Trail, which will include drainage improvements and ditch cleaning. They mentioned that some machine work will be needed, and noted that DPW and DCR have worked on it. (Mr. Berry showed the board the length of the road on a map of the area, along with where the road begins and ends, and where the culverts are located for reference). Ms. Abrams noted houses up the hill from there. Mr. Mercurio noted where the CK Smith farm, bought by Iqbal Ali, was located, and that it abutted DCR property. Ms. Abrams pointed out where there was closed road, and opined that it will be part of a good multi-use trail. Mr. Chase mentioned that he wanted to hook it into the existing trail. Ms. Abrams explained that they want the Concomm to approve upgrading, and they want to clean up and replace culverts; she showed the board the six existing culverts on the map, and said they need to replace four, and repair two of them. Also, she mentioned that, at the first section of the trail, inside the yellow gate coming from Route 140, because of large amounts of water drainage downhill from

there, they propose splitting the distance and putting a culvert halfway from there to the next culvert. (Ms. Abrams then clarified, that they intend to replace four culvert pipes, add or re-establish two, add one new location, and two will have nothing done to them). She also discussed where the asphalt and gravel were, and noted that the gravel was becoming eroded from the rain and they would have to repair it. She also discussed with the board where the gravel could be purchased. (Mr. Chase suggested that she call Mr. Mercurio to find out where to obtain the gravel. Ms. Abrams noted that the gravel needs drainage, to Mr. Mercurio). (Ms. Abrams, Mr. Mercurio, and Mr. Chase then discussed the flow of the drainage, what kind of gravel to use, and what to do to the gravel-Ms. Abrams mentioned rolling the gravel, and placing stone dust on top to make it smooth)..

In response to Ms. Eaton, Ms. Abrams replied that parking would be addressed in a later phase of the project. In response to another question from Ms. Eaton regarding a place to walk on the proposed bridge, Ms. Abrams replied that the plan is to have walkers go from the existing parking on Thomas St. to enter the trail, then followed the path of the 800 to 900-foot bridge to its termination (future phase of the project will handle this). In response to a question from Mr. Mercurio, Ms. Abrams replied that they propose a 10-foot wide bridge, for pedestrians only, and she described the history of the Town contemplating a bridge there since the Rail Trail construction was begun. She also described the types of bridges that were discussed. In response to a question from Ms. Eaton, Ms. Abrams replied that the bridge would be less weight-bearing and lighter than the bridge located in Millbury over the Blackstone River, and added that use of materials not salt-impacted would be good, and discussed possible structural components. She noted that it would be a challenge to cross the railroad tracks, and discussed permission from various entities that they needed to obtain in the past for the Rail Trail construction. (Mr. Barry pointed out where the railroad tracks are located and where the bridge would have to run to cross it). Ms. Abrams asserted that, compared to other bridges in the State, that this bridge would not be that expensive. Mr. Mercurio asked how they would pay for the project? She explained that design and engineering of the bridge would be done first; they anticipated that there would be a partnership with Wachusett Greenways and the State for partnership matching funds, but explained that no one can manage those funds except DCR. Mr. Chase asked if VHB would be consulted? Ms. Abrams replied that they might be working on another section of the trail. (Ms. Abrams replied to Mr. Mercurio that the trail will run from Northhampton to Boston, but not every section will be on a rail bed). She suggested that probably through MA DOT they will pay for the bridge itself. In response to a question from Mr. Mercurio, Ms. Abrams replied that they will probably need a permit from the railroad company to cross the railroad tracks. (Mr. Mercurio then discussed possibilities of the commuter rail and bridge being involved with each other in some way). Ms. Abrams continued, that MA DOT suggested looking at the project in Acton, which cost \$6 million. Mr. Barry added that the Blackstone project cost \$14 million. Ms. Abrams opined that this bridge (West Boylston) would be modest in comparison, and explained that they want to have a connection for people from West Boylston who come over from Route 140, pedestrians, and bicyclists, for example, and opined that the bridge makes sense.

Mr. Hadley asked Mr. Chase what Wachusett Greenways needed from the Commission? Mr. Chase responded that their work should be considered maintenance; they would clean the top, open up the swale, and install some culverts, then redo the top (Mr. Hadley, Ms. Abrams and Mr. Chase pointed out on the map what entities owned what properties). Ms. Abrams noted that they would like to start work as soon as possible, partly because they have several projects funded by grant, and also because the wood turtles are in the area near Waushacum Brook, and this requires that the work be done at a certain time (late fall to early winter). Mr. Chase responded that the board needs paperwork; the board can give them emergency permission to work because of the water, but they will have to file a Request for Determination of Applicability, which he asserted would be a Negative Determination, based on maintenance, and there should be a maintenance contract, for things such as cutting trees, so that they do not have to come back before the board each time they do their work. He explained that they can be given a motion to go forward, but they will need the Determination and a maintenance program, so that, if there is any problem, they can contact the Commission.

With no further questions or comments, Mr. Hadley made a motion to allow the Wachusett Greenways to proceed with their work, with the understanding that they will file a Request for Determination of Applicability. Mr. Mercurio seconded. All in favor. Mr. Chase noted that this permission will be on record in the minutes, and instructed the representatives to contact him about the Request for Determination. Ms. Abrams noted that, on

the original map, that they were also planning to add a culvert close to I-190; Mr. Chase said that that can be added on as maintenance, but Mr. Mercurio and Mr. Chase instructed Ms. Abrams to notify the Commission before they do that work so that they can go out to the site. Ms. Abrams also noted that more discussion will be needed later regarding where the trail will be going.

Update on Flagg RV:

Mr. Hadley informed the board that Planning Board approved the license requested by Flagg RV. Mr. Chase said that he went there and told them that they were out of compliance regarding impervious material, but thought that their plan looked alright.

Update on Poison Ivy Maintenance Plan by Katelyn Ivers:

Ms. Ivers told the Commission members that she researched "goatscaping" and the company that the Town would use for doing this, and they said that they will take care of many types of invasive species (she showed photos to the board members and presented information showing before and after goatscaping was done). She asserted that goats will do better at destroying poison ivy than mechanical means or pesticides, adding that the seeds of the poison ivy will not live in the goats' intestines so that they will not regrow after they are eliminated from the goats. She discussed other benefits of goatscaping, and opined that it would also provide educational opportunities. Ms. Ivers replied to Mr. Hadley that the treatments last a full year, and in response to Mr. Mercurio, she discussed costs that would be involved. She said that the recommendation would be two crews, with four goats per crew, and ½ acre per crew of poison ivy can be eliminated per week. Two herds are recommended, and at a cost of \$11,000.00 for one herd, in total, the cost would be \$21,000 for two herds, or eight goats, for 20 weeks, which is a full season. One can also pay per week rather than for an entire season. She explained that the best time to do this would be in June or July when the poison ivy is at eye level with the goats, so they will eat that first. Ms. Ivers did explain that the cost would depend on the actual number of acres, which would have to be determined in order to make an estimate.

The board members then discussed who they thought should pay for the treatments, and that a proposal should be submitted to the Commission board, including a rough idea of square footage involved. They also discussed safety for the goats, as Ms. Ivers mentioned that the goats would be well contained on busy streets (Mr. Mercurio mentioned Beaman Street) through the use of electric fence, and the board discussed safety of the electric fence also. Ms. Ivers responded to a question from Mr. Haarmann that the Town would only pay for the time, but the goatscaping company would be responsible for moving of the goats to different areas.

Ms. Ivers also discussed some ideas for funding, such as educational sources, a fundraising campaign, and also possibly a Go-Fund-Me site. She explained that, as there would be no pesticides involved, there would be no VMP (Vegetation Management Plan) needed (as was mentioned at the last meeting). She said that she would check on safety for the goats, at the request of Mr. Mercurio and other board members who discussed the busy road and guardrail situation.

Mr. Hadley reiterated to Ms. Ivers that she should get the safety information and acreage information. Mr. Mercurio suggested that they pick areas that are more vital for the work to be done, such as near the DCR building on Beaman Street, and from Old Stone Church down to the Wachusett Reservoir. The board and Ms. Ivers discussed possibilities of acreages and time used, and that it would not be harmful as no spraying would be done. Mr. Hadley asked Ms. Ivers to obtain the information for the next meeting, and he would ask, as a member of the Selectboard, about funding. The board also discussed this being a pilot program that the public will watch. They asked her to bring the information to the December 3 meeting (along with availability of the goatscaping), and they can put together a cover letter to the Board of Selectmen about this.

Minutes of October 1, 2018 Meeting:

After review of the draft minutes by the Concomm members, Ms. Eaton made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Hadley seconded. All in favor.

Update on Electronic Reminders to File and Record:

The board decided to continue that discussion, until there was a plan put together.

Discussion of Revolving Fund Information:

Mr. Chase would discuss this with Ms. Goldstein at another time.

Treasurer's Report and/or financial approvals:

Mr. Chase reviewed the Accounting Department's latest financial report for Concomm, dated 10/31/18.

Tentative Concomm Meeting Calendar for 2019:

Ms. Goldstein had sent a tentative meeting calendar to the Concomm members prior to this evening's meeting; all members agreed with the dates listed, and instructed her to send it to Nancy Lucier.

Miscellaneous Mail and/or Paperwork:

Mr. Chase and the board looked over any mail that had not been discussed before.

Next scheduled meeting – MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018

With nothing further to discuss and no further comments, Mr. Mercurio made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Ms. Eaton seconded. All in favor.

Submitted by: Toby S. Goldstein

Reviewed by: [Signature]

Date submitted: 12/5/18

