

Conservation Commission Meeting
Virtual Meeting
September 29, 2022

Roll call was taken of members and staff present included: Chair, Peg Arguimbau, Vice Chair, Meredith Avery, Jon Wasserman, and Stephen Cremer. Colin Barbera, Alan Westman and Keevin Geller were not present. Staff present included Josh Philibert, Conservation Administrator.

Arguimbau opened the meeting by reading Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020. As of June 15, the measure was extended in An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted during the State of Emergency, allowing by Governor Baker to continue to permitting virtual public meetings until March 31, 2023. Per guidance from the State, Arguimbau noted that all votes would be taken by roll call. She then reviewed the ground rules for the meeting.

The remote meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

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| 7:32 PM | Continued Public Hearing | NOI, 113-115 61 Eisenhower Drive – Yury Deych Wetland Replication |
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The applicant e-mailed the Conservation Administrator asking for a continuance to the October 6, 2022 meeting. Philibert informed members that he had circulated materials the applicant had e-mailed the office on September 29, 2022.

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| Motion: To continue the hearing until October 6, 2022 |
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| Cremer moved Avery seconded Wasserman - Aye, Avery – Aye, Cremer – Aye, Arguimbau – Aye 4-0-0 Motion Passed |
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| 7:33 PM | Discussion Item | Knotweed Control Test Plots |
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The chair informed members that the Discussion Item would be taken up later in the meeting.

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| 7:34 PM | Discussion Item | 8 Kings Road Violation – Raj Singh |
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Philibert shared photos with the members and informed them that Mr. Singh had a personal emergency and was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Singh had not presented a formal planting plan as was requested by the commission at a previous meeting. The commission had not yet agreed upon a planting plan for Singh to complete. Mr. Singh began planting both native and non-native species on either side of the line of boulders on his property marking the upland and wetland portions of the parcel.

Philibert shared his concerns about the work done so far, which included the strong possibility that the seeded lawn area will impede the growth of a tree it surrounds and likely kill it. Additionally, he had hoped to see more than 7 bushes planted total (on both sides of the rock boundary). He noted the current plantings looked stressed and were 6 feet apart. Lastly, Philibert informed members that although a portion of the debris deposited on site had been removed, a good amount of matter remained.

Arguimbau and Avery discussed the need for additional plantings and a continuous vegetative buffer. Avery noted the importance of installing a buffer to address any upland activity and noted potential use of chemical lawn treatments as an example.

Philibert and members discussed requesting an 8 ft mulch bed from the furthest plants back towards the wetland while plants mature be installed. Benefits would include a distinguishing the area so it would be less for a landscaper to disturb the area.

Arguimbau requested the Philibert contact Singh with the hope the property owner would be present at the October 6th meeting.

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| 7:46 PM | Discussion Item | Stormwater Bylaw Rules and Regulations |
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Arguimbau provided a summary of work done on the bylaw rules and regulations. The previous Conservation Administrator, John Thomas, used the language the Neponset River Watershed Association had put together for many local towns as a template. She asked members to review the document, if they have not already, and noted some concerns about formatting issues which would be addressed before sending a new draft to members. Members will have three weeks to review the document before a vote will be taken at the second meeting in October. She noted the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction will oversee Article II (addressing earthwork and construction) as the DPW will retrain oversight of matters pertaining to Article I.

Administrative approval would also be a key component of the permitting process based on the size of the parcel in question (less than 1 acre) for workflow purposes. Philibert noted that permitting forms will need to be created as part of implementing the new regulations. Arguimbau suggested contacting the NRWA for guidance. Members discussed concerns about this subject matter being outside the commission's area of expertise as well as the need to develop long-term management plans. Also discussed was potentially contacting the author of the current language, possibly Kerry Snyder at the NWRA, to learn if any changes to the language are recommended after seeing the rules and regulations in practice in other towns. It was also agreed upon that Town Counsel should be consulted during the language review process.

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| 8:10 PM | Discussion Item | Knotweed Control Test Plots |
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Rita Corey and commission members discussed potential plans for implementing control tests with glyphosate and separately, other non-herbicidal methods. Benefits would include observing the effectiveness of both types of invasive species management comparatively. Corey was hopeful the members would support locating knotweed control test plots away from the edge of Lake Massapoag.

Resident Beth Nathan sent a letter regarding goat management. Corey later described an idea where logistics have been worked out in terms of ownership, transport, and monitoring with the hope the goats could work on a plot of land near the Community Center parking lot. Arguimbau noted concerns about the approval process for public land use being complicated. She suggested looking into privately owned properties for testing this method.

Avery described other non-herbicidal treatments including cut and cover in addition to hand pulling. Cut and cover involved placing wire mesh or a landscape blanket over the growth to suffocate the plantings and prevent sunlight from reaching them. Sometimes shoots growth through the mesh but are killed because there is not enough energy for the plant to grow.

Arguimbau praised Corey's plans to educate residents on potential management plans and also coordinate with other local groups like the Sustainable Sharon Coalition to address the matter. She also praised Corey's commitment to physically removing the knotweed from the Community Center beach and other locations.

Cremer and Corey discussed the issue of cutting the plant and placing them in plastic bags when the length of the stalks can poke holes in the bag. Cremer asked if it would just as effective to bag only the flowers. Corey suggested cutting the length of the stem and placing smaller pieces in the bag to avoid punctures.

Corey informed members of her concerns about the growth around the parking lot at the train station and also residents treating growth on their property with roundup. She noted a study at McGill University in Montreal that has found evidence of glyphosate in water bodies and how even small amounts have affected the zooplankton population. She also noted that Mass Audubon is currently exploring a plan planting trees and bushes in areas addressing knotweed growth to prevent future growth.

Philibert and Avery discussed the chemical breakdown of glyphosate in organic matter and noted concerns about the chemical breakdown in sand. Philibert also noted concerns about the commission being both a proponent and reviewing body of the efforts to mitigate the problem.

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| 8:15 PM | Discussion Item | Lake Update |
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Philibert informed members that the Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting of toothcup was complete. The benefits over using chemical treatments included minimizing the amount of phosphorous released which happens when the plants die from herbicides.

The lake level is at 9.2 the lowest this season but on par with previous years from August to October.

Philibert will be taking samples of Sucker Brook every 100 meters to help identify locations where phosphorous and e. coli are not present. Camp Wonderland will also participate.

Arguimbau and Cremer discussed the presence of a juvenile eagle nesting in the dead pines nearby the Community Center.

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| 8:19 PM | Discussion Topic | Conservation Administrator Update |
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Philibert informed members that an Eagle Scout candidate would like to install a 20 ft boardwalk on Massapoag Trail. Members asked that the candidate join them at the next meeting to discuss specifics on the project. Arguimbau would like to know more about how it will tie into the trail system. Cremer would like to know about potential nearby existing structures that could potentially be in need of repair.

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| 8:23 PM | Other Business | 61 Eisenhower Drive Enforcement |
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Philibert sent a certified letter, return-receipt requested notifying the landowners a violation had occurred on their property. DEP said the office would need written permission before conducting and

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site visits. The property owners had not contacted the office in response to the letter as of September 29th.

8:25 PM Other Business Approve August 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 11, 2022.

Cremer moved
Wasserman seconded
Cremer - Aye, Avery – Aye, Wasserman – Aye, Arguimbau – Aye
4-0-0 Motion Passed

8:27 PM Other Business Approve September 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 8, 2022 as amended.

Avery Moved
Cremer seconded
Cremer - Aye, Avery – Aye, Wasserman – Abstain, Arguimbau – Aye
3-0-1 Motion Passed

8:28 PM Other Business Approve September 8, 2022 Exec. Session Meeting Minutes

Motion: Motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 8, 2022 Executive Session as amended.

Cremer Moved
Avery seconded
Cremer - Aye, Avery – Aye, Wasserman – Abstain, Arguimbau – Aye
3-0-1 Motion Passed

8:28 PM Other Business Topics Not Anticipated within 48 Hours of Posting Agenda

Due to quorum concerns, the Chair proposed and members agreed one meeting a month may help members schedule outside commitments around the meeting schedule. It was agreed that for November and December, unless a permit application required a meeting within 21 days, only 1 meeting per month would be held.

Philibert informed members that the DER has included funding for FY24 for Cedar Swamp related work and has named it a main priority. Avery praised Philibert's work on the matter and its success.

Avery informed members about an upcoming MACC conference on October 15, 2022 that will focus on climate resilience and include multiple sessions on stormwater and challenges facing conservation commissions throughout the state. The meeting will be in person in Devens, MA.

8:37 PM Motion to Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn

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Cremer moved
Avery seconded
Wasserman – Aye, Cremer – Aye, Avery – Aye, Arguimbau – Aye
4-0-0 Motion Passed