

Conservation Commission Meeting  
Sharon Community Center  
April 27, 2017 - DRAFT

Peg Arguimbau, Chair, Meredith, Avery, Jon Wasserman, Michael Donatelle and Alan Westman were the members present. Members not present included Keevin Geller and Stephen Cremer. The Conservation Administrator, Greg Meister, was also present.

A sign-in sheet is on file in the office listing other attendees of the meeting.

Meeting started at 7:45pm

**7:45pm – Violation Enforcement, 348 North Main Street**

Ed Little informed the Commission that the last time he met with them, he told members that he would be taking the manure off of his property. At this point in time, he has removed about 85 percent of the manure. He is working on removing the remaining material, however, due to the current rains; it is proving a bit challenging. Once the rains secede, he will continue removing the remaining pile.

With respect to bringing the area back, he would prefer not to hire a consultant, but instead use landscapers and folks from Norfolk Aggie, with whom he has relationships with. He will also pay whatever fine the Commission feels appropriate.

Arguimbau mentioned that some of the area disturbed will come back on its own. She also mentioned that the correct type of seed mix should be used. Most importantly however, was for the land area to be brought back into good condition. She asked the rest of the Commission for their thoughts.

Avery brought up timing of when the remaining manure would be removed. Additionally, she also noted that the correct seed mix should be used, and perhaps someone from the Aggie school should be present to assist with final removal of manure, so that not too much of the top soil is removed. Avery also mentioned that the timing of seeding is important. She noted that spring is a better time to plant than August. She also suggested that while Little was removing the remaining material, perhaps he can simultaneously work on the area where material has already been removed and prepare that area for planting.

Meister will oversee the project. He will review the letter from Rockwood, consultant who had originally looked at the area, and double check what seed mix was recommended. He also mentioned that he visited the site earlier today and the area is pretty much down to where it should be, and would recommend not going any deeper.

Meister asked Little if he will be ready in May to begin seeding. Little responded that he believed so, and as Avery suggested, he can seed those areas which are ready to seed while continuing to remove manure from other areas.

Arguimbau asked if there was a plan for removing the manure from the property. Little explained that he has someone who would like the manure. Arguimbau noted that the consensus from Commission members was to begin planting as soon as possible, using seed mix which was suggested by Rockwood. With regards to a fine, the Commission will need to enter into Executive Session to discuss a fine structure. She mentioned that though State law requires setting up one way, the Commission is able to set up as they see fit. This can be discussed in Executive Session. We can come up with a final amount. Little expressed his desire to be present at this meeting. It was suggested to hold this meeting either May 4<sup>th</sup> or May 18<sup>th</sup>. Little should notify Meister when he will begin seeding.

Voucher for Gelerman re: Town Meeting Article 28 was passed around for signatures.

### **8:00 PM – Discussion**

#### *Deer Hunting on Conservation Land, Richard Kramer*

Kramer was present and explained to Commission members that his main purpose for attending tonight's meeting is to introduce the thought of possible deer hunting on conservation land. Kramer became involved in this about a year ago, when he was at Borderland State Park. At that time, he spoke with park rangers and Friends of Borderland about the degradation of land due to the overpopulation of deer. A deer biologist was brought in and prepared a deer survey of Borderland State Park. The biologist has performed many surveys throughout Massachusetts on deer population and in his opinion; there are four severely impacted areas: Blue Hills Reservation, Wampanoag State Park, Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary and Borderland State Park.

This past January the biologist presented his results to the Friends of Borderland. Of interest, the biologist believes that it would be a good idea to develop and institute programs which would bring the deer population back into balance. Currently, there are approximately 80 deer per square mile which according to statistics is way too high. Deer Management population studies recommend about 18 deer per every square mile. Due to the overpopulation of deer, the under canopy is being destroyed. The biologist found that although the deer are quite stressed, it is not the type of stress which will cause their population to crash. The deer have begun eating foods not typically associated with their diet, destroying even more habitat. This is detrimental as it means loss of habitat for birds, insects, etc.....

The biologist also pointed out that though it was good to look at the area of Borderland State Park, deer management should be looked at from the State level, pointing out land owned by the Conservation Commission in Sharon and Easton, and King Philip Rock that are also severely impacted due to the overabundance of deer. The biologist said that it is important for folks to learn about the issue and to recognize the severity over population of deer is causing, and to perhaps form collaborations amongst different towns/entities.

Kramer also informed Commission members that deer hunting was currently taking place at Moose Hill Farm as well as on Mass Audubon properties. Additionally, he believes

that the Foxboro Conservation Commission has begun to allow deer hunting on some of its properties. It is Kramer's hope that Commission members will take a look at the powerpoint presentation prepared by the Mass Fish & Game and that perhaps a collaborative group can be formed to begin to address and work on a sensible regional program to help bring the deer population under control.

Kramer was asked the total deer taken this past hunting season. He believes that the numbers were: Moose Hill - 18, Trustees – 6, Mass Audubon – 6 and another 6 were taken from the power line right of way. Both sexes were hunted and Kramer explained that the program would take about five to seven years to begin bringing the deer population back into balance.

The type of hunting permitted can be restricted as well as time frames and locations. Currently, only bow hunting is allowed on Moose Hill. At Blue Hills, they allow bow hunting and rifles and shotguns. About 65 deer were taken from Blue Hills, but their program is quite labor intensive as it is a controlled hunt which lasts only four days and is open by lottery. Kramer explained that he has hiked many of the trails during hunting season, and it is clearly marked that hunting is taking place and to stay on marked trails.

The powerpoint should be sent to members to review for discussion at a later time.

Ideally, Kramer would like to start a well thought out pilot program in this area as the over population of deer is problematic in other parts of the state as well. It is his hope to enlist various entities such as Borderland and town conservation commissions to work on together.

It was suggested to look into what how other programs are working and to maybe have a deer survey done on Commission property. The Commission will wait to hear back from Kramer to see if was able to bring together other persons interested in this issue.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes April 13, 2017**

**Motion** to approve meeting minutes

Avery, Wasserman 4-0-1 (Motion Passed)

### **8:10PM – Presentation/Update**

Keri Murray, Town Master Plan Committee Representative (TMPC)

Keri forwarded a slide presentation, but unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting. Arguimbau reviewed presentation with Commission. Arguimbau also reviewed with Commission members past plans that were prepared.

The TMPC is looking for support to bring in a consultant to assist with preparing a Town-wide Master Plan. From research they have performed in looking at other towns master plans and costs associated with preparation, the TMPC is looking for

approximately \$150,000 over a two year period. There is additional information on the Town's Planning Board website. There was concern as there was no information regarding what would happen if the Town Meeting did not vote for the funding. Perhaps additional information will be presented at Town Meeting.

**8:20PM – MOU for Sharon Galleries. Update on Spring Valley**

*Bob Shelmerdine representing applicant.*

**Sharon Galleries**

Copies of the MOU were passed around for signatures. There are four copies and members should sign them all. The MOU contains the paragraph which pertains to the Commission.

**Spring Valley**

Shelmerdine explained that the Planning board voted 3-1 in affirmation of Spring Valley. He showed several maps of Spring Valley and what was being proposed. Essentially, the plans were similar to those presented to the Commission previously and at the special town meeting held this past December.

Shelmerdine explained to Commission members that Article 19 in the Towns Warrant is what they will be presenting at Town Meeting. The difference between this proposal and the previous proposal is:

- A reduction in the number of townhouses requested, from 68 to 52
- The townhouses will be located along Tiot Street and developed upon 20 acres, in the previous plan, houses were also located along Edge Hill Dr
- The townhouses will be age restricted, with only 2 bedrooms per unit, with the master bedroom located on the first floor
- There will be no more than 104 bedrooms
- Front lots will not be located within the overlay district (they were in the original plan)
- Using existing zoning (60 square feet, 200 feet of frontage)
- \$502,000 water mitigation costs to the Water Department
- Emergency connection (\$135,000) if the developer is unable to connect to Norwood Sewer. If developer is able to connect to Norwood, then a line will be brought in

There was talk about also bringing in water. If the developer chooses not to bring in a water line, then the town will have an additional expense. The Town is looking to establish an emergency water hookup with Norwood and has been negotiating with them. If the developer could establish an agreement with Norwood for sewer, then it would definitely help with the Town getting a water hookup. Norwood is on MRWA. Sewer is easier to get than water. The developer has agreed to participate and work with town to establish an emergency hookup of water to Norwood, but first must become a partial member with the MWRA. At 135K. Shelmerdine reiterated that the developer has the option of having onsite sewer and showed on the map where the septic would be located.

Commission member asked the cost to become partial member with MWRA. Shelmerdine did not have this answer, but stated that Turkington has had discussions with Norwood.

Brief discussion about the MOU signed by the Board of Selectman on March 22, 2017. Commission member asked where in the MOU it showed where water would come from. It was noted that in Section 2, there was mention about getting sewer but there was no mention about water. Shelmerdine explained that an economic feasibility study was currently being performed by Norwood, and that they are still reviewing. Therefore, he believes that it will be likely that an on-site water treatment system will be installed on the property. He further stated, that he was not sure if it was in the MOU, but did mention to Commission Members that the developer was committed to getting water for the Town. Additionally, he said that if they can't get water, then it would be unlikely they would be able to get sewer from Norwood.

The golf course will remain. The old parking lot area will be where the townhouses will be located and new parking will be established.

Shelmerdine explained that the property was being divided into five separate lots. Lots 4 and 5 would contain single family housing. Lots 1 & 3 will become restricted lots prior to issuance of first building permits. Lot 2 contains the clubhouse. If the golf course becomes economically unfeasible, then lot 1 will be deeded to the Town, and subject to restriction. (Non residential).

Homes to be built will not include affordable homes. Currently the Town is at 10.6% affordability. As an age restricted development, 80 percent of the homes must be owned by one owner who is 55 or older. The remaining 20% of units need not be age restricted. This is outlined in the MOU.

Must work through the Planning Board for site approval, and if wetlands, then must work with the Conservation Commission.

### **8:30PM - Open Space Discussion/Work Session**

Commission members reviewed the survey questions from the prior Open Space Report. They looked at the questions and determined those they wished to keep, those they wished to eliminate, and what, if anything, to add. Should continue to include comment boxes as this is important if responders wish to add further information .

Members were asked to think about how to release the survey. Via Survey Monkey, the Town Website, emails? Mailing/Postcard listing link to survey?

Arguimbau will speak with Chused to see if and how many email addresses she may have.

Next meeting: if quorum then meet on May 4<sup>th</sup>, otherwise, perhaps the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

Members asked to look at Section 8, Goals and Objectives, located in older version of open space report. Section 8 goals and objectives.

**Gavins Pond Article**

Arguimbau informed Commission Members that the petition group was in contact with both her and Mesiter. Fincom and others were concerned with Article 97 being too permanent. Others were concerned about the well, field and the pond. Arguimbau and Meister met with Gelerman to discuss. In the end, it was decided that the Town (Board of Selectman as water Commissioners) would have control of the well, soccer fields and Gavins Pond. The Commission would receive the remaining property.

It is important to note the Commission has no intention of taking anything away from the soccer fields and the parking, wells, or the pond. They would just like permanent protection on the remainder of the property.

**Motion:** adjourn

Westman, Avery 5-0-0 (Motion Passed)