

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 10, 2013 – 6:30 pm

Second Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother, Donna Francis, Sean Werle, Addie Holland and Deb Picking

Commissioners Absent: Justin Fermann

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey- Agent

Also Present: Joshua Epstein, potential commissioner

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Approval of Minutes:

Motion made by Sean Werle to accept the September 11, 2013 minutes as amended. Seconded by Addie Holland. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

PUBLIC HEARING:

NOI 2013-02 RECONSTRUCTION OF GREENFIELD RD (Continued from 9/11/13)

Guests: Mark Elder (Project Manager for Greenman-Pedersen, Inc- GPI), Bob DeFrancesco (Engineer for Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. - GPI), Lisa Adams (abutter), Kevin Dowd (abutter), Andy Rewa (abutter), Nick Salustri (abutter) and Chris Sawyer-Laucanno (Montague Reporter).

This is a continuation of a public hearing from September 11, 2013 where the consultants from Greenman-Pedersen, Inc presented their plan for the replacement of four (4) culverts and wetlands replication due to the proposed to widening of Greenfield Road.

Culverts:

The culverts that are existing are smaller than necessary and the walls supporting the structure are crumbling. The culverts currently direct run off from both perennial and intermittent streams. The culverts to be replaced are located between the Rail Trail and the Randall Road area. The proposed widening of the road and guardrail replacements requires longer culverts. Mass Stormwater standards require wider culverts. Mark Elder walked the commission through each individual culvert replacement. Each involved widening the culvert, and using a naturalized bottom. Perching was removed or otherwise minimized to extent possible. The agent reported that every effort was made to meet the stream crossing standards for replacement culverts. See handouts for details.

Wetlands Replication:

The Conservation Commission reviewed the wetland replication plans as presented by Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. and there will be a need to do sedimentation control and tree protection devices will need to be installed before any work can be done in the 236 square foot area. The existing vegetation will need to be removed and the area excavated to a depth of 1 foot below the finished grade. Hydric soil will then be laid in two six-inch batches, and the area seeded and planted with native shrubs. Deb Picking raised concern about whether the wetlands replication could actually be accomplished due to the fact that hydric soil differs from place to place and might not be a suitable match. The consultants will do soil testing and have a wetlands specialist on site to monitor. It was felt that the Conservation Commission should have an active role in both the project and the oversight of the wetlands specialist.

Public Comment:

Lisa Adams asked about the MEPA filing. The MEPA certificate was issued on 12/7/2012. Andy Rewa noted that the catch basins near the intersection of Randall Road and Greenfield Road continue to have flooding problems. Mark Fairbrother will bring this concern to the DPW Superintendent Tom Bergeron. Nick Salustri was present to bring attention to the fact that some driveway culverts in the area are undersized. In addition to causing erosion issues for Mr. Salustri, it could threaten the infrastructure of Greenfield Road. Mr. Fairbrother noted that the Town cannot fix the culverts, as they are on private property. It was suggested that the abutters could be at least notified about the issue.

After reviewing the culverts and wetlands replication plan, the commission felt ready to discuss findings and special conditions for the project.

The Agent prepared the following findings based on the proceedings:

- The purpose of this project is to reconstruct Greenfield Road, from its intersection with The Canalside Bike Path to its intersection with Hatchery Road, to address deteriorated road conditions, inadequate drainage and safety hazards.
- The project includes reconstruction of roadway, improvements to sight distance, widening and construction of bicycle lanes on each side, replacement of culverts, headwalls and wingwalls, and construction of drainage.
- The project will be constructed by a private contractor working for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.
- This project was filed pursuant to 310 CMR 10.53(f) as a limited project for “maintenance and improvement of existing public roadways, but limited to widening less than a single lane, adding shoulders, correcting substandard intersections, and improving inadequate drainage systems.”
- DEP file 229-174 expired prior to construction.

The Commission concurred.

The Agent recommended the following Special Conditions (in addition to the standard conditions):

- Replacement of culverts and all other work in streams shall take place during the low-flow season, between July 1 and October 1 of any year when this Order of Conditions is valid.
- Fording of rivers and streams with equipment is prohibited.
- All work in streams shall be scheduled and phased on successive days, exclusive of weekends and holidays, so that it can be completed in the shortest possible time.
- Streambanks shall be revegetated with native vegetation, including woody species where such have been removed.
- The Commission reserves the right to review and approve final restoration plans with the selected wetlands professional, prior to implementation in the field.
- The Commission reserves the right to require additional plantings in the wetland replication area to ensure achievement of 90% cover of wetland plant species within two full growing seasons, defined as April through October of two years, as required by 310 CMR 10.55(4) (b).

The Commission concurred.

Motion made by Sean Werle to close the hearing and issue an Order of Conditions, with special conditions as discussed for NOI 2013-02. Seconded by Addie Holland. ***Motion passed unanimously. Deb Picking abstained from the vote because of her absence at the first hearing.***

Other Business:

- Request for Certificate of Compliance for NOI #2011-01 by Western Massachusetts Electric Company for the 354 Line Reconstruction Project located off of Richardson Road/Beaver Dam Project.

The agent, Sean Werle, and Donna Francis visited the project site with representatives from WMECO and the environmental consultant. Walter reported that the work was completed and the impacted wetlands areas have rebounded 100%. In addition, the Amherst mitigation project is complete. A letter of completion from the environmental consultant will be included in the file.

Motion made by Donna Francis to issue a complete Certificate of Compliance for NOI 2011-01. Seconded by Sean Werle. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

Conservation Agent Update:

- Sawmill River Access Area- update on process for mowing. Fish and Game advised not to cut. They will mow in another two years. Fish and Game advised not to mow, because of wood turtles. They will mow in another two years to control woody growth. This is a requirement of Natrual Heritage.
- Upcoming business: NOI for bank stabilization at 16 Walnut St. Applicant has been advised to file NOI.

Motion made by Sean Werle to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Addie Holland. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:13 PM

Approved by: _____ Date: _____