

Montague Conservation Commission

One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

(413) 863-3200 Ext. 207

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 11, 2015 – 6:30 pm

Upstairs Meeting Room, Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Alex Peterkin, Addie Rose Holland, Justin Fermann, Sean Werle and Donna Francis (6:37 PM)

Commissioners Absent: Deb Picking

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey - Agent

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

Approval of Minutes:

Motion made by Addie Rose Holland to approve the May 14, 2015 minutes. Seconded by Justin Fermann. **Motion passed.** Sean Werle abstained.

Request for Determination of Applicability #2015-02 filed by MA Department of Conservation and Recreation for a proposed campsite adjacent to the Connecticut River near Greenfield Road (Assessors Map 192 Lot 113.4). A portion of the work is within the riverfront resource area.

DCR is partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club to establish the CT River Paddlers Trail in Massachusetts. DCR has agreed to establish and host 2-3 primitive, “leave-no-trace” campsites as part of the Trail. DCR has selected an 11 acres forested upland site 5 river miles from Barton’s Cove.

The site is within the Riverfront Resource Area. Applicant claims there will be no alteration to any bank, boarder vegetative wetlands, or land under water. Timber plank stairs pinned with rebar will be installed to protect slope and access upland – no excavation. Stairs, not tent platforms are in a flood prone area. Privy will be outside of any jurisdictional areas. Two 12x10 tent platforms will not penetrate the ground. Materials will be brought to site by hand. No major equipment is necessary. Applicant has committed to manage any invasive species found on site. Applicant is planning to meet with abutter to describe the plans and management of the property.

Motion made by Addie Rose Holland to issue a Negative Determination Box #2 of Applicability RDA #2015-02 by MA Department of Conservation and Recreation. Seconded by Sean Werle. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Public Hearing (Continuation): Notice of Intent #2014-03 filed by Franklin County Conservation District for the Sawmill River Rehabilitation Project at South Street. The South Street project includes the reestablishment of the banks at the South Street Bridge.

The Conservation Commission is still awaiting a general permit from the Army Corps of Engineers. This will be continued at the July 9, 2015 Conservation Commission Meeting. The applicant requested a continuation via email.

Chairman Fairbrother declared the hearing continued to the July 9 meeting at 6:30PM.

Agent Updates:

- FRCOG Pipeline correspondence
The Commission authorized a letter to State Officials and FERC asking that they recognize local/state planning and regulations in the FERC process. (Exhibit A)

Walter let the commission know that the town attempted to intervene into the department of public utility meetings by working with PLAN-New England but this request was denied and is in the process of being appealed.

The Commission briefly discussed whether they may want to hire a wetlands consultant to delineate resource areas along the proposed pipeline route. The Commission asked the Agent to check back after the next round resource inventory is released by FERC, so their data can be evaluated.

Motion made by Alex Peterkin to adjourn the meeting Seconded by Addie Rose Holland. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:53 PM.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Montague Conservation Commission

One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376, (413) 863-3200 Fax 207 Fax (413) 863-3222 Email: planner@montague.net

Secretary Kimberly D. Bose
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
88 First Street NE Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

 ORIGINAL May 14, 2015

FILED OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE
COMMISSION
MAY 15 2015
11:11 AM
FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY
COMMISSION

Re: Tennessee Gas Pipeline, L.L.C., Docket No. PF14-22-000

Dear Secretary Bose:

The Montague Conservation Commission understands that the proposed route for the Northeast Energy Direct Pipeline will run for 4.7 miles through the Town of Montague. The Montague Conservation Commission urges FERC to protect the interests identified in the following laws of the Commonwealth:

Mass Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Ch 131 s40) -The proposed route will directly impact several jurisdictional wetland resource areas.

Mass Riverfront Protection Act (MGL Ch258, Acts of 1996)- The proposed route will cross the Connecticut and Millers Rivers.

Mass Endangered Species Act (MGL Ch 131A Sec 4)- The proposed route will affect 2,366 acres of NHESP Priority Habitat for rare species within ½ mile buffer.

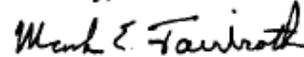
Permanently Protected Open Space (Article 97 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth)- The proposed route bisects the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area- affecting 97 acres of permanently protected land within 300 feet.

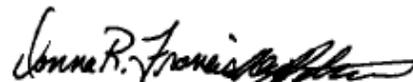
The Zoning Act (MGL Ch 40A)- The proposed route bisects the Turners Falls Water District's public water supply protection district for the Hannegan Brook Well Zone II.

The Commission also urges FERC to avoid segmentation in reviewing projects across the region. Thus we ask you to evaluate the cumulative impacts of the five major pipeline projects planned for New England.

Foremost, The Montague Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan calls for preserving the Montague Plains, a precious ecological and recreation resource of statewide benefit. The pipeline bisects this 20,000+ acre area that is primarily protected by the Mass Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. We are concerned that the proposed pipeline will conflict with the obligation that the land used for outdoor recreation and natural habitat. Thank you for considering our local concerns.

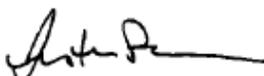
Sincerely,


Mark Fairbrother, Chairman


Donna Francis

Alex Peterkin


Sean F. Werle, PhD


Justin Fermann, PhD


Addie Rose Holland


Deborah J. Picking, PhD

CC: Montague Legislative and Congressional Representatives, Governor Baker, Commissioner of Mass Fish and Game