

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 8, 2019

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

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Sean Werle, Alex Peterkin, Donna Francis, Addie Rose Holland

Commissioners Absent: Deb Henson, Justin Fermann and Laurie Reid- alternate.

Staff: Walter Ramsey – Agent

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

Approval of Minutes: No minutes were approved.

6:30- Public Meeting: Request for Determination #2019-01 filed by Montague Department of Public Works for the construction of a 92 LF 5' wide bituminous pavement walk path to connect First Street sidewalk to the Canal side Rail Trail, Identified by Assessors as Map 4 Lot 15.

Walter Ramsey gave an overview of the project on behalf of the DPW.

WR: Montague received a complete streets grant for adding sidewalks and bike lanes throughout town consisting of 4 different projects: one of which requires Commission review. The relevant work consists of new sidewalks on First Street outside of Town Hall down to L Street and specifically a spur to connect that sidewalk to the Canal side Rail Trail bike path. This needs permitting through the RDA process as it is in the riverfront area for the Connecticut River. All work is in the outer 100 feet of the riverfront area and is considered previously disturbed area. The area where the work will take place will be along an elevation of where there is not ponding on the grassy lawn. To be sure, a 12" diameter reinforced concrete culvert with flared end is proposed near the bike path to ensure possible seasonal flooding of the lawn is not impeded. Erosion controls will be done according to best management practices. The removal of one mature tree may be necessary because the path may affect critical root zone. If the removal is necessary, the Town will replace with two new trees of the same species in the riverfront area. Given the location, the propose location is best way to connect to the Canal side Rail Trail to the sidewalk without disturbing the plantings. Firstlight is the owner of the property and they are coordinating closely with the Town and are in agreement with the proposal. A similar project connecting Unity Park to the Canal side Rail Trail was done in 2011.

Ultimately project is not exempt. 310 CMR 10.53(6) could apply which actually requires an NOI as "limited projects", but the Commission decided that this is a *de minimis* impact and does not quite meet the threshold of an alteration as it is already a disturbed area and thus it is small enough not to warrant a full Notice of Intent.

Motion made by Addie Rose Holland to issue a negative determination for RDA #2019-01 (Box 2) as presented with the preference to retain existing tree(s) if possible. Seconded by Alex Peterkin. **Motion passed.**

Request for Certificate of Compliance NOI 2018-02 filed by Thomas Memorial Country Club for restoration of an irrigation impoundment on a parcel identified as Montague Assessors Map 10 Lot 29.

Walter gave an overview of the project. Mark Sicard, the greens keeper, did a thorough job of navigating the permit process with the Town and the Army Corps of Engineers. Walter did a site inspection with Mark Sicard on July 24, 2019. The pond is functioning and is already back to being wonderful habitat for frogs, plants and golf balls. All the fill that was dredged was kept on site. It was used to fill a slope that was located outside of any buffer zones. Agent recommends that the COC granted.

Motion made by Sean Werle to issue a Certificate of Compliance for NOI #2018-02 filed by Thomas Memorial County Club. Seconded by Donna Francis. **Motion passed.**

Agent updates:

- **Items not anticipated within the 48 hours of posting**
 - Audience members wanted to know how the Montague City Road Flooding project was progressing. Walter Ramsey let them know that the Order of Conditions was issued by the Conservation Commission. The next step is for the town to finalize permitting through Army Corps of Engineers and MassDEP and identify a funding source. Best case is implementation in 2020.
 - Addie Rose Holland announced her resignation and was thanked by all the members of the Commission for her service on the Conservation Commission board over 17 years. Addie Rose Holland intends to move to the position of alternate to be able to prioritize family.

Motion made by Sean Werle to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 PM. Seconded by Addie Rose Holland. **Motion passes.**

Approved by: _____

Date: _____