

WEST TISBURY
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 28, 2020

Present: Brian Beall, John Brannen, Whit Griswold, Donna Paulnock, Binnie Ravitch, Peter Rodegast, Michael Turnell, and Tara Whiting-Wells

Absent: Geraldine Brooks

Staff Present: Maria McFarland

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 P.M. Tara Whiting-Wells, Chair presiding.

Minutes: The minutes of the January 14 meeting were approved as revised. All in favor.

New Business:

Climate Change Committee: The board discussed Kate Warner's letter dated January 12. Donna explained to the Board that the list referenced in the letter stems from the Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings Report dated June 30, 2018. Tara said some of the items referenced in the letter, such as work to raise parts of Tiah's Cove Road, are already in the works.

Donna said she thinks the next step for the climate change group will be to focus on the specific recommendations and work on those.

The board will read the summary of findings before deciding how to respond to Kate's letter. Discussion was tabled to a future meeting.

Old Business:

Warrant Article/Revolving fund for Bylaw fees: A motion was made and seconded to approve the warrant article to place bylaw filing fees into a revolving fund. All in favor

Blackwater Brook Storm Runoff Assessment update: Maria has asked Sheri Caseau about getting money to do some water quality sampling/testing at the same sites Bill Wilcox did in 2009. She will follow up with Sheri.

Map 7 Lot 28/Blackwater Brook Farm: Members discussed past efforts to engage the owner of Blackwater Farm to address the manure storage situation, livestock in the brook and possible encroachment of farming activities into the bordering vegetated wetland. Whit agreed to talk Alan Cottle about the possibility of arranging a site visit with Mia Halter and/or Don Liptack from the Natural Resources Conservation Services Division of the Department of Agriculture and Bill Wilcox of the Dukes Conservation District. The purpose of the visit would be to offer some guidance on best management practices for manure storage, keeping livestock out of Black Water Brook and farming activities in the buffer zone. If Alan isn't willing to meet with these folks Whit will find out if Alan will allow the board to do a site visit and have a chat with him.

Map 3 Lot 65.3 Runamok Farm and Map 3 Lot 85.1 Leonard Peak: Members reviewed a memo prepared by staff regarding past efforts to work with the owners of Runamok Farm. Maria will check with Omar Johnson to get more information on the barn inspections he and the Animal Control Officer recently did.

Members discussed sending a generic letter asking these property owners to engage with NRCS in order to improve farming practices on their properties.

It was noted that Pond View Farm and Whitestone have been working with NRCS.

Map 35 Lot 1.9/99 Pond View Farm Road: Tara updated the board on the Board of Health meeting on the septic system for this property. She and John attended to offer the Conservation Commission's support to the Board of Health in asking this applicant to install a denitrifying septic system.

John asked if there was any data available that would counter Reid Silva's argument to the Board of Health that these systems are no better than Title V systems. There was a brief discussion on materials already given to the Board of Health including copies of the Mass Estuaries Report and the TMDL report.

Tiah's Cove Road Culvert: Tara told the board that the Selectmen went out to bid on the culvert replacement and received 3 bids. Because the Selectmen and Highway Superintendent do not want to use state funding or ask the town for money at the next town meeting, Jen is working on going out to bid again to obtain bids from contractors who are pre-qualified with Mass Highway projects using grant money.

The Notice of Grant Opportunities for Culvert Replacement pre-application process was received today. The pre-application grant briefing sessions are scheduled for the first two weeks of February. The actual application will be available on February 25 and is due on March 6. No action was taken.

Administrative:

Water Resource Withdrawal Bylaw application: A motion was made and seconded to approve the presented version of the application. All in favor.

Brian suggested that back flow preventers on hoses used for withdrawal should be a requirement. This can be included in the regulations.

Buffer Zone regulations: Maria distributed a draft of revisions to the regulations to update the buffer zone regulation for members to review. No action was taken.

View channel regulations

Regulations from the towns of Oak Bluffs, Yarmouth, and Mashpee were reviewed. Currently the board relies on the buffer zone regulations and the state definition of vista pruning at 310 CMR 10 04 when reviewing view channel projects

Issues discussed:

- View Channel/ Vista corridor dimensions/ Determine if a formula for determining dimensions is needed.
- Continue to use the states definition of vista pruning which states that the canopy cannot be reduced to more than 90%.and that vista pruning does not including cutting of trees, removal of shrubs or mowing of the ground cover.
- Heights of shrub layers: Should a height be specified or should shrubs be pruned to staggered heights, undulating or mimic natural growth in a manor appropriate to their growth patterns?
- Use Oak Bluffs language for the section on Shrubs
- Use some of the guidelines from Yarmouth
- Qualifications of persons doing landscaping work will be taken from Oak Bluffs
- Protocol for removing invasive species
- Items to be included in the Notice of Intent (written narrative proposed pruning including map and photos delineating the site)

Maria will work on a draft incorporating various wording from Yarmouth, Mashpee and Oak Bluffs to come up with definitions, a preamble and performance standards.

Administrative: Tara announced that she will step down as Chair at the end of February. Tara left the meeting at 6:15. Discussion the appointment of a new chair was tabled.

Correspondence:

Certificates of Compliance:

Map 6 Lot 7/ 255 John Cottle Road: WT2016-02 and DEP File Nos 79-377 & 384
Map 43 Lot 2/130 Watcha Club Road/ SE79-381

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria McFarland
Board Administrator
APPROVED