



PAXTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2016

Location and Time: John Bauer Senior Center 7:00-8:15pm

7:00 PM Bylaw Discussion Summary:

- CK suggested adding a hardship/leniency period for one year after the bylaw is approved to encourage any landowner with an active violation to file a permit prior to the bylaw becoming effective. The Commission would actively work with landowners to rectify any existing violations.
- Boxford Section 375c – reference is to all permits, not just those for single family homes.
- Appeals process: need to approach the ZBA to see if they would be willing to oversee conservation appeal process. This would keep the issue in town and reduce possible legal costs.
- An updated draft shall be printed and brought to the next meeting.

7:30PM Meeting opened

Attendance: Commissioners: Chris Keenan (Chairman,) Michael Voorhis (Vice Chair), Tim Luring. Absent: Jim Robert (Assoc. Member), Holly Robert (Assoc. Member,) Others present: Mia McDonald (Cons. Agent); Donmarie Desrosiers, resident; Robert Ferguson, resident; Caitlin Carey, resident.

Minutes: Minutes of 8/11/16 meeting were reviewed and accepted with one correction to edit confusing reference to Boxford regulations.

Motioned to accept MV, seconded by TL; all voted in favor to accept the minutes with one correction.

Bills: MM payroll; TL motioned and MV seconded; all voted in favor of paying the bill.

Correspondence: Notice circulated about 2016 Town Forest Conference.

Informal Discussion: Draft of Annual Report for the Commission reviewed. Typo noted in second sentence. Confirm date of donation for land purchase on Asnebumskit Hill with Greater Worcester Land Trust; include in annual report if made in FY 2016.

Request for Certificate of Compliance for 97 Suomi Street

Request stated that work never commenced at the site. The site visit was conducted by MM and the site is stable and vegetated; no work was observed. MV motioned and TL seconded; all voted in favor to issue the Certificate of Compliance for 101 Suomi St, DEP File # 257-0297. CK abstained.

Request for Certificate of Compliance for 145 Marshall Street

Request submitted for work on a septic replacement in 2005. The site visit was conducted by MM and the site is stable and vegetated; but the site does not match the approved plan. A parking area had been constructed adjacent to the wetland resource area noted in the approved plans. The Commission discussed the site and requested additional information on the parking area: if it was constructed by previous owner and the resource area was not damaged, no filing needed. Otherwise a permit shall be necessary as after-

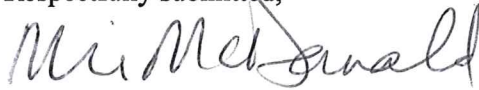
the-fact-filing or the area shall need to be restored under an enforcement order. MV motioned and TL seconded to continue the hearing until additional information is provided.

Interested members: Caitlin Carey, Bob Ferguson and Donmarie Desrosiers were interested in becoming commissioners and attended the meeting. The Commission discussed responsibilities and activities with interested residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 12, 2016 at the White Building at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Mia McDonald,

Agent for the Conservation Commission

Reference Documents:

*As noted in the minutes, on file with the Paxton Conservation Commission.

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Paxton Conservation Commission
Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2016
July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016



The Commission first wishes to thank those commissioners that regretfully resigned this past year: Marisa Ayvasian, Gerry Ryan and Zach Ferguson. Their service to the Commission, time and input provided a valuable resource to the Conservation Commission and the Town.

The Commission undertook two important projects this year: organizing efforts in trail maintenance and initiating a draft wetlands bylaw. Two meetings were held to solicit input from the public on the trails and public land in town. The Commission also worked with the Open Space Commission, Assessor's Office, Paxton Land Trust and the Greater Worcester Land Trust to gain a better understanding of the public land, available trails and trail status throughout the town. This work culminated in a trail cleanup in

April that coordinated over a dozen volunteers to remove piles of litter and trash, including a full-sized couch, from the Illig's Pond trail and trailhead.

The Commission solicited the generous assistance of the Department of Public Works to remove piles of yard waste mixed with rubbish on Alderwood Road within the buffer zone of a nearby bordering vegetated wetland. Once the debris was removed, new signage was posted. The Commission worked with nearby residents on their concerns with the dumping. Letters were also mailed to residents in the area with instructions on how to properly dispose of trash and yard waste.

Building on their relationship with the Greater Worcester Land Trust, in May the Commission voted to contribute \$5,000 towards the purchase of land on Asnebumskit Hill known as "Thoreau's Seat." As detailed in the Telegram & Gazette in an article in July:



"The roughly 100-acre Asnebumskit Ridge property is located in Paxton near the Holden town line and runs from Pleasant Street up to the summit of the 1,400-foot Asnebumskit Hill. There it links up to the Asnebumskit Ridge Trail, an approximately two-mile trail to South Road in Holden. The property also provides links to 800 acres of other conservation properties, including Muir Meadow, The Cascades, Boynton Park, Cooks Pond, Southwick Pond and Donker Farm, Mr. Colin Novick executive director of the Greater Worcester Land Trust said.

Thoreau mentioned a visit to the hill in an 1852 letter to Harrison Blake, calling it 'one of the true temples of the earth.' The view, which looks southwest over Kettle Brook Reservoir to the Connecticut hills, is now called Thoreau's Seat. The hill also was the site of the first FM radio broadcast in the state, in 1939."

The Commission began work in September on a draft wetlands bylaw. They discussed the bylaw at their monthly meetings and brought it to Town Meeting; but did not win the vote. The Commission plans to use feedback solicited from the meeting and from residents to alter the draft bylaw to reflect the needs of the Town.

The Commission remains committed to the best management of the Conservation lands and trails throughout town and plans to build on the work completed over the past year.

Respectfully Submitted

Chris Keenan, Chairman
Mike Voorhis, Vice Chairman
Tim Luring, Commissioner
Jim Robert, Commissioner
Holly Robert, Associate Commissioner

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