

Montague Conservation Commission

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Thursday, January 10, 2013 – 6:30 pm

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

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother-Chair, Deb Picking, Sean Werle, Addie Holland and Justin Fermann.

Commissioners Absent: Donna Francis

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey- Agent

Approval of November 8, 2012 Minutes:

***Motion** was made by Sean W. to accept the November 8, 2012 minutes. Seconded by Justin F. Motion passed. Deb P. abstained from vote.*

CONTINUED DISCUSSION: NOI #2009-03-Unity Park Improvements- Montague Parks and Recreation Department –discuss a possible amendment to the Order of Conditions for phase II of Unity Park planned for spring 2013 Construction.

The Order of Conditions approved a 13,000 square foot 2:1 offsite mitigation area along the Connecticut River bank per the Riverfront Protection Act. This is not possible anymore because landowner issues. WPA language allows the equivalent level of environmental protection where square footage is not a relevant measure. The butterfly garden would promote the interests of wildlife and habitat restoration per the Wetland Protection Act. It would support 8 endangered butterfly species native to western Massachusetts. The commissioners would like to see onsite invasive plant species removed (if any are present). The Berkshire Design Group has not reported a feasible or realistic invasive species removal program as an alternative. The Parks and Recreation Department will come back to the Commission in February for a formal amendment request.

Agent Report:

Suzanne Kretzenger (7:05 PM)

- NOI #2012-02- Sawmill River Dredging by Montague DPW. Enforcement Status updates.

Walter R has approached the DEP point person (Karen Hershburger) on several occasions. There will be an enforcement conference scheduled at a later date with the DPW. The enforcement process is on-going at this point and Walter R will be notified as to what decisions are made. Suzanne Kretzenger has been in to see Walter R. and regularly seeks updates from the Planning and Conservation office.

- Forest Cutting Plan 2012-01 Jenks. Project status.

The Service Forester confirmed there have been no issues with the stream crossing and there has been no cutting in wetlands. She let Walter know that the area is compliant under the Forest Cutting Plan.

- Discussion: Montague Plains Dumping and Road discontinuance.

The State has installed video monitoring on the state land to try and curb and catch those who are responsible for the continued dumping onto the plains. There has an increase in dumping on the Town of Montague Right-Of-Way recently. The question of responsibility was raised.

- Discussion: 2013 Work plan

Walter has been looking at the Open Space Plan and wants to know if there are any goals for the Commission in 2013. The Conservation Commission would like to put in a request for \$10,000 to be deposited into the Conservation Commission Fund to be used to purchase Agricultural Land etc. In looking at riverfront property in the area Walter found a property in Millers Falls, MA for mitigation which is owned by Tower Erving LLC. (previously known as the old Millers Falls Paper Factory). This property has 2,000 square feet of linear use along the Millers Falls River. This property would give residents access to the river for canoes and recreational use.

- FERC

Walter announced that on Thursday, January 31 at 6:00PM. A “scoping” meeting will be held at the Discovery Center. The Conservation Commission can propose studies to be done.

***Motion** made by Sean W. to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by, Addie H. Motion passes.*

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7: 23 PM

Approved by: _____ Date: _____