

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 10, 2014 – 6:30 pm

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

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

Commissioners Absent: Deb Picking

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey- Agent

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM

Approval of March 13, 2014 Minutes:

Motion made by Justin Fermann to accept the March 13, 2014 minutes. Seconded by Sean Werle. ***Motion passed.***

Public Hearing: Notice of Intent #2014-02 filed by MassDOT for proposed reconstruction of Hatchery Road from Greenfield Road to Turners Falls Road; improvements to Greenfield Road and Turners Falls Road; and the construction of a shared-use pedestrian-bicycle path and bridge over the B&M railroad at the former Greenfield Road crossing site. Associated project activities include drainage system improvements and other minor site improvements within resource areas.

Guests: Sean Hale - Epsilon Associates, Inc., John Osorio - Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., Adam Shoukimas - Mass DOT, Jeanne Golrick, Lisa Adams, Bob Adams.

Sean Hale provided an overview. The project is two-fold which includes making the repairs that are necessary as well as installing a pedestrian bridge in the location of the former Greenfield Rd Bridge. The project is largely located outside of resource areas and buffer zones. The jurisdiction work in wetlands has multiple bordering vegetated wetlands (BVW) delineated in the western half of the project, a system near the intersection of Greenfield Rd and south of Hatchery Rd, also a cluster of wetlands near the bridge crossing along with an unnamed USGS-designated mapped perennial stream. The work qualifies under the wetlands protection act in two different limited project provisions: 1) road repair rehabilitation 2) construction of footpaths and bike paths for the bridge. The work within the riverfront area also qualifies as a limited project which gives the Conservation Commission some flexibility over the conditions of the project. There are no direct wetland impacts to speak of, as work is proposed only in buffer zones. The work within the riverfront area will be limited to disturbed former roadways and existing roadways.

Stormwater Plan

John Osorio presented the stormwater plan submitted with the NOI. Greenman-Pedersen proposes modified country drainage. This entails swales and check dams (to collect sediments) where needed from Hatchery Road. At the intersection with Greenfield Rd two drop inlets with four (4) foot sumps at this location are proposed. These will connect to the existing perennial stream north of the intersection (Same as current conditions). In the post-development condition, the design goal was to minimize impacts to existing drainage patterns while making several overall improvements. Improvements to the closed drainage system, which includes replacing all catch basins and drop inlets within the project limits with deep sump catch basins/drop inlets. In addition grass channels will be constructed to aid in

the conveyance of runoff. Where sufficient right-of-way exists grass channels will be expanded to include check dams that will provide some peak flow attenuation and total suspended solids (TSS) removal.

Ponding Concerns

Walter Ramsey inquired about a ponding concern on the westerly section of Hatchery Road. John Osorio assured this will be addressed. GPI proposes that from Greenfield Cross Road a swale will continue all the way down with two or three check dams along that path and then connecting to the proposed drop inlet with four (4) foot sumps that then will connect to an existing system.

Driving Over Swales

Lisa Adams inquired about the ability to drive farm equipment over the swales since she owns farmland on both sides of the road. The swales will be approximately 12 feet wide and very shallow, intended to be passable by machinery if necessary. However, she cannot damage the swales in the ROW.

Erosion Control

Justin Fermann asked about the erosion control plan. The proposed project limits are marked on the plan. Per the Order of Conditions, the contractor will be responsible for implementing erosion control.

Riverfront Area

Jeanne Golrick inquired about what constitutes a riverfront area and why and whether it is somehow being used to justify the project. The nature of the jurisdiction of riverfront area was cleared up by the Commission for her edification.

Natural Heritage Endangered Species has reviewed this project and has determined that the project area to the east is in priority habitat and gave a designation of “no take”.

Since DEP had not yet assigned a file number the Conservation Commission cannot vote on the NOI #2014-02 tonight.

Sean Hale requested the hearing be continued on behalf of his client.

Mark directed Walter to prepare a draft order of conditions for review and approval at the next meeting.

Mark Fairbrother stated that the public hearing for NOI #2014-02 would be continued to the next Conservation Commission meeting on May 8, 2014 at 6:30 PM located at the Montague Town Hall.

Public Meeting: Request for Determination of Applicability #2014-01 filed by Montague Highway Department to resurface and improve approximately 910 feet of Montague City Road right-of-way between Masonic Street and Solar Avenue. Resource areas adjacent to the proposed work area include bordering vegetative wetland, riverfront area, and floodplain.

Guests: David Galbraith (Farren Care Center)

Walter Ramsey presented the Montague City Road project which the State will be constructing but the Town will be permitting. The work will be from Masonic Avenue to Solar Avenue in front of the Farren Care Center. There will be bus turn outs, improvement of the bike path crossing, sidewalks and generally making the area safer along Montague City Road. The project involves riverfront area and bordered vegetative wetlands but since they are not proposing to widen the road the riverfront area does not apply and is just being looked at for impacts of the buffer zone and the bordered vegetative wetlands. (There is an exemption for maintenance of roads prior to 1996 that don't include enlarging

therefore are exempt). There will be some pervious area added to what is now impervious with the addition of a sidewalk and grass flanking each side.

The main concerns are: erosion control and boundaries of the work. The plans lay out the work limits for the project including silt barrier fence and siltation logs located on the other side of the parking area as shown on the map. There will be no need to go into resource areas as it is all within a buffer zone. Justin asked about erosion control and inlet protections. Walter identified where these are located on the project plans. The project will not widen the roadway nor alter the drainage pattern of the road. Walter recommends a negative 3 which is a determination within the buffer zone as defined under the regulations but will not alter the area subject to protection under the act therefore it does not require a filing of a notice of intent.

Motion made by Addie Holland to make a Determination of Applicability for #2014-01 filed by Montague Highway Department for a negative 3 which is a determination within the buffer zone as defined under the regulations but will not alter the area subject to protection under the act therefore it does not require a filing of a notice of intent. Seconded by Justin Fermann. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Correspondence and other business

- Request to issue a Certificate of Compliance for DEP file 229-228 by FirstLight Power Resources/GDF SUEZ NA.

Walter Ramsey: This is for the FirstLight camp erosion project from 2011 located on the Connecticut River. The work has been completed and Walter walked the site with Beth Bazler (FirstLight Land Management Administrator) in February. In the order of conditions the Conservation Commission allowed for the installation of small retaining walls and some bank stabilization. Some lease holders used this option and photographs were provided. These were inspected by the agent. The order also asked FirstLight Power to do yearly updates and outreach to the lease holders as well as instructional workshops for them. The applicant has provided evidence that the met both of those conditions. Walter recommends issuing the certificate of compliance after walking the camp sites.

Motion made by Donna Francis to issue a certificate of compliance for DEP file 229-228. Seconded by Justin Fermann. (Sean Werle abstains) **Motion passed.**

Agent Updates

- Discuss possibility of holding a Conservation Restriction on Map 37 Lot 142 in Lake Pleasant (8.2 acres) Land owned by the Turners Falls Fire District.

Walter was approach by the Turners Falls Water Department about a potential conservation restriction in Lake Pleasant. The land is not currently protected by Article 97. The Montague Conservation Commission already owns an adjacent parcel. The lot is not buildable and has no frontage. It is mostly wetland with some limited developable uplands. There was a question as to whether this is worth pursuing or not. The Commission's price would have to be negligible. Lisa and Bob Adams, abutters to the site objected because they may have an interest in purchasing of the parcel for development. Walter stated that other abutters had approached him about putting this into protection. Mark Fairbrother requested a map and some photographs be brought to a future meeting so the Conservation Commission can make an informed decision about this opportunity.

Motion made by Addie Holland to adjourn the meeting Seconded by Donna Francis. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:37 PM

Approved by: _____ Date: _____