

# Montague Conservation Commission

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## MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 10, 2018 6:30 PM

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

**Commissioners Present:** Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Sean Werle, Justin Fermann, Addie Rose Holland, and Alex Peterkin, Laurie Reid-Associate

**Commissioners Absent:** Donna Francis and Deb Henson

**Staff:** Walter Ramsey – Agent

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Mark announced that Laurie Reid has been appointed as an Associate Member for the Conservation Commission. It is an annual term of service ending June 30 every year. Laurie was welcomed by the Commission.

### Approval of Minutes:

**Motion** made by Sean Werle to approve the March 8, 2018 Minutes. Seconded Justin Fermann. **Motion passed unanimously.** Alex Peterkin abstained from the vote.

**Motion** made by Alex Peterkin to approve the April 12, 2018 Minutes. Seconded Sean Werle. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING- Notice of Intent NOI #2018-02 filed by Thomas Memorial Country Club** to restore an irrigation impoundment on a parcel identified as Montague Assessors Map 10 Lot 29. The work will impact 1,725 square feet of bordering vegetated wetland and up to 90' linear feet of bank.

**Guest:** Mark Sicard – Thomas Memorial Country Club

Mark Sicard: The purpose of this application is to restore an irrigation pond at the golf course. This restoration was done about three years ago and worked for the short term but now additional restoration is needed to maintain irrigation. Mark Sicard received a phone call from Mark Stinson – DEP Western Region Circuit Rider with a request for more information and a hint that an outside consultant would be useful for this permitting process. Mark Sicard has outreached to a local consultant and has set up a meeting on May 15th.

Walter Ramsey: DEP has not issued a file number and is holding off until more information is provided. The 2013 dredging of the same pond considered the project as an impact to bordering vegetative wetland and bank. 2:1 Mitigation was required and provided. That project has received a Certificate of Compliance.

It was unclear to the Commission what resource area are being impacted and how a 401 quality Certificate may or may not apply to the project. These are not things typically decided by the Commission. One commissioner suggested that this might be able to meet the maintenance exemption clause.

The Conservation Commission asked the Agent to set up a site visit before the next meeting and will expect a more complete application upon Mark Sicard's return.

*Mark Sicard asked the Conservation Commission for a hearing continuation to June 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM.*

**Motion** made by Alex Peterkin to continue the hearing to June 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM. Seconded Sean Werle. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Mark Fairbrother declared the hearing for NOI 2018-08 continued to June 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM

**Conservation Agent Updates:**

**Forest Cutting – FC#2018-01 filed by David and Amanda J. Gendron for West Mineral Road** The forest cutting has been approved by DCR. There are no wetlands on these 15 acres to be concerned with. The forest cutting will include black birch, sugar maple and hickory. No comments offered from Commission to DCR.

**Review of Planning Board Zoning Changes being considered by Planning Board:**

Walter is going to the town boards and informing them of the zoning changes that are being considered by the Planning Board and where they might intersect with each board's purview.

1. Removal of "Unrestricted" Zoning District – this designation is very unusual and is found on parcels in town along the riverbanks that Firstlight owns. There are only about 3-4 parcels across town like this including the Millers Falls Oxbow and Cabot Woods and the Conte Research area
2. Increase lot size of Agriculture Forestry District from ½ acre to 1 acre – This relates to agricultural land protection.
3. Open Space Residential Subdivision bylaw - This is an optional alternative to a traditional subdivision where housing can be clustered and thus building less road infrastructure while putting 40% or more of the land into permanent protection. This allows some flexibility while having the housing being held collectively rather than individually.

**Topics Not Anticipated within 48 hours of posting:**

1. Connecticut River Camp Owner Matt Labrie has requested permission to take down 2 trees that are in danger of falling on the structure and are rotten at the base. Matt has also been in contact with Beth Bazler at Firstlight regarding his concerns. Matt Labrie submitted photos showing the concerns. The Conservation Commission is fine with the removal of the trees leaving the stumps.
2. MACC is holding some wetlands forums in April and May if anyone is interesting in attending.

**Motion** made by Addie Rose Holland to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM. Seconded Sean Werle. **Motion passed.**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_