

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 14, 2019

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

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Donna Francis, and Addie Rose Holland, Alex Peterkin and Laurie Reid

Commissioners Absent: Deb Henson, Justin Fermann, and Sean Werle

Staff: Walter Ramsey – Agent

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

6:30 PM Approval of February 2019 Minutes:

Motion made by Addie Rose Holland to approve the February 14, 2019 minutes. Seconded by Alex Peterkin.

Motion passed.

Project Updates:

- **Montague City Road Flooding Solution Engineering and Public Works Routine Maintenance Plan**
Guests: Lawrence Rusiecki of Wright-Pierce Engineers and Meredith Borenstein of SWCA Environmental (Consultants for the Town of Montague)

Lawrence and Meredith have been working with Tom Bergeron – DPW Superintendent and Walter Ramsey – Town Planner regarding a designing a solution to the Montague City Road flooding issues and concerns. They are approaching the Commission prior to filing an NOI.

Meredith Borenstein shared ortho and topographical maps to show the Commission the overall areas of concern along Montague City Road. Stream flow calculations were done, and then an average was taken from the existing channel measurements (4 feet wide) and (1 foot depth). She created a model then a stormwater test of a 2 inch rain event over 24 hours was run. The result was that the channel will overtop which means all the water will follow the roadway then dip off as the grade lessens to the south. As a solution, Lawrence presented a cross section that shows maintenance of the ditch by deepening and winding the channel (6 feet wide and 1 1/2 feet in depth with adding a 6 inch deeper shelf making it a 12 foot shelf (towards the railroad embankment). The stormwater test was then re run which demonstrated that the water stayed within the channel as well as restoring the wetland area. Anything greater than 1 inch an hour in 24 hours does give an overtop situation of flooding.

Meredith Borenstein – informed the Commission about proposed wetlands restoration and removal of invasive plants. A wetlands habitat will be created due to the shelf and then the revegetation process. Meredith has put together a narrative and the hope is to do a maintenance notice of intent (NOI). It was the understanding that the DPW has work they need permits for and to do a bundle of these types of requests which would help streamline the process and make the Commission aware of all the projects around the town.

Discussion:

Walter Ramsey: Gave a hypothetical question that if there was permission granted by the Railroad to do what was needed on their land would it have more of a benefit/impact towards the solution? *Lawrence responded saying it would benefit the project if given the permission due to the upland portion of land in terms of having an area to create a flood plain. This is up-gradient on the East side so if that happened, there would be more disturbance along with residential impacts.*

Addie Rose Holland: is this proposed solution “enough” due to the stormwater projections? *Lawrence responded that the channel can be made deeper and wider but how much more can’t be done without triggering more impacts on the railroad properties and jurisdictions. Expanding to the West/travel way would not be advisable and there are no barriers in place. As a failsafe a series of catch basins are proposed along the roadway to collect overflow and allow it to re-enter the channel 1000 feet down when it posed no risk of flooding.*

Alex Peterkin asked how long this solution would last after completion. *Lawrence responded that in the contract a maintenance and operations plan would be written in an order of conditions. In doing so, it gives permission to the DPW to do what is necessary at the minimum 2 times a year to maintain the area. Implementing the maintenance plan will be important.*

The thought is to keep the project simple at this point and do what is needed with out creating any adverse impacts. There will be a full NOI (maintenance of existing structures) in the future that Lawrence and Meredith will work to address the temporary impacts and lineal feet of bank on the project and then come before the Conservation Commission for approval. The Commission looks forward to reviewing the NOI.

Agent Updates:

- Consider Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal Review Policy:

Walter wanted to share with the Commission a policy that Shelburne has for Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal review process. This would be a Selectboard policy of how to handle the situation when residents take their land out of Chapter 61 so that there is a standard procedure of how it happens and the notification of various town boards. There is a state law that dictates how this is handled and the town will add some additional procedures like the notifications of boards (Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Selectboard, Assessors) to the policy. The Commission would have the ability to review the policy and make recommendations before it goes to the Selectboard for a final decision. Walter will work on a draft modeled after the Town of Shelburne, MA. The Commission did not object to having such a policy in place.

Correspondence from Eversource:

- Eversource provided notification of yearly vegetation management.

Motion made by Donna Francis to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 PM. Addie Rose Holland. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Exhibits:

Montague City Road Flooding Protection Design Project Design Plans
Shelburne Falls MA Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal Policy