

Town of Ayer Conservation Commission

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432 * 978-772-8220, ext. 143
Minutes for 4/13/2023

Location: Ayer Town Hall, 1st Floor

Present: Jon Schmalenberger (Chair), George Bacon (Member), Jessica Gugino (Member/Clerk), Heather Hampson (Conservation Agent)

Not Present: Mark Phillips (Vice-Chair), Jen Amaya (Member)

APAC taped: YES

**All Public Hearings are opened under the Wetlands Protection Act (MCL Ch. 131, section 40)
and under the Ayer Wetlands Bylaw (Article XXVI)**

7:00 PM – Open Meeting

Confirmation of Agenda

VOTE: G. Bacon moved to confirm the agenda as posted; J. Gugino 2nd.

Motion approved unanimously 3-0.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

VOTE: G. Bacon moved to accept the minutes for 3/23/2023 as written; J. Gugino 2nd.

Motion approved unanimously 3-0.

Public Input

None received.

Discussion: Request for Certificate of Compliance (COC), Woodland Way, MassDEP # 100-0393

Mikael A. Lassila, from S. J. Mullaney Engineering, Inc., was present on behalf of the applicant, Ridge View Realty Trust, in reference to the Pingry Hill subdivision.

All construction activities are now complete in the Pingry Hill subdivision, and any remaining open OOCs are now being addressed.

The Order of Conditions (OOC) for 100-0393 was issued for the roadway and infrastructure work, and included a 7,236 sq. ft. wetland replication area.

Signed and stamped As-Built plans for the roadway and the replication area were submitted as required.

The replication area was larger than the 6,000 originally approved.

Woodland Way already received its street acceptance at Fall Town Meeting, 2022.

G. Bacon moved to issue a COC for 100-0393; J. Gugino 2nd.

Motion approved unanimously 3-0 and the COC was signed.

Discussion: Request for Certificate of Compliance, 138 Littleton Road, MassDEP # 100-0423

Mikael A. Lassila, from S. J. Mullaney Engineering, Inc., was present on behalf of the applicant, Ridge View Realty Trust, in reference to the Pingry Hill subdivision.

The OOC for 100-0423 was for the construction of a single-family house, driveway, retaining wall, drainage, subsurface utilities, grading and lawn at 138 Littleton Road.

This OOC also included 2,439 sq. ft. of wetland replication.

The replication area was monitored for 3 growing seasons by Dr. Desheng Wang, of Creative Land & Water Engineering, LLC., whose previous planting reports were included with the COC request.



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The signed and stamped As-Built was also included and noted small changes, such as the driveway installation further to the east and changed location of a retaining wall.

J. Gugino noted that the minutes for 4/12/2018 stated that the OOC required the installation of 5 conservation signs, 2 by the wetland area at the front of the property and 3 at locations to be determined by the Agent at the new replication area.

Mr. Lassila did not know if these had been installed and they were not referenced in the COC Request. H. Hampson will check on this.

G. Bacon moved to approve a COC for 100-0423, its issuance contingent on confirmation that the required conservation signage is already in place or, if not, is put in place; J. Gugino 2nd.

Motion approved unanimously 3-0 and the contingent COC was signed.

Autumn Ridge Conservation Restriction (CR) Annual Monitoring Report

Steve Smith, as volunteer Steward/Monitor for this CR, presented the Annual Report.

The CR was established in 2005; Baseline Documentation was completed in 2010; and Mr. Smith has thus far submitted two five-year photo updates to the Baseline Documentation – in 2015 and in 2020.

For this year's report, Mr. Smith was assisted on the field work trips by several Autumn Ridge residents – John Marion, John Cadigan, Keith Frederick, Marion Stoddard, Carl Formachetti, and Beverly Smith – on 10/21/2022, 11/25/2022, 12/20/2022, and 1/14/2023.

Several of the Autumn Ridge residents, led by Chuck Francis, also perform trail maintenance work every year.

No encroachments of any kind (by hunters, campers, fire builders, motorcycles, motorbikes, or boaters) were observed this past year.

The water levels in Rock Meadow Pond as well as Smith Pond (this one closer to the residential area) were reduced due to the serious drought.

The ongoing yearly record of wildlife observations was expanded this year to include eastern coyotes.

At Mr. Smith's query as to whether the Commission wished him to continue as CR Steward, the answer was an enthusiastic and appreciative "yes!"

While Mr. Smith was still present, J. Schmalenberger asked him if he had suggestions for the Commission's current effort to form a volunteer Friends of Pine Meadow group to help maintain and steward the Town's Pine Meadow Conservation Land.

Mr. Smith was very active with the Greenway Committee, back when it was still in existence to handle many of these tasks.

Mr. Smith said he had plenty of suggestions and would be happy to help and participate with a new volunteer group.

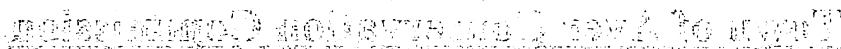
He also said he would send H. Hampson his electronic files that include the digitized version of the conservation land map (that Printing Solutions in Westford used to produce), as well as a list of standard duties that he has compiled over the years for monitoring other pieces of conservation land.

Conservation Commission Office and Member Updates

Vernal Pools

H. Hampson just completed a field session training in the certification of vernal pools.

Willow Road/Rte. 2A Intersection (MassDEP # 100-0477)



The signed and stamped A-70's were also included and noted as follows, such as the delivery installation further to the east and changed location of a building wall.

A change note from the reference for H-2018 dated the COC required its installation at a conversion stage 2 by the westward area of the front of the property and it is necessary to be identified by the Agent in the new application area.

H-1 again did not know if there had been in place and they were not referenced in the COC for phase 4. However will check on this.

C. Brown was asked to provide a COC for 100-0-102. The response contained no confirmation that the indicated changes shown signified already in place or if not is due to plan 1. (Signed C.)

Additional notes mentioned H-9 and the confirmed COC was sought.

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John Kishner, John Coghlan, Keith Braxton, Nathan Goodland, Carl Green, Robert, and the only "other" -
I don't recall a report Mr. Smith was written on the field work night 1 and 2. Autumn Rights resistance -
was for submitted to the five year update in the District Documentation - in 2012 and in 2006.
The CR was submitted in 2007. The District Documentation was completed in 2010 and the Smith Res-
istance 2011 as volunteer team and Attorney for the CR presented the Annual Report.
Autumn Rights & Documentation Documentation (CR) was not a field night 13/13/07

1. The following information was obtained from the records of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, regarding the land owned by the United States in the State of Nevada:

Mr. Smith said he had plenty of suggestions and would be happy to help and participate with a new group of these tasks.

Mr. Smith was very active with the Greenway Committee back when it was still in existence to handle steward the Town's Pine Atadsky Conservation Land.

Commissioner's assistant John's volunteer friends of Pine Atadsky group to help maintain and while Mr. Smith was still there at the 30th anniversary asked him if he had suggestions for the

that has been developed for monitoring other physical quantities in the water column. The system is designed to be deployed on a mooring and can be used to monitor a wide range of parameters including temperature, salinity, and density. The system is also capable of monitoring the water column for the presence of suspended matter, such as plankton and detritus. The system is designed to be used in a variety of environments, including coastal and open ocean waters. The system is also capable of monitoring the water column for the presence of pollutants, such as oil and chemicals. The system is designed to be used in a variety of environments, including coastal and open ocean waters. The system is also capable of monitoring the water column for the presence of pollutants, such as oil and chemicals.

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The Mass. Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) Willow Road/Rte.2A intersection improvement project, approved in February 2022, is starting to get underway.

H. Hampson has been out to the site.

To be do-able, she noted that the trees at the catchbasin outlet will have to be removed *before* the installation of the erosion controls can be undertaken.

MassDOT will have a public safety detail present when that is done, and the Tree Warden will also be notified.

West Main Street/ Department of Public Works (DPW)

H. Hampson met with DPW Director Dan Van Schalkwyk on West Main Street, where street improvements are taking place, to inspect an area where the DPW will need to reconstruct a catchbasin outlet by building up the ground below the outlet to lessen the drop-off.

She also noted that the DPW will be gearing up to move forward with plans to replace the bridge on West Main Street crossing over Nonacoicus Brook.

The DPW will need to submit new OOC for this project (previously approved in 2018 under MassDEP # 100-0424, now expired)) as the bridge and culvert design have changed substantially.

Pirone Park

H. Hampson met with Parks Director Jeff Thomas to approve the relocation of some of the erosion controls (for the Kiddie Junction playground remediation and rebuild) so that they do not obstruct the upcoming Little League season.

Earth Day, April 21st

H. Hampson will be setting up a table at the 2-6 p.m. McPherson Road event, with various flyers available to the public (including looking for volunteers for a new Friends of Pine Meadow volunteer group as well as a flyer providing tips for homeowners living by a lake).

She asked if any commissioners could cover the table from 2-3:30, until her return, and J.

Schmalenberger indicated that he would be able to.

Master Plan

The Planning Board is looking for updates of where Town departments and boards are on project goals laid out in the Master Plan.

H. Hampson will be reviewing those projects that had required Commission action.

Waterways Sign Project

H. Hampson sent the final grant report to the Nashua River Stewardship Council.

She is still waiting for one invoice from Liddell for the replacement signs, and will need to update the breakdown of costs for the Council as well, into their preferred format.

She also asked the Council about the procedure for returning unused grant money and found that it might be possible for the Commission to submit a request to use those funds in another way, if approved.

One suggestion, which she will explore, is whether the remaining funds could be used for something like new signage for the Pine Meadow Conservation Land trails.

2023 Invasive Aquatic Weed Treatments on Ayer Ponds

H. Hampson will let Joe Onorato, of Water & Wetlands (the company doing this year's treatments), know that there is a previously unnoted crescent of invasive phragmites mixed in with the native cattails at one end of Pine Meadow Pond.



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Minutes for 11/25/2023

The first part of the presentation (MassDOT) Willow Road Bridge. A letter from the project appeared in the town of Ayer, MA, stating to the town of Ayer.

11. The project has been on the site.

12. To be able, she noted that the trees in the area will have to be removed before the installation of the bridge. The trees in the area will have to be removed before the installation of the bridge. The trees in the area will have to be removed before the installation of the bridge.

13. MassDOT will have a public safety detail present when the bridge is being installed. The trees in the area will have to be removed before the installation of the bridge.

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It was also noted that the Order of Conditions for the pond treatments will need to be amended to include contingency plans for additional treatment in the event of another toxic blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) bloom.

Grove Pond Water Chestnut Pull

The grant-supported volunteer invasive water chestnut pull at the eastern end of Grove Pond, organized by Laurie Nehring and PACE (People of Ayer Concerned about the Environment) will have its first scheduled pull on May 2.

H. Hampson will plan on participating in some of the pulls, as she did last year.

Ayer Solar II (MassDEP # 100-0444)

The site is relatively stable although H. Hampson and the Environmental Monitor, on their weekly visits, have noted that it appears people using mountain bikes have run over some of the erosion controls and inadvertently created some channels.

8:22 PM – Adjourn Meeting

VOTE: G. Bacon moved to adjourn; J. Gugino 2nd.

Motion approved unanimously 3-0.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date / Signature of Approval:

4/27/2023 