

## **Town of Ayer Conservation Commission**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432 \* 978-772-8249 \* 978-772-8208 (fax)  
Minutes for **7/25/2013** – Approved 8/8/2013

Location: Ayer Town Hall, 1st Floor

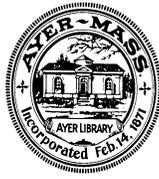
Members present: Bill Daniels (BD, Chair), George Bacon (GB, Vice-Chair), Takashi Tada (TT), Becky DaSilva-Conde (CA, Conservation Administrator), Jessica Gugino (JG, Clerk)

Not present: Lee Curtis (LC)

APAC taped: Yes

### **7:10 PM – Open Meeting**

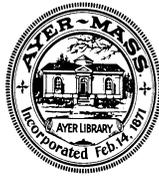
- **Confirmation of Agenda**
  - GB moved to confirm agenda as posted; TT 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Public Meeting: RDA – 27 Groton-Harvard Road, Patrick Hughes**
  - Mr. Hughes described his project to add a deck to the rear of his house.
  - The only work to be done within the buffer zone will be the hand-digging of three 8 in. diameter sonotubes, 4 ft. deep.
    - This is at a distance of approximately 98-ft. from the edge of Flannagan Pond.
  - Mr. Hughes expressed surprise that he had to appear before ConCom for such minimal work given that his next-door neighbor dug multiple fence holes only 15 ft. from the pond without appearing before ConCom.
    - It was explained to Mr. Hughes that ConCom seeks to be consistent and requires proper procedures from all residents in compliance to the Wetland Protection Act.
    - ConCom was never notified about the next-door neighbor's activities.
      - CA will make a drive-by to see if she can discern the activity in question.
  - GB moved to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability with one condition.
    - The condition is that all material from the dug sonotube holes is immediately transported from the area.
      - If this condition is met, there is no need for silt fencing or haybales.
    - Motion approved unanimously.
  - ConCom members signed the DOA form.
  - CA will email Building Inspector Gabe Vellante a copy of the form so that Mr. Hughes can secure his building permit promptly.
- **Discussion (cont'd.): RFQ, comprehensive study of Ayer ponds**
  - ConCom's planned appearance before the BOS on 7/16 was bumped by the BOS from its agenda.
  - Although grievously disappointed, ConCom agreed to re-schedule to the BOS meeting on 8/20.
  - The goal for this meeting is to:
    - 1) clarify what the BOS's expectations are with regard to weed treatment and the pond study



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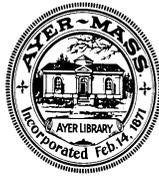
- this includes inquiry into the status of the Dam & Pond Management Committee's charter;
  - 2) review the proposals ConCom received and why it selected Geosyntec as its preferred consultant;
  - 3) discuss funding options if the BOS chooses to move forward.
- CA will make sure the BOS has copies of the Geosyntec proposal for review.
- BD asked CA to send letters to the 3 companies that submitted proposals.
  - CA will notify New England Environmental and ACT that ConCom appreciated their submissions but has chosen to work with another company in taking the next step.
  - CA will notify Geosyntec that ConCom has chosen to take its proposal to the BOS for review and will hope to have feedback for them in August.
- **Meeting Minutes Approval**
  - GB moved to accept the minutes for 6/27 as written; TT 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.
  - GB moved to accept the minutes for 7/11 as amended; TT 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.
- **CA Updates**
  - Pingry Hill
    - The construction area has experienced significant rain wash-outs, leading to an extensive wash of sand at the end of Hemlock Road at Rte. 2A.
      - BD stated that he noticed this while driving to attend this meeting.
    - Some siltation problems were also again detected at Hickory Way.
    - CA said she had called Project Manager Lori Scanlan with concerns about the siltation issues a few weeks ago, given heavy rains.
    - BD said Hemlock Road should be closed as a construction entrance and a haybale line installed at its end.
  - Beaver Management Plan
    - CA discussed the emails forwarded between DPW Superintendent Mark Wetzel and Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions, LLC.
      - The ball was now in ConCom's court.
      - ConCom requested site walks before moving forward.
    - CA will contact Mr. Callahan with some Saturday dates in September or October.
      - Once the site walks are scheduled, CA will contact residents near the Robbins Road beaver dam to invite them to accompany that portion of the ConCom walk.
        - Beaver Solutions had suggested labeling that area a "No Tolerance Zone."
          - The dam would then be removed and the beavers trapped and killed.



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- TT asked for an understanding of what the label ‘No Tolerance Zone’ actually means.
- ConCom members did not look on trapping as a long-term solution and would like to hear more from Beaver Solutions as to whether the use of leveler pipes could be tried.
- Greenway Committee Trail Brochures
  - CA handed out copies of the newly-printed brochure received from Steve Smith.
- **Member Updates**
  - JG attended the Preconstruction Meeting held on 7/23 for the Army’s Plow Shop Pond Remediation plan.
    - Presenting the plan were Robert Simeone, Army BRAC Coordinator, and Rachel Leary, Project Manager for Sovereign Consulting, the primary contractor.
      - RCD is the subcontractor that will be performing the excavation work.
    - Also present were Town Administrator Pontbriand, DPW Superintendent Wetzel, Fire Chief Pedrazzi, PACE President Corenzwit, a BOH representative, and others.
    - Ms. Leary said mobilization of equipment to the site will begin the week of 7/29.
    - The initial dewatering of Plow Shop Pond will commence the week of 8/5.
    - The goal is for restoration work to be complete by 10/15.
    - All fueling of equipment will be done at the staging areas.
      - No fuel will be stored on-site; a tanker truck will be used.
    - Ms. Leary said the dewatering process should only take 3-4 days.
      - Once dewatered, 21 acres of the 30-acre pond will remain wet, reducing the anticipated fish kill.
    - Wildlife biologist Laura Simkins will be on site during this process.
    - A weir using 1-ton supersacks of sand will be erected at the outflow point from Grove Pond.
    - A 6-9 ft. diameter concrete septic leaching pit, wrapped in fabric, will be located at Moore dam.
      - Two floating 12-in. pumps will be located within the infiltration chamber.
      - Water will be pumped from here through flexible / collapsible hose around the dam and into a similar leaching pit on the other side, in Nonacoicus Brook.
      - Silt fencing and rows of straw wattles will be used to function as a splash pad to contain any sediment that may get through and to dissipate the energy of the pumped water flow.
        - Ms. Leary said they did not anticipate sediment getting through into the brook.
    - Ms. Leary said the maximum pump rate would be 5000 gallons per minute.
    - Ms. Leary said that a baseline measurement of the conditions at Nonacoicus Brook will be taken during the week of 7/29.



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- Turbidity, temperature, arsenic, and dissolved oxygen will be measured.
- Ms. Leary said that surface monitoring would be done throughout the process.
- Three monitoring spots downstream, at 100-ft. intervals, will be used.
- JG asked what Sovereign's plans were if Nonacoicus Brook was contaminated.
  - Ms. Leary said they would 'fix the problem and clean up sediments'.
- Ms. Leary said that in the Roundhouse area, an excavator will be located on shore and will reach out approximately 64 ft. to pull contaminated sediments into shore for removal.
- At the Red Cove area, Ms. Leary said it will be necessary to construct temporary access roads into the pond, after dewatering, for the movement of heavy equipment.
- JG asked about the 2012 and 2013 wetland delineations which ConCom was told in mid-June they'd be receiving within a few weeks.
  - Ms. Leary said she thought this had been done by Mike Renco at the Army CORPS.
  - JG said, to her knowledge, that these had not been received.
    - Mr. Leary said she would look into this.
  - CA confirmed during JG's report that this promised data package had not, in fact, been sent to ConCom.
- JG asked about CA or other ConCom members being allowed to observe the dewatering process and its impact.
  - Ms. Leary said this would have to be coordinated with her or the wildlife biologist.
    - Visitors to the site must have a hardhat, protective glasses, and a visitor pass.
  - JG said that BRAC Coordinator Simeone indicated he would be scheduling a site tour in mid to late August.
  - In addition, DPW Superintendent Wetzel asked to do a site visit when the project was ready to start.
    - JG asked Mr. Wetzel to notify CA and ConCom in case it is possible for someone to accompany him.
- ConCom discussion followed.
  - BD expressed severe dismay that things were proceeding with neither the Army nor Sovereign Consulting having appeared before ConCom.
  - BD asked CA to talk to Joe Bellino at Mass DEP about this.
- **8:48 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
  - GB moved to adjourn; TT 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.