

Town of Ayer Conservation Commission

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432 * 978-772-8249 * 978-772-8208 (fax)
Minutes for **3/12/2015** – Approved 3/26/2015

- Location: Ayer Town Hall, 1st Floor
- Members present: George Bacon (GB, Acting Chair), Takashi Tada (TT), Jessica Gugino (JG, Clerk)
- Not present: Bill Daniels (BD, Chair), Lee Curtis (LC), Vacancy: CA, Conservation Administrator

- APAC taped: Yes

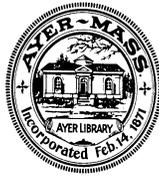
- **7:08 PM – Open Meeting**

- **Confirmation of Agenda**
 - Review of wetland regulation revisions was dropped from the agenda.
 - TT moved to confirm the agenda as amended; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

- **Meeting Minutes Approval**
 - TT moved to accept the minutes for 2/26/2015 as written; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

- **Announcements**
 - Boston Gas Company (d.b.a. National Grid) submitted written notification of their intent to perform public utility maintenance activities on Shirley Street, in Ayer, during spring 2015.
 - The proposed gas main relay project will improve reliability for local natural gas customers.
 - Approximately 715 ft. of existing steel gas line will be replaced with plastic gas line.
 - Although a portion of the project is within 100 ft. of wetland and within 200 ft. of Nonacoicus Brook, no impact to wetland resource areas is anticipated.
 - Best Management Practices (BMPS) will be implemented during the project (e.g haybales, catchbasin protection).
 - Pre-existing conditions (grades, vegetation, pavement) will be restored at the completion of the project.

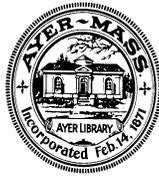
- **Public Hearing (cont'd.) : Notice of Intent – 141 Snake Hill Road, Christopher Valentine (MassDEP # 100-0381)**
 - Matt Waterman, Senior Project Engineer from Landtech Consultants, and Christopher Valentine were present.
 - Proof of notification of abutters was handed over to JG.
 - Mr. Valentine provided a check for \$62.65 as reimbursement for cost of running the first legal ad.
 - Mr. Waterman will mail a check for the same amount to reimburse the cost of the second legal ad.
 - The project proposes the construction of an addition to the existing single-family house on a .43 acre lot.
 - In addition, an existing septic system will be decommissioned and a connection will be made to the Town sewer system from the front left corner of the house to the street.
 - The work will all be within the 100-ft. buffer zone to wetlands.
 - Silt fencing and straw wattles will be used for erosion controls.



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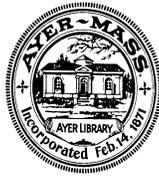
- The existing paved driveway to Snake Hill Road will remain for access to the site but will be reduced in size and impervious surface by the end of the project.
- In addition, a temporary construction entrance, using trap rock, will be employed on the left (north) side of the house to enable heavy equipment to reach the backyard for excavation and backfilling.
 - Other vegetation along this area of an old cart path will be pruned back.
- Two large maples close to the house, one 28 in. and the other 20 in. in diameter, will be taken down.
- An existing deck on the back of the house will be temporarily detached and moved, then reattached to the addition.
- The septic tank in the backyard will be crushed and filled in place.
- A DPW permit will be needed for the pavement cut and connection to the Town sewer.
 - The slope in the front of the house where approximately 30 ft. of sewer line will be placed is very gentle, changing from 235 ft. by the house to 232 ft. by the driveway.
 - Runoff will be sloped by traprock and captured by the erosion controls.
- Mr. Waterman said the plan needs to be updated to show the tree removal, but would prefer to wait until after ConCom does its site visit so that other potential changes can be made at the same time.
- GB said ConCom will have to wait for most of the snow to melt before it can schedule a viable site visit.
 - The corners of the building addition as well as the path of the projected sewer line will need to be marked.
- One detail yet to be worked out is the timing and means of coordinating the switch from the septic system to the sewer system.
- TT moved to continue the Public Hearing to 3/26 for the purpose of scheduling a site visit if possible; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Discussion: Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee (OSRP)**
 - Beth Suedmeyer, Co-Chair of the OSRP, presented a status update.
 - OSRP contracted with the Conway School of Landscape Design for students to compile the bulk of a draft OSRP.
 - An accessibility survey will need to be completed by the OSRP after the Conway students have finished their portion of the work.
 - The previous 5-year OSRP expired in 2009.
 - The Mass Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) now allows OSRPs to cover a 7-year period before needing to be updated.
 - An updated OSRP will make Ayer eligible to apply for various State funding grants.
 - The current update committee has convened 2 Public Meetings in the last 2 months and used an online questionnaire to solicit public input.
 - Four broad priorities have been identified thus far:
 - protection of water and drinking water resources;
 - protection of natural resources and habitats;
 - commitment to enhancing Ayer's walkability and connectivity of resources;
 - enhancement of recreation opportunities.



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- Ms. Suedmeyer said the OSRP will hold another Public Meeting for the purpose of reviewing and commenting on a final draft OSRP.
- A power point presentation illustrated some of the mapping data for Ayer being gathered for the plan update:
 - broad scale water connections in the region;
 - wetlands and ponds in Ayer;
 - aquifers, wells, and pump zones;
 - areas where drinking water is under permanent protection, and areas where it is not;
 - FEMA national flood hazard zones;
 - natural resources and wildlife habitat;
 - BioMAP2 – Core wildlife habitat and ACECs;
 - natural communities and unique features;
 - farmland;
 - prime forest and farmland, and which areas are permanently protected;
 - NLCD land cover;
 - environmental justice populations in Ayer and their access to Open Space resources;
 - current land: classification, protection status; Town-owned, vacant.
- Ms. Suedmeyer said the draft report will circulate to committees of interest for comment.
 - JG suggested the OSRP Chair meet directly with ConCom again to review OSRP goals and priorities that would potentially apply to ConCom before finalizing the plan.
 - Ms. Suedmeyer said one thing the plan will have to take into consideration is Town staffing resources when it comes to implementation of plan goals.
- **Accounts Payable**
 - Lowell Sun: \$62.65, legal ad for 141 Snake Hill Road NOI.
 - TT moved to approve payment of \$62.65; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
 - Geosyntec: \$11,781, for Ayer Pond Assessment Study.
 - Draft material provided by Geosyntec was reviewed and found satisfactory.
 - TT moved to approve payment of \$11,781; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Office Updates**
 - Nashua Street Extension Appeal of MassDEP Superceding Order of Conditions
 - A Settlement Agreement was reached on 3/11 between MassDEP and the appellants (Goldsmith, Prest & Ringwall, Calvin Moore).
 - The Settlement Agreement will need to be signed by ConCom.
 - JG will place this on the 3/26 agenda.
 - Planning Board request for comments
 - For the Catagna-Spagna application to the PB, JG will repeat ConCom's comment to the ZBA request for comments for the same company's project:
 - Catagna-Spagna will need to file before ConCom because of its proximity to a pond/wetlands as denoted on the submitted plan.
 - ZBA request for comments
 - EPIC Enterprises has submitted an application for a sign variance to overrule the 10-ft. setback from lot line requirement.
 - ConCom has no issues with this application and will reply as such.



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- CA job posting
 - The internal posting period is now complete and IT's Cindy Knox has created a link to the long version of the CA job posting on the Town's website.
 - JG will forward the short version of the job description, including the link, to MACC (Mass. Association of Conservation Commissions) and MSMCP (Mass. Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals).
 - JG will also forward the posting to the Nashua River Watershed Association and surrounding local ConComs (Harvard, Westford, Littleton, Shirley, Groton).
 - TT, GB, and JG reviewed the memo received from Town Administrator Robert Pontbriand detailing the costs of posting the ad to the MMA (Massachusetts Municipal Association).
 - TT said the cost seemed rather steep and did not think ConCom would benefit greatly from this resource.
 - JG will run by BD.
- Renovation/upgrades of old Hannaford grocery store location
 - A meeting between members of Town departments/boards and Steve Mullaney, of S.J. Mullaney Engineering, is to be held on Thursday, March 26 at 11 a.m.
 - The purpose of the meeting is to review plans for upgrading the site in preparation for a new Shop n Save grocery store.
 - JG will likely be able to attend this meeting.
- **Committee Updates**
 - The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has approved forwarding an article to come before Spring Town Meeting, asking for "up to \$20,000" to fund restoration of historical Fire Station photographs.
- **Citizen Concerns**
 - None were expressed.
- **8:40 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - TT moved to adjourn; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.