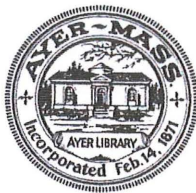


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TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK



Town of Ayer Conservation Commission

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432 * 978-772-8249

Minutes for 2/10/2022

Location: Remote Meeting via Zoom, accessible to public, due to ongoing COVID 19 Pandemic

Present: Jon Schmalenberger (JS, Chair), Mark Phillips (MP, Vice-Chair), George Bacon (GB, Member), Jennifer Amaya (JA, Member), Jessica Gugino (JG, Interim Office Administrator; Member/Clerk)

APAC Recorded: Yes

7:00 PM – Open Meeting

- **Confirmation of Agenda**
 - A Discussion of a new New England Power Company construction project was added to the agenda, see below for details, and the order of a few items was changed.
 - GB moved to confirm the agenda as amended; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - GB moved to accept the minutes for 1/27/2022 as corrected; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **Public Hearing (cont'd.): Notice of Intent (NOI) – Willow Road and Route 2A, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) – Highway Division, Danielle Spicer, MassDEP # 100-0477**
 - Assessor's Map 30
 - Tom Bigelow, Project Manager from Green International Affiliates, Inc., was present via Zoom on behalf of MassDOT.
 - GB moved to approve and issue the Order of Conditions (OOC) for 100-0477; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
 - GB moved to close the Public Hearing for 100-0477; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
 - OOC to be signed in person at Saturday, 2/12, site walk (see below).
- **Public Meeting: Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) – 66 Nashua Street, Danielle and Keith Scheffer**
- **Assessor's Map 13, Parcel 38**
 - Danielle Scheffer was present via Zoom.
 - The Scheffers would like regrade next to the back of their house in order to build a flat patio and walkway area in their narrow and sloped backyard.
 - The work area would extend to approximately the 25 ft. buffer zone line to wetlands.
 - A retention basin also abuts the wetlands.
 - The patio would be constructed in two tiers, supported by two retaining walls, and would be designed to drain to the retention basin.
 - A site walk was scheduled for 8:45 a.m. on Saturday, 2/12.

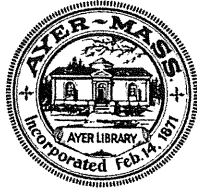


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- **Discussion: Notice of Intent (NOI) – K137/L138 Mainline OPGW Installation Project Construction Phase, New England Power Company, MassDEP # 100- tbd**
 - JG advertised the opening of a Public Hearing for this project for tonight's meeting but forgot to place this item on the posted agenda.
 - ConCom can hold a brief discussion with the applicant for the purpose of scheduling a site walk.
 - The Public Hearing itself cannot be officially opened now until ConCom's 2/24/2022 meeting.
 - JG will re-advertise this Hearing in next week's *Nashoba Valley Voice*.
 - Alison Milliman, of BSC Group, was present via Zoom to discuss scheduling a site visit prior to the official opening of the Public Hearing.
 - Over a year ago, ConCom issued an OOC for a soil borings project on this utility line Right-of-Way (ROW) to test the substrate.
 - This NOI will move beyond that study into a construction phase to replace many of the line support structures as well as install an overhead optical groundwire (OPGW).
 - This project overall crosses through many towns, not just Ayer.
 - Ms. Milliman suggested ConCom schedule a site walk for two particular areas along the Ayer portion of the ROW where there will be permanent impacts, including an area requiring wetland replication.
 - A site walk was scheduled for 9:15 a.m. on Saturday, 2/12, meeting at the Bishop Road substation.
- **Discussion: Review Draft Request for Quotes (RFQ), 2022 Ayer Pond Aquatic Weed Management**
 - After talking with Joe Onorato, of Water & Wetlands, whose company did the 2021 treatment, JG made a number of edits to the RFQ document.
 - Curly-leaf pondweed, a non-native species that has appeared in recent years, has been added as a targeted species in the RFQ.
 - Scheduling the initial treatment for fanwort should now optimally be in May, based on the post-treatment survey and mapping from the previous year.
 - This will be prior to the 2022 pre-treatment survey based on visual observation of new growth and standard throw-rake in early June.
 - The initial treatment for fanwort is more effective when treated prior to new growth becoming visible at the surface in the spring.
 - Subsequent booster treatments for fanwort as well as initial and booster treatments for milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed will then be based on the pre-treatment survey from early June.
 - GB moved to approve and issue the RFQ as reviewed; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
 - JG will issue the RFQ, which has a 3/8 deadline for submissions, on the following day.



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- **Discussion: Request for Extension of OOC – Pond Weed Management, Town of Ayer, MassDEP # 100-0293**
 - The OOC for aquatic weed treatments in the ponds needs to be extended.
 - The previous vote to extend this OOC for 3 years was taken on 1/10/2019, but due to the 462-day permit extension granted by the Commonwealth because of the pandemic State of Emergency declared during 2020-2021, it has not yet expired.
 - GB moved to approve a 3-year Extension of OOC #100-0293; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote.
 - JG will mail the current Extension to the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds as soon as a check is prepared by Accounting to pay for the \$105.00 recording fee.
 - Extension to be signed in person at Saturday, 2/12, site walk.
- **Conservation Commission Office and Member Updates**
 - Waterways Signs Project
 - On Saturday, 2/12, following the site walks for the Scheffers and New England Power Company, ConCom members will review and photographically document all of the possible sign locations for this project.
 - Flannagan Pond Public Access for canoes and kayaks
 - The Department of Public Works (DPW) has submitted an application for CPA funding to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to conduct a feasibility study for Flannagan Pond access.
 - The study will look at a number of possible access points, examine the pros and cons of each, and then produce a final location recommendation and potential design.
 - The goal is to provide dock access for public use that is also ADA-compliant and has parking available.
 - CPC's Public Hearing for this application will take place on Wednesday, March 30.
 - JG will provide copies of the DPW's application to ConCom members for the next meeting on 2/24.
 - Since the second stage of the project, actual construction, will have to be reviewed and permitted by ConCom, all agreed it was best that this application, while supported by ConCom, remains in the name of the DPW rather than being a joint project.
 - Community Preservation Plan Update – Upcoming Focus Group meetings
 - CPC has hired a consultant firm, J.M.Goldson, to update its CPP.
 - Focus group Zoom meetings will be held separately for each of the four CPA categories:
 - Thursday, March 3:
 - Open Space (5:30-6:45 p.m.)
 - Recreation (7:15-8:30 p.m.)



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- Monday, March 7:
 - Housing (5:30-6:45 p.m.)
 - Historical Preservation (7:15 – 8:30 p.m.)
- ConCom members will be receiving invitations to participate in these Focus Groups.
- Girl Scout Troop Tree-planting project
 - ConCom received an email request for advice from a local girl scout asking about where to get tree seedlings, and where to plant a tree, for a troop project.
 - JG got information from the DPW, which recently had a Tree Survey done, and will check this out further before running some suggestions by the rest of ConCom.
- Open Space Residential Subdivision (OSRD) Guidelines document
 - JS said he and JG had met earlier in the day, via Zoom, with Town Planner Mark Archambault, Planning Board members Ken Diskin and Jonathan Kranz, and DPW Director Dan Van Schalkwyk, to continue working on finalizing the OSRD guidance document.
 - Further meetings are planned, and ConCom as a whole will get to see the full draft when ready for wider review.
- Conservation Administrator Job Vacancy
 - The job listing has now been posted publicly, including to the MACC (Mass. Association of Conservation Commissions) and MSMCP (Mass. Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals) websites.
 - Per MP's question, JG will check with the Town Manager's office to see if any applications have yet been received.
- **8:00 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - GB moved to adjourn; MP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date / Signature of Approval:

2/24/2022 