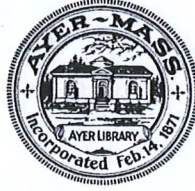


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AUG 16 2022



TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK



Town of Ayer Conservation Commission

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

Minutes for 7/14/2022

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

Present: Jon Schmalenberger (Chair), Mark Phillips (Vice-Chair), George Bacon (Member), Jennifer Amaya (Member), Jessica Gugino (Clerk), Heather Hampson (Conservation Agent)

APAC Recorded: Yes

7:01 PM – Open Meeting

- **Confirmation of Agenda**
 - G. Bacon moved to confirm the agenda as posted; M. Phillips 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - G. Bacon moved to accept the minutes for 6/23/2022 as written; M. Phillips 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **Public Input**
 - None received.
- **Discussion: Request for Proposals (RFP), Stratton Hill Conservation Analysis Peer Review**
 - One proposal, from BSC Group, was received by the submission deadline.
 - Their price proposal was for \$10,250, this to be paid by the applicant for the project.
 - J. Gugino said that, after observing the Planning Board meeting on 7/12, it appears that a 'scoping meeting' can take place with the reviewer to adjust the scope of the RFP if needed.
 - One thing that was raised at the Planning Board meeting in response to resident concerns about potential blasting, was the possibility of the use of 'chemical blasting' rather than explosive.
 - Given the ecological importance of the Stratton Hill site, the impact of blasting in the RFP scope should be expanded to include consideration of the use of chemicals and their impact.
 - In anticipation of increased public participation for the next meeting with the third-party reviewer, the Commission discussed reasonable parameters.
 - Public input and participation will be welcome, but will likely be limited to up to 5 minutes per person.
 - Any particular graphics that might want to be presented should be run by H. Hampson in advance.
 - J. Schmalenberger will provide some opening remarks to clarify to the public the limitations of the Commission's role with regard to Stratton Hill.



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- The one exception will be the sign for Nonacoicus Brook which is expected to be mounted to an existing guardrail with the assistance of the DPW.
- Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **Conservation Commission Office and Member Updates**
 - Pingry Hill Subdivision
 - H. Hampson did a site walk with Erosion Control Specialist Dr. Desheng Wang to review sites with open OOCs and identify things that still need to be done or need to be fixed.
 - Grove Pond Water Chestnut Pull
 - H. Hampson (and J. Schmalenberger) were able to participate in the invasive water chestnut pull organized by Laurie Nehring (PACE) and previously permitted by ConCom under an RDA.
 - Ayer Solar II
 - H. Hampson accompanied the Environmental Monitor for Ayer Solar II, Rhianna Sommers, on a recent inspection visit.
 - She has also sent Rohit Garg additional comments about issues that need to be addressed, including erosion control/silt fence maintenance, the proposed replication area, the box culvert crossing, and the need for matting on some slopes.
 - Pirone Park/Kiddie Junction Removal-Remediation-Replacement Project
 - This project will be coming before ConCom in August with all of the work proposed under a single Notice of Intent application.
 - Beta Group will have its design for the project ready in August.
 - 'Ayer Commons' Chapter 40B Project, Fitchburg Road
 - This project starts the process of securing a 'comprehensive permit' through the Zoning Board of Appeals on Wednesday, 7/20.
 - H. Hampson provided review comments for ConCom.
 - This project will also have to separately come before ConCom down the road as, given the Wetlands Protection Act is State Law, this portion cannot be handled under the comprehensive permit process.
 - Shaker Mill Pond OSRD Subdivision
 - H. Hampson will be meeting with representatives of the developer, Dan Aho, on site tomorrow (7/15) to review the area where a walking trail is supposed to go in along the shore of the pond.
 - Because this is in the 'No Disturb' inner 50 ft. of Buffer Zone, ConCom members were in agreement that the intention for this trail was for it to be a simple walking path with minimal impact to the environment (i.e. no paving, no trees cut down).



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- 133 Oak Ridge Drive
 - The resident for this property initially contacted H. Hampson about replacing an existing deck using diamond piers that are simply driven into the ground.
 - However now the resident has proposed expanding the deck 8 ft. closer to Flannagan Pond.
 - H. Hampson has recommended the resident submit an RDA, which the Commission agreed with.
- 89 Littleton Road
 - The resident for this property wants to draw water from Shaker Mill Pond to irrigate his lawn, similar to the resident at 87 Littleton Road who received permission (through an RDA) from the Commission to do this in 2021.
 - G. Bacon noted that the previous permit specified water could not be drawn during a drought outside of the guidelines for irrigation watering applied to the Town as a whole.
 - J. Schmalenberger asked that the resident be invited to chat with ConCom about this at the next meeting.
- Flannagan Pond Feasibility Study
 - H. Hampson will be meeting tomorrow (7/15) with Dan Van Schalkwyk, Director of the DPW, and the outside consultant (Tighe & Bond) about the study
- M. Phillips
 - M. Phillips had a conversation with a neighbor on Mountain Laurel, whose property abuts Conservation Restriction (CR) land.
 - The issue of whether invasive vegetation can be managed or not was raised.
 - This should be considered in the development of future CRs, including those done in conjunction with the Planning Board's OSRD process.
 - The control of invasives should be allowable, especially around stormwater basins.
- Mr. Tillotson added that the Planning Board now requires O&M plans (Operations and Maintenance), including for basins.
 - He suggested ConCom include specifications about these issues in their Conservation Recommendations to the Board for OSRD projects.
- **8:37 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - G. Bacon moved to adjourn; M. Phillips 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date / Signature of Approval:

7/28/2022 