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Conservation Commission Minutes, March 23, 2006

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
 MINUTES

MARCH 23, 2006

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Timothy Sullivan, David White, Catherine Garnett, and Judith Hodges of the Commission. William O'Rourke and Ellen Reed, of the Commission, were not in attendance. Mark Roussel and Ted Doucette were in attendance for the project at 1013 Massachusetts Ave. Gerry Smith and Dr. Peter Braun were present for the discussion of aquatic weed control on the Upper Mystic Lake. Elsie Fiore attended briefly regarding the Alewife Reservation Path project. Chuck Teroni, who attended the Land Stewards meeting, was also in attendance.

7:30 p.m. - COMMISSION BUSINESS

Elsie Fiore asked if the Commission had received her email on the Alewife Reservation Path project, regarding the inappropriate filing process and how Arlington was skipped over. She said she has signatures of 10 citizens on her comment letter. The Commission replied it had received it, but after the close of the public hearing, so could and did not consider it in its decision to issue a permit.

Sullivan/Hodges motioned to approve the 3/9/06 minutes with minor edits; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Beckwith reported on a letter/email received from 248 Pleasant St. regarding garbage on the shore of Spy Pond. The letter explained that the current owners did not see the litter until recently as they bought the property in the winter. They intended to clean up the mess as soon as the ice melts on the steep embankment. The Commission directed Ms. Beckwith to draft a followup letter setting a deadline for this clean up by June 1, 2006.

Mr. White reported on the Annual Land Stewards meeting and presentation given by Rich Roger Wrubel of Belmont's Habitat. He spoke longer than expected but it was well received. He has lots of useful information on invasive plant removal that stewards are eager to learn.

Mr. White is currently working to obtain sign posts for the Conservation Land signs.

8pm – REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY at 1013 MASSACHUSETTS AVE for a sewer connection

Mr. Doucette presented the proposed work to connect the existing house to the town sewer system. The house has connected to a cess cess pit up to this time. The rear lot of the house consists of a paved parking area. Erosion controls will be placed at the limits of the lot line. While the lot is within the Riverfront Area, the work area is just beyond the 100 foot Buffer Zone to Mill Brook.

White/Garnett motioned to determine that although the work as proposed is within a resource area protected by the Act and Bylaw, the work will not negatively impact the resource area and therefore the applicant is not required to file a Notice of Intent; motion passed unanimously.

9pm – UPPER MYSTIC LAKE, AQUATIC WEED MANAGEMENT, working session

Dr. Braun described the past work to control aquatic weeds in the Upper Mystic Lake. Mr. Braun has lived on the shore of Mystic Lake for 36 years. MDC used to do aquatic weed control. Currently the seven waterfront homes have taken on this work to clear vegetation within 100 feet of the shoreline, approximately 2.5 acres. There was a drowning at one point, someone tangled in weeds while swimming.

In the early 1990s, a plastic mesh barrier, called aqua screen, laid in strips, which only worked for a few years before sedimentation covered the barrier and new plants were able to root again. They tried to lift the barrier back up off the bottom but was too unwieldy/unwieldy, heavy.

In 1997 they started with chemical treatments for Richardson pondweed (Potomageton), Elodea and some lilies. They tried to skip one year, but everything grew back with much more vigor the following year. Last year, they only achieved poor control, possibly due to a late application of chemicals.

There is a treatment area in the upper bays as well, in Winchester, across from the wetland/wildlife protection areas. This work is paid for by DCR, in close cooperation with Paul DiPietro (usually present for treatments). Their contract runs through this year.

Mr. Dr. Smith recommended switching to granular Aquathol K in order to get the herbicide down to the root zone of the weeds. He also spoke of an aquatic weed survey that DCR might have money for that would involve the whole lake. This would be very helpful in the overall program evaluation. The Commission would be more than willing to encourage a study of this type. The last time this was surveyed was in the 80s.

Mr. White provided the 2005 year-end report by Mr. Smith on the weed control program's progress. This report has been emailed to the Commission.

Mr. Stevens discussed the permitting requirements on any future weed treatments. A new Notice of Intent must have to be filed with the Commission.

COMMISSION BUSINESS (cont.)

Mr. White reported that there is a gap in haybales at 87 Mystic St and tree cutting was reported but there could have been a rotten limb. The Commission directed Ms. Beckwith to obtain followup information.

Ms. Beckwith read a response letter from 248 Pleasant St explaining that debris on the shoreline of Spy Pond had been left by the previous owner of the waterfront property. The sale took place during the winter and the current owner has not been able to access the location due to the steep embankment covered with snow and ice. The Commission directed Ms. Beckwith to follow up and set a deadline for cleaning up the debris for June 1.

The Commission discussed new Wildlife Habitat Protection Guidelines issued by DEP. Mr. Sullivan is copying the manual. There are 2 versions of an appendix, applications, long and short, which has to accompany a Notice of Intent in some instances..

Ms. Beckwith reported that the Warrant Article for maintenance of aquatic weeds of town waterbodies is currently being reviewed by the Finance Committee. The Planning Department has asked if the monies left over from doing this work at Arlington Reservoir, roughly \$20K, could be used to initiate the town-wide measure. White/Sullivan motioned to approve the transfer of the leftover capital funds from the Arlington Reservoir to a town wide account for the same purpose; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Garnett reported on the progress of the Reservoir Planting plan and that she still needs our permit conditions. She should have a rough draft for public comment at the end of April. She also discussed the possibility of a mural project with DPW.

The Commission voted to convene at approximately 10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Corinna Beckwith
Administrator