

Arlington Conservation Commission
Minutes
June 1, 2017

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 Chair Nathaniel Stevens, Commission Members David White, Mike Nonni, Susan Chapnick and Janine White. Also present were Interim Administrator Eileen Coleman. Members Curt Connors and Charles Tirone and Associate Member Catherine Garnett were not present. Also present were Nick Asermelly and Bruce Whelittle.

Prior to Commission Business, Interim Administrator Eileen Coleman asked for clarification of the jurisdiction for Mr. Nick Asermelly of 1127 Mass. Ave. Earlier that day his contractor had been stopped from working with an excavator by the Building Department following a call from a neighbor. Ms. Asermelly had commenced grading the land behind his property with the intention of building a retaining wall of segmented block partially enclosing a parking structure composed of permeable material. An underground culvert runs between his property and that of 50 Lowell St. It was unclear to Ms. Coleman whether the culvert was within the jurisdiction of the Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC). After some discussion, it was determined that the proposed project is outside the jurisdiction of the ACC. Ms. Coleman will notify Mr. Asermelly by email to confirm that he is not required to apply for a permit for this project. She will copy the Arlington Inspections Department on that email.

7:30pm – Commission Business:

DWhite/Chapnick motioned to approve the May 18, 2017, minutes with edits; motion passed unanimously.

JWhite/Nonni motioned to approve the Feb 2, 2017, Executive Session minutes with edits; motion passed unanimously.

Arlington Wetland Regulations

Mr. Stevens explained that, in light of issues that have cropped up in some recent projects, some language should change in the Regulations.

Tree Replacement

Ms. Chapnick suggested that the tree replacement policy should be changed, for example, changing the requirements for small caliper trees and defining the replacement policy for large trees more clearly.

Ms. White thought replacement of trees one to one is more important than inch to inch.

Ms. Chapnick felt habitat value is more important than number of trees.

Mr. Stevens said he had assumed that proponents would plant smaller trees with a view that they would grow in inches.

Ms. Chapnick said that based on the way the regulations are written, the Dawn Redwood at Magnolia Park should not have been removed. She suggested Town Counsel Doug Heim's interpretation be reviewed.

Mr. Stevens explained the regulation had evolved that way because so many people had enquired about removing trees close to waterbodies.

Ms. Chapnick emphasizes the need to include the words "at the discretion of the ACC."

Mr. Stevens confirmed that language is now in the Plan Submittal Requirements.

AURA

Mr. Stevens would also like the Regulations to be clearer with respect to the Adjacent Upland Resource Area (AURA), clarifying zones and the need for alternatives analysis to be conducted before applying. He mentioned two recent projects in which the proponents had defined the

zones rather than the ACC.

Ms. Chapnick wondered if the ACC should define the AURA and then define the zones for each project.

Stormwater

Ms. White confirmed that nothing has come up so far that indicates changes are required with respect to stormwater. The regulations could perhaps mention “most recent” TP20 “methodology” or “Cornell Methodology” and “data sets.”

Climate change

Ms. White pointed out that the City of Cambridge has developed maps showing areas that will be underwater in the future, including, for example, the location of Lanes and Games on Route 2. She wondered if ACC should have a provision for additional flood storage to alleviate flooding associated with climate change.

Ms. Coleman is to contact Cambridge Conservation Commission to ask what they are requiring of applicants with respect to climate change, sea level rises etc.

She will also investigate what groups, if any, in the Arlington Planning Department focus on climate change.

88 Coolidge Road (DEP #91-0278)

Ms. Coleman described the test pit procedure carried out that morning (June 1). She had also distributed a note indicating that the granite ledge was reached at 30” in Test Hole D on the map marked up by Nobis Engineering, 40” in Test Hole C, 56” in Test Hole A and 63’ in Test Hole B. The proponent had a hydrogeologist on site, Matt Hodges, who will provide a letter report based on his observations.

Bruce Whelittle expressed some concern about compression of the soil by the Bobcat, which also got quite close to the oak and cedar tree.

Ms. Coleman also noted that Mr. Nyberg had again mentioned how difficult it is proving to find a tree company to remove the dead tree for which he received a Tree Removal Certificate. He seems unwilling to request access through his neighbor’s property but may consider it.

Nobis Engineering has also submitted a partial invoice. The original proposal was for approximately \$5k for work done over a relatively short period. Given the delays, Mr. Vernon of Nobis Engineering asked if he could submit an interim invoice. Purchasing Manager Dominic Lanzillotti agreed. Mr. Vernon submitted an invoice for \$3505.96 on May 24, 2017.

DWhite/JWhite motioned to approve the invoice. Motion carried unanimously.

Zoning Recodification

Mr. Stevens informed those present that the notes compiled by the ACC had, unfortunately, not been submitted to the Zoning Recodification Group but Assistant Planning Director Laura Wiener will do so. Mr. Connors attended the May meeting at which the Town manager asked if the Town could be exempt from zoning requirements. He got push-back against that idea.

Waterbodies

Ms. Chapnick has received a proposal from Mr. Cura with updated verbiage. She does not know if Teresa DiBenedictis has communicated with Mr. Cura. Ms. Chapnick will ask Mr. Cura if he is and Ms. DeBenedictis are in agreement and will contact Ms. Coleman if they are not.

Ms. Coleman mentioned the huge potholes in the parking lot of the Reservoir. She will ask the DPW and/or Park and Recreation if there is a plan to fill them in before Reservoir opens to the public.

Ms. Coleman also mentioned that the Tree Removal Certificate issued to the DPW for removal

of 3 trees adjacent to Hills Pond has expired. She is in communication with Jon Marshall about the issue.

Conservation Administrator Job Description

Mr. Stevens had distributed a draft job description the previous day. The Commission members present discussed requirements for the position. Suggestions included field experience, meticulous record keeping, creating detailed minutes, knowledge of State regulations, wetlands/hydric soil/stormwater engineering experience helpful.

Mr. Stevens will ask Mr. Connors, Mr. Tirone and Ms. Garnett for additional input and will endeavor to get comments to Planning Director Jenny Raitt on Monday, June 5.

Miscellaneous

Ms. Coleman will build a calendar of reports required of previously permitted projects so as to track them.

The Conservation Commission Newsletter, which is usually published in Spring, will be produced in Fall this year.

Meadowbrook Park cleanup usually organized by former Conservation Administrator Cori Beckwith did not happen this Spring. The park is so overgrown it would be difficult to access.

Ms. Chapnick wondered how this can be prioritized in the future.

MyWRA cleanup of Mill Brook was expected to begin this summer. Ms. Coleman to contact Patrick Herron, Director of MyWRA, for updates on the project.

Homewood Suites received a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy on May 25. Planting had not begun by May 30.

Open Commission Member position: Ms. Coleman to contact Gene Benson, MACC, to ask if he knows of interested candidates.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Coleman,

Temporary Conservation Administrator