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Conservation Commission Minutes 01/17/17

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Stow Conservation Commission Minutes January 17, 2017

A meeting of the Stow Conservation Commission was held at the Stow Town Building, 380 Great Road, Stow, Massachusetts, on January 17, 2017 at 7:30 in the evening.

There were present: Andy Snow, Chair
Serena Furman, Vice-Chair
Cortni Frecha
Jeff Saunders
Ingeborg Hegemann Clark

Absent: Doug Morse
Sandra Grund

comprising a quorum of the Commission

Also present: Kathy Sferra, Conservation Coordinator
Jacquelyn Goring, Conservation Assistant

The Conservation Commission meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Minutes: Cortni Frecha made a motion to approve the minutes of December 20, 2016 as amended. Serena Furman seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Coordinator's Report

- **New Applications:** Two applications are expected for the next meeting including a proposed electric line and expansion of an electrical building on the Melone & Sons property on White Pond. Serena volunteered to conduct a site visit. Additionally, a Request for Determination will be submitted by Stow Conservation Trust for trail work at Shepherd Memorial Woodlands and Andy volunteered to take the lead.
- **Stow Acres Site Visit** – Sferra informed the Commission that she has contacted Stow Acres to set up a site visit and has not been able to reach them yet.
- **Update on Community Preservation Act Proposals** – Sferra noted that she and Bob Wilber from SCT met with the Community Preservation Committee last week to present the proposals for Small Farm and Carver Hill. Sferra added that there are a lot of project proposals before them this year. Sferra will be presenting the Town Center Park proposal with Laura Greenough next week and welcomed Commission members to attend.
- **Town Forest Tree Work** – The tree work on the historic oak in Town Forest has been completed.
- **Town Forest Illegal Motorized Vehicle Use** – Sferra informed the Commission that snowmobile and ATV tracks were found in Town Forest last week. The ATV remained on the colored marked trails and the snow mobile went all around Town Forest including off the marked trails. Detective Sergeant Michael Sallase is assisted staff in locating and talking with the owner of the ATV. The Stow Police Department also posted on their Facebook page that motorized vehicles are not permitted on Conservation land in Stow.

Request for Extension of Order of Conditions – Bentley Building Corp. – Hemenway Farm – Sferra informed the Commission that Mark White of Bentley Building Corp. has requested a 3 year extension because construction on the project has stopped while remediation approaches are being evaluated. Cortni Frecha made a motion to grant a 3 year extension of the Order of Conditions for Hemenway Farm. Serena Furman seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Approve Invoice – Polatin Ecological – Invasive Species Management – The Commission reviewed invoice #129-2016 from Polatin Ecological. Sferra noted that there was a significant cost savings on this task due to the Highway Department assisting with field edge mowing which reduced the time and materials for Polatin Ecological from the estimate of \$7,000 to an actual cost of \$1,975.60. Ingeborg Hegemann Clark made a motion to approve the invoice for \$1,975.60. Cortni Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

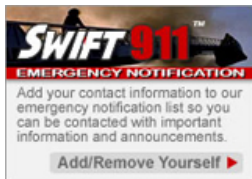
Review/Approve 2016 Annual Report – The Commission reviewed the 2016 Annual report and had no additions or corrections. Cortni Frecha made a motion to approve the 2016 Annual Report as written. Jeff Saunders seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) Request to Sign on to Statewide Letter regarding Pipelines - Ingeborg Hegemann Clark recused herself from the discussion. Sferra informed the Commission that she had received a request from MACC for the Commission to sign on to a letter about interstate gas pipelines to the Governor. Sferra noted that the issue of interstate pipelines has not impacted in Stow but has come up in Bolton. The Commission discussed interstate gas pipelines and their permitting process and requested the Sferra find out what other Commissions have signed onto the letter for further discussion at the next meeting.

Ingeborg returned.

MACC Annual Conference – Sferra requested that Commission members notify staff by next week if they will be attending the MACC Annual Conference and which workshops they will attend. Sferra added that there are available funds in the budget to send a few Commission members to the conference.

Continued Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – Stowaway Realty Trust – 121 White Pond Road – Dave Burke, wetland resource specialist, and John Melone Jr. and Peter Melone, Stowaway Realty Trust, were present. Burke provided copies of the most recent revised plans. Sferra also



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at 11:56 AM



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provided the Commission staff comments on the most recent plan revisions and the golf course maintenance plan. Burke described the changes to the plan including an aerial overlay of the property, 35' no disturb buffer, and the 100' buffer to Elizabeth Brook and Assabet River. Burke noted that the proposed golf course maintenance and improvement plan will add no additional impervious surfaces and that little erosion is expected because the property is relatively flat. Burke described the proposed golf course improvements including moving the fourth green to the south which would require some removal of trees in the outer 200' RFA and replanting of 36 trees in other areas of the course. John Melone Jr. described the location of the tree removal and the Commission requested that the area of tree removal be shown on the plan. Melone added that the fourth tee is moving away from the river by ten feet. The Commission inquired if the square footage of the RFA to be altered was calculated which Burke confirmed he could provide at the next meeting. The Commission also noted that the eighth green will be moving into the RFA and trees will be topped at the ninth green to allow for playing over the wetland. Melone described the topping of trees in the ninth green and the proposed invasive plant removal and the Commission requested that both be added to the plan. Burke clarified that the restoration area by the club house will consist of native fescue grass and river birches. Concrete curbs will be installed in the parking area and the existing club house will be repaired.

The Commission asked if erosion controls were planned and Burke noted he did not think they were necessary but after discussion agreed to use snow fence as a limit of work line and silt fence between the fourth and ninth green which will be included on the plan. The Commission noted that alternatives must be provided to the work in the RFA and noted that the eighth tee was outside the RFA and is now proposed just inside the RFA. Melone noted that the change was made to improve play on that hole. Peter Melone added that the eighth tee is now a par five and the proposed change would make it a par four and will now be off the green and will utilize an existing path which will prevent the need to cut trees in the area. The Commission noted that the proposed location of the eighth hole is also within floodplain and would require compensatory flood storage for any grading and recommended that the hole move out of the RFA and floodplain. John Melone Jr. noted that it could be pulled back and moved closer to the sand trap. Burke added that the cart path would still need to be avoided because it is used as a primary access for trucks because large vehicles are not able to cross the bridge over the brook. The Commission further discussed the location of the eighth hole and recommended that alternatives are provided that are outside the RFA and floodplain and in a previously disturbed area. The Commission also added that if the cart road and green could not be moved outside the 100' buffer without impacting equipment access, details would need to be provided about the turning radius and width of the vehicles using the cart road for access.

John Melone Jr. confirmed that no golf cart paths will be paved at this time and if future work is needed that is not included in this filing he would file with another plan. Melone described the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control work which the Commission noted is exempt from the Wetland Protection Act. Burke reviewed the invasive species management plan which would include a combination of mechanical removal and herbicide treatment that will later be planted with river birch and loamed and seeded with native grass. The Commission requested that an invasives management plan be submitted and noted that foliar spraying is not the preferred method of applying herbicide in jurisdictional areas. Burke added that the area of invasives near the parking lot is too close to the river for foliar spraying and very dense. A split rail fence is proposed which the Melones plan to mow behind to control the spread of invasives in that area. Burke also described a method of invasives treatment which includes scarification of the roots but the Commission noted they had concerns about using that method near the bank and recommended the use of stem cutting and painting. Burke also clarified that the clubhouse will not be expanded and the well will be moved.

The Commission clarified that they would like to see erosion controls and a limit of work shown on the plan, a limit of work marked in the field, RFA calculations of the total amount of RFA on the property and the amount to be altered, alternatives to the proposed location of the eighth tee and a detailed invasive species approach. Melone confirmed that no paving is proposed with the exception of the area by the clubhouse. Sferra noted that there is an issue with wetland flag 44 and the overlay which Burke confirmed he would revise on the plans.

Cortni Frecha made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Notice of Intent filed by Stowaway Realty Trust to February 7, 2017 on or after 7:30PM. Andy Snow seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Erosion Issue – Delaney Wildlife Management Area – Sferra informed the Commission that she was contacted by a resident about erosion at Delaney Wildlife Management Area. It appeared that recent wind driven rain blew water across an area which is not well vegetated causing erosion into the pond. Sferra notified the Department of Fish and Wildlife and they quickly responded by breaking up the channel with erosion controls barriers and stone. Sferra confirmed during a site visit that work is occurring to stabilize the area but would be able to revegetated until spring. Sferra issued an Enforcement Order the day of the site visit and requested that Commission to ratify it. *Ingeborg Hegemann Clark made a motion to ratify the Enforcement Order issued to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Cortni Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.*

Dog License Mailing/Map – Jacquie Goring informed the Commission that she has worked with the Town Clerk's office to develop a one page flyer that would be included in the mailing back to homeowners who have applied for dog licenses. The flyer includes a map of conservation land in Stow and which properties require leashes or allow off leash walking under direct control as well as a copy of the Conservation Commission's regulations. The Commission reviewed the mailing and agreed it was helpful to distribute to dog owners in Stow but recommended it not be included on the website.

Townwide Knotweed Permitting Discussion Draft – Sferra noted that she is working to develop a "generic" knotweed removal permit to simplify the process for homeowners to eradicate knotweed within the Commission's jurisdiction. Sferra provided a draft for the Commission which has been reviewed by knotweed expert Brian Collieran. The Commission reviewed the draft and suggested hand cutting to be added as a method of removal of knotweed. The Commission also discussed the square footage of the treatment area and the requirements for additional permitting for altering more than 5,000 square feet of wetlands and suggested that the Commission reserves the right to limit the square footage of the project. The Commission also recommended that a map of the property be required as well as photos of the plants to confirm that it is knotweed. The Commission agreed to move forward and staff will submit a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) as the applicant for an upcoming meeting.

Adjournment – Ingeborg Hegemann Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM. Cortni Frecha seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquie Goring
Conservation Assistant

Exhibits included during January 17, 2017 Conservation Commission Meeting:

- Stowaway Site Plans dated 1/9/17
- 1/17/17 Agenda and Meeting Packet
- Conservation Commission Member Supplemental Packets
 - Staff comments regarding Stowaway NOI Addendum Golf Course Maintenance Plan
- Dog License Mailing
 - Email Correspondence regarding Delaney Wildlife Management Area erosion

Stow Town Building 380 Great Road, Stow, MA 01775
Phone: (978) 897-4514 Fax: (978) 897-4534
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