

Approved on February 28, 2018

**Plainfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held January 31, 2018**

Meeting was held in Town Hall. Commissioners present:
Erik Burcroff, John Burns, Jack Nelson, Alice Schertle, Judy Williams (Chair)

Call to Order, Judy Williams, 7:05 P.M.

Minutes of 11-29-17 were amended to note the availability of a Notice to Abutters form letter. Jack moved, Erik seconded that the minutes be approved as amended. Passed unanimously.

MACC Environmental Conference

The annual MACC Conference, to be held March 3 at Holy Cross College in Worcester, was discussed. John will attend. Jack and Judy will coordinate plans to attend if possible.

We have \$409 in our budget. MACC dues for FY 19 will be \$195, a 2% increase payable by September 30, 2018. Judy has requested an additional \$50 for the Conservation Commission 2019 budget.

WPA Emergency Certification Form

Commission discussed the emergency form which can be issued to permit work necessary to abate an emergency such as flooding, hazardous road undercutting, and emergency snow events.

There was a brief discussion of requirements of the River Protection Act.

Circuit Rider News Articles

Commissioners reported on articles in Mark Simpson's January 2018 Mass DEP Circuit Rider News. The following reports were given:

Alice: University of British Columbia researchers have found that changes to ground vegetation have as much impact on global water resources as climate change. As land is urbanized and forests and green vegetation destroyed watersheds are irreversibly damaged.

Jack: Scientists have found that the lethal fungus causing White Nose Syndrome in bats is vulnerable to UV light. They may be able to use the UV light sensitivity in trying to combat the fungus, which has decimated bat populations in North America.

Judy: Suburban ponds are a septic buffet. Researchers have found that human waste contaminates many suburban ponds and provides most of the nutrients consumed by some tadpoles and other animals and plants.

Sandra Steingraber Talk

Erik attended and reported on Sandra Steingraber's talk on fracked gas, PCBs and health, on December 2nd in Lenox. Steingraber has identified new bacteria that live on fracked gas.

Road salt and sand

A resident has expressed concern about the amount of road salt and sand used and possible stream contamination. Judy has discussed the matter with the highway superintendent. Mert has reduced the amount of salt used; he considers issues of road maintenance and safety as well as the effects of materials used.

Nelson/Sargent Conservation Restriction

The Commission reviewed the Conservation Restriction on the Nelson/Sargent property. The Town of Plainfield, acting through the Conservation Commission, co-holds the Conservation Restriction with the Franklin Land Trust. Copies of the 21-page CR had been provided to the commissioners by Judy prior to the meeting.

Other Business

The Conservation Commission Annual Report compiled by Judy and provided to members prior to the meeting, was reviewed.

Commissioners discussed Open Meeting Law requirements regarding email communications among commission members.

It has been proposed that communication with town officials be done through an official Gmail address.

Judy will be the Conservation Commission representative for the town web site.

On 1-2-18 Judy signed off on a garage removal for John Lynes at 6 Mountain Street.

Next Meeting will be held February 28, 2018 in Town Hall at 7:00 P.M.

At 8:25 P.M. it was moved and seconded that this meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle