

Plainfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held August 29, 2018

Meeting was held in Town hall.

Commissioners present: John Burns, Erik Burcroff, Alice Schertle, Judy Williams (Chair).
Commissioner Jack Nelson was absent.

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

Minutes of 2018-06-27 were amended to show, under Forestry Memorandum of Understanding, a question about the ten-day limit on the Conservation Commission's opportunity to comment on a Forest Cutting Plan. Approved as amended.

Update on Westfield Wild and Scenic River Designation

Judy reported that she has spoken with Director Bob Thompson about DER's procedures in managing the Wild and Scenic Westfield River program in Massachusetts. Bob was impressed with the work John Burns has already done on five tributaries in Plainfield. John goes to most of the Wild and Scenic meetings and is able to represent the town and keep us informed. The Plainfield designation under the Wild and Scenic program is currently on hold until more information comes in from other communities involved.

Judy has told the Select Board of the program and the ConCom's support of a Wild and Scenic designation for Plainfield. The Select Board expressed approval.

Discussion followed of the importance of the River Protection Act. Judy told of two different women whose efforts individually have been responsible for the cleaning of two seriously polluted rivers in Massachusetts.

Discussion of Forestry Memorandum of Understanding

Judy read sections of the MOU. Discussion followed.

Commissioners questioned the time elapsed between creation of forest cutting plans or amended plans and the submission of these plans to the Conservation Commission for comment.

Questions also arose about the time allowed for ConCom to comment on a plan and about the need for Commissioners to be able to visit the property to fully understand the project and its effects. We will consult with Service Forester Alison Wright about these and other issues.

Erik read the Forest Cutting Plan, DCR file # 237-8897-17, for property on Route 116 owned by the Cullen Nominee Trust. We will make a site visit to the property tomorrow. Alison Wright and Consulting Forester Eric Donnelly will meet us at the site.

Site Visits Made

Monday, July 2, 2018, Erik, John, Jack and Judy made a site visit to the solar project at 29 Union to consider the request for approval of new berm design.

Thursday, July 5, 2018, Erik, Jack, John, Judy and Alice made a site visit to the Casey Dwyer property on Campbell St. Mr. Dwyer met the commissioners and showed plans for the house to be built. There are no wetland issues. Judy signed off on the building permit.

Wednesday, July 18, 2018, Erik, Jack, Judy and Alice made a site visit to the solar project at 29 Union to inspect new berm construction and drainage. Commissioners were escorted by Jeffrey McDonald, Construction Supervisor, Nexamp. Drainage engineering appeared to be effective in controlling water from a major storm the day prior to the visit. Commissioners approved the berms, which were constructed primarily of ground stumps and soil. About 75% organic material and 25% soil was used.

Site Visits Scheduled

Erik, Jack, Alice and Judy will make a site visit tomorrow, Thursday, August 30, at 9:00 A.M, to the cutting project on Route 116. The property is owned by the Cullen Nominee Trust. We will meet the Consulting Forester, Eric Donnelly, and Service Forester Alison Wright who will accompany us on the site visit.

Following the Route 116 visit we will do a site visit at the Ashfield Rod and Gun Club to inspect Gun Club property in Plainfield where a pistol range is planned.

Next meeting

There will be no meeting in September unless a special need arises.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday, October 31, 2018 at 7:00 P.M. in Town Hall.

Adjourned, 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle