

Approved 5-8-19

**Plainfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held March 27, 2019**

Meeting was held in Town Hall.

Commissioners present: Erik Burcroff, Jack Nelson, John Burns, Alice Schertle
Judy Williams (chair).

Call to Order, Judy Williams, 7:08 P.M.

Minutes of 2-27-19 approved as presented.

Request for Determination of Applicability, Nelson/Sargent

Jack Nelson recused himself from consideration of the Request.

The RDA was submitted by Jack Nelson and Jeanne Sargent for a green burial site on property at 138 Pleasant St. The property is held in a Conservation Restriction with the Franklin Land Trust. On 3-24-19 Erik and Judy made a site visit to the property accompanied by owners Jack Nelson and Jeanne Sargent. The two burial sites are in an upland area not jurisdictional under the WPA. The Commission reviewed maps of the area. Judy moved, John seconded that the commission issue a Negative Determination under #1: The area described in the Request is not an area subject to protection under the Act or the Buffer Zone. Unanimous in favor.

Erik, John, Judy and Alice signed the Negative Determination.

Continuation of a Public Hearing for an ANRAD at 66 North Union

This was a resumption of a Public Hearing continued on 2-27-19 to consider an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation for a proposed solar installation at 66 North Union on property owned by Robert Pytko. Judy reported that Bill Lattrell submitted a proposal to do a peer review for \$2,321.94. Judy contacted Michael Newhouse who said the proposal would be acceptable and that a check from Marvel Solar would be forthcoming.

John suggested that a site visit by the commission prior to the peer review would help commissioners to formulate questions for the peer reviewer. John will contact owner Robert Pytko to request permission for a pre-review site visit. John will also contact Michael Newhouse to request GIS shape files of the Wetland Delineation.

Erik said that some clear cutting appears to be in progress on the property. Property owners are allowed up to 25,000 board feet as a firewood cut.

The Public Hearing was continued to April 24, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in Town Hall.

MACC Annual Conference Reports

Judy and Jack attended the MACC Annual Conference on 3-2-19.

Jack reported on a session on vernal pools. A bylaw is needed to protect all vernal pools, certified or not, in isolated wetlands of any size. It would extend protection to "Isolated Land

Subject to Flooding” that is non-jurisdictional because it is less than ¼ acre-feet at average depth of 0.5’ in volume. Jack will work on a draft of a vernal pool bylaw for the next meeting.

Erik said a bylaw should include language addressing de-forestation for solar siting.

Judy reported on a session on protecting wildlife along energy ROWs crossing wetlands. An Eversource representative pointed out the need for energy transmission to support alternative energy sources.

Judy reported on a session on managing invasive species. She read sections of a manual titled Whole Plant Removal Guide which recommended such removal over herbicides or cutting. Erik questioned how they deal with root disturbance which can spread invasives. In some cases burning can be an effective control measure.

Judy attended two sessions on solar arrays. Solar installations can impact wildlife, for example by inhibiting salamander crossings. In some areas hives have been used with solar panels for production of “solar honey.”

Solar arrays can impact climate change when forests, which sequester carbon, are removed to site solar arrays.

Jack explained “subtracters” and “adders” which are used as incentives and dis-incentives for solar array siting. The attempt is to discourage placing solar arrays in undeveloped areas.

Next meeting is on April 24, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in Town Hall, when the Public Hearing for an ANRAD for a solar installation at 66 North Union will be resumed.

Adjourned 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle