

Approved as amended on 10-30-19

Plainfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held September 25, 2019

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 8-28-19 were approved as read.

Meeting time change. It was decided to change the regular ConCom meeting time to 6:30 p.m.

Forest Cutting Plan, Seelye Property

Erik reported that DFW and NHESP imposed two restrictions on the FCP: (1) Cutting to be done only between Oct. 15 and April 15 to protect wood turtles. (2) 50 ft. and 300 ft. buffers to be marked and inspected.

Site Visit, East St.

Judy made a site visit the week of Sept. 14 to the Andrew Van-Assche property at 31 East St., where a garage will be built. No wetland issues; Judy signed off on the project.

Right of First Refusal

Judy reported that the town elected not to exercise its right of first refusal for a 6.6 acre parcel on Bow St., tax parcel 12 on Assessor's Map 16, where there is a change of use from Chapter 61b to residential. The purchaser is Locke-Hardy. A small residence will be built. No wetland issues affecting the building project.

Hazard Mitigation Strategies

Commissioners reviewed issues addressing increased risks due to climate change as assigned to the Conservation Commission on a draft of Plainfield 2019 Hazard Mitigation Strategies.

Erik spoke with assessor Helene Tamarin about properties potentially available for purchase in an Open Space program. We need to find out if funding might be available to assist in such purchase.

John reported that there are only 2 recorded owners of dams in Plainfield: Ashfield Rod and Gun Club and Robert E. Waryjasz Sr. Trust (currently David Thibault). Many smaller dams are not listed by the state, including some in Plainfield.

Alice reported that Plainfield never adopted an Open Space Plan, though a plan was developed in 2007 with a committee that included Emily Boss, Emily Stockman and others. Judy Williams has a copy of that plan and will bring it to the next meeting.

Judy reported on water conservation guidelines. Commissioners reviewed copies Judy provided of EPA guidelines. Suggestions were made for additions or amendments to address current and projected conditions in Plainfield.

Judy shared emails between her and Ron Wolanin and Tom Lautzenheiser, both of Mass Audubon, regarding Judy's inquiry about a forest management program on West Mountain to address climate change and possible forest fires. The Mass Audubon representatives said there was currently no specific fire management policy for West Mountain and that the risks of major forest fires in the area were minimal. Judy said it will take a while to get feedback from other committees assigned to study the issue.

Wetlands Bylaw

Jack provided copies of some considerations he put together for a possible Plainfield Wetlands Bylaw addressing increasing hazards and environmental risks due to climate change. Wider buffer zones and increased areas under protection were among the issues discussed. The ConCom will continue the review and consider other possible bylaw provisions next time.

New Business, John Root Application

Judy received an email from John Root regarding a presentation he would like to make on Attracting Birds, Butterflies, Bees, and Other Beneficials. He requests Conservation Commission support for his application for a Cultural Council grant. Judy suggested that he contact the Agricultural Commission.

Please note that the regular time of Conservation Commission Meetings has been changed to 6:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 30 at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall.

Adjourned 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle