

*Approved as amended 8-4-21*

**Plainfield Conservation Commission  
Minutes of Meeting Held June 30, 2021**

The meeting was held in Town Hall. Commissioners present: John Burns, Erik Burcroff, Judy Ferber, Jack Nelson, Alice Schertle, Judith Williams (chair).

Also present: Rhianna Sommers representing Epsilon Associates, Inc.; Catherine Harragian, RDA applicant for Bow St. property; Roxanne Finn, Bow St. property abutter; Chris Stockman, Plainfield resident.

**Call to Order**, Judith Williams, 6:31 p.m.

John moved, Jack seconded, approval of the minutes of 5-26-21, as amended. Unanimous.

**Public Meeting, Bow St. RDA**

Applicant Catherine Harragian was present for consideration of a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for two parcels of land on either side of Bow St., owned by Jamie Paquette. Abutter Roxanne Finn was also present. Erik, Jack, John, Judith W., and Judy F., made a site visit to the property today, 6-30-21. There is a perennial stream on the property. Judith read the RDA description of work. Proposed work includes growing of perennials, shrubs, and trees in the ground and in containers. Soil amendments will be added and some trees removed. Water will be obtained from a well dug on the property or will be pumped from the stream. Roxanne Finn said she would like to know how many trees would be removed. She said there is a spring on the property to which her property has spring rights.

Commissioners discussed the need for more specific articulation of the impact on wetlands, including maps showing the resource area and clearly defining the limits of the work.

John moved, Jack seconded that the Commission issue a Positive Determination under #3:

*The work described on referenced plans and documents is within an area subject to protection under the Act and will remove, fill, dredge, or alter that area, Therefore, said work requires the filing of a Notice of Intent.*

Vote was unanimous in favor. All commissioners signed the Positive Determination.

**Public Hearing, Eversource NOI**

Rhianna Sommers of Epsilon Associates was present for Eversource Energy regarding submission of a Notice of Intent (NOI) for a Line 312 Structure Replacement Project. Erik, Jack, John, Judith W. and Judy F. made a site visit to the work area in the Eversource electrical corridor Right of Way between Prospect Street and east Main Street, on 6-29-21.

Judith W. read the work description from the NOI. Rhianna gave a presentation, showing maps of the areas involved. The work includes structure (pole) replacement and installation of gravel work pad and access roads. Resource Area impact involves Bordering Vegetated Wetland and Buffer Zone. Judith W. read two significant interests of the WPA which would be impacted: protection of wildlife habitat and ground water supply. Rhianna said wood poles showing severe deterioration from weather and woodpecker damage will be replaced with steel poles.

John moved, Erik seconded that the Commission approve the Eversource NOI. Vote was unanimous in favor. All commissioners signed the NOI approval.

### **Revisit of Certificate of Compliance for Nexamp**

Erik, John, Jack, Judith W., and Judy F. made a site visit to the Nexamp solar facility on North Union on 6-29-21.

Judith W. read a letter dated 6-29-20 from wetland scientist Arthur Allen stating that the wetland replication on the property was performed as required. Commissioners found that that Sedge and Boneset, wetland plants originally planted in the replacement area were surviving. They felt the area demonstrates the fact that wetland replication is never more than partially successful in replacing the original wetland.

Alice moved, Judy F. seconded, that the Commission issue a Certificate of Compliance for the Nexamp project. Vote was unanimous in favor. The COC was signed by all Commissioners.

### **Report on Utility Pole Chemicals**

Chris Stockman joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m. She reported that she observed toxic chemicals being injected into utility poles in Cummington and has since discovered that such chemicals are injected into poles as preservatives in every state including MA. She showed photos of poles in Plainfield with holes where cartridges containing insecticidal and fungicidal chemicals are inserted. Some poles have bands around the base where chemicals are applied. She has seen such chemically-injected poles near streams and ponds and asks that we observe Plainfield's poles to make sure toxic chemicals are not leaching into our wetlands. She feels that transparency issues and notification issues must be addressed. Chris left a folder containing information and photos for the Commission. Erik read from the materials a list of toxic chemicals put to such use.

### **Vernal Pool Visit—Jack Nelson**

Jack reported that he met with Plainfield resident Tim Walter and DEP Circuit Rider Mark Stinson at the vernal pool on Pleasant Street. Tim had expressed to the Commission his concern that a culvert is draining the pool causing it to diminish in size. Tim had suggested blocking part of the culvert to reduce the flow. Jack said they observed that the pool and associated wetland are supporting wildlife. Mark explained that damage could be done by blocking the flow of water through the culvert and recommended that the best approach was to leave it alone.

### **Report on Beaver Damage—Erik Burcroff**

Erik reported that dam building by beavers across 116 from the pond has caused culvert flooding and could undermine the highway. He said when Plainfield's new highway superintendent is hired he will deal with the problem.

### **Site Visit, Brent Steele Property**

Judith W. made a site visit to the 43 South Central property of Brent Steele, where a barn is going to be built. There were no wetland issues.

### **New Business**

Jack suggested putting an article in the Post listing all the steps to be taken and forms to be filled out to obtain a building permit.

Erik said Elaine Holder is putting together a welcome packet for new residents which could include building permit information.

Judith W. reported that Joe Rogers of GZO Environmental will meet with River Road lot 27-25 property owner Kyle Dempsey in July to see if all requirements have been met on the property. Joe will report his findings to the Conservation Commission. The Commission will make a site visit before a Certificate of Compliance is issued.

A site visit to the Kyle Dempsey property on River Road was scheduled for Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Judith W. said we have received an annual dues bill from MACC for \$203. The bill will be given to Paula King for payment.

### **Next Meeting**

Because of scheduling conflicts, the regularly scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission will not be held the last Wednesday of July.

**The next meeting of the Conservation Commission will take place on Wed., August 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall.**

There will be a site visit to the Kyle Dempsey property on River Road at 4:00 p.m. August 4, prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle