

Approved 10/26/22

**Plainfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held September 28, 2022**

Meeting was held in Town Hall. Commissioners present: Erik Burcroff, John Burns, Judy Ferber, Jack Nelson, Alice Schertle, Judith Williams (chair). Also present: Laurie Israel and Elaine Sidney, owners, 27 S. Union
Shelby Howland, Village Carpentry

Call to Order, Judith Williams, 6:35 p.m.

Minutes of 8/3/22 were approved. The continuation of the Public Hearing for the 27 S. Union NOI noted in the minutes had been moved from 8/31/22 to 9/28/22.

Continuation of Hearing for NOI, 27 S. Union.

Property owners Laurie Israel and Elaine Sidney obtained proposals from two wetland consultant firms regarding services supplemental to the submitted NOI. Shelby Howland said that their decision was not to use, at significant cost, the services of a wetland consultant. The NOI remains as submitted. The Commission asked for clarification of the project in order to make an informed decision on the NOI. Commissioners described maps generally submitted with elements such as title, key, and scale for clarity. Shelby agreed to submit a map indicating scale and sufficient to accurately identify the area involved and clearly delineate placement of erosion controls. Judith W. will contact Shelby in regard to supplying copies of certified mail receipts or signatures of abutters notified. The Public Hearing was continued to the next meeting on 10/26/22 at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall.

Certificate of Compliance, Kyle Dempsey, River Road, Plot 27 Parcel 25

At completion of the project two years ago, Commission had requested that the site be monitored during two more growing seasons. On 9/21/22 a site visit was made by Erik, Jack, Judy F., Judith W. and Alice, with Kyle Dempsey and Joe Rogers of GZA Environmental. Plants including sweet pepper bush, blueberry, witch hazel, dogwood and others were seen to have taken hold in the restoration area. Judith moved and Erik seconded that the Conservation Commission issue the Certificate of Compliance. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Report on Bow St. Enforcement Order

Commission discussed enforcement problems in regard to a barn being converted to a residence on Bow Street without required permits. The property is in Riverfront and jurisdictional under the Wetlands Protection Act. Residents on the property have refused to comply with the Enforcement Order issued by the Conservation Commission or the Request to Vacate issued by the Building Commissioner. Jack reported that he has spoken with the Select Board chair and the Board is aware that work subject to state regulations continues on the property, including recent installation of a composting toilet and preparations to bring in electricity. Conservation Commission members expressed concern that unpermitted work is potentially harmful to the residents, the community, and the environment. The Commission will seek the support of the

Select Board to obtain compliance with the same permitting required of all property owners in Plainfield. We will request that the matter be placed on the Select Board agenda.

Jack agreed to contact MACC (Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions) for advice on the matter. DEP Circuit Rider Mary Grover has indicated that DEP involvement may be possible.

Report on Friends of Plainfield Pond.

Judy F. reported on the 8/31/22 meeting attended by residents concerned about the condition of Plainfield Pond, particularly the diminished water level and the abundance of water weeds. Ed Stockman gave a presentation in which he characterized the pond as basically healthy. The plants seen in the water are not weeds but native plants and a productive part of the environment. They will disappear as the season progresses. The low water level is a concern and discussion included investigating the dam. DCR claims ownership of the dam and Judy reported that they have agreed to send a representative to Plainfield to inspect it. Bill Salomaa, program director at DCR, has been helpful and says there is a possibility that DCR may do some work on the dam, though the project is small and not high in priority.

Judy Ferber is the liaison between the Conservation Commission and Friends of Plainfield Pond. The next meeting of the Friends will be on 10/6/22 at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall. Pond usage, litter, and cleanup will be among the issues discussed.

Report on Mark Stinson's Workshop

Erik, Jack, Judith W. and Alice attended Mark Stinson's wetland workshop on 8/17/22 at Hawlemont School in Charlemont. The workshop was attended by Conservation Commissions from a number of small towns and several commissions included new members—encouraging for future conservation efforts. The session included mention of the setback for new agriculture at 100 feet, which commissioners would like to review.

New Business

Jack reported finding a tree with Emerald Ash Borer infestation on South Central. Judith W. put a sign on the tree to notify observers of the infestation. The Tree Alliance will make information about identifying EAB available. If removed the tree should be ground and care taken not to spread the infestation. Emerald Ash Borer has also been reported in Ashfield.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in Town Hall and will continue the Public Hearing for the 27 S. Union NOI.

Adjourned, 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Schertle