

SOUTH HADLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 22, 2010

Approved at 3/15/10 meeting.

PRESENT: Jack Fleming, Chair; Dennis Swartwout, Jim Canning, Brad Allen, Janice Stone, Conservation Administrator.

7:00 PM OPEN FORUM Opportunity for residents to come in and ask questions, discuss wetland concerns with the Conservation Commission. No decisions will be made at this time, all items will be taken under advisement. Individual time may be limited by the number of persons waiting to speak. No one present to participate in this session.

7:01 PM OLD & NEW BUSINESS: Jim presented a *bill* for payment of Janice's registration for the *MACC conference* on February 27th. Jim made a motion to approve payment. Dennis seconded, all approved. Commission discussed approving Paul Beaulieu from Tighe & Bond as the Senior Wetland Scientist to monitor the *Texon demolition* under Order of Conditions 288-349. Dennis made the motion to approve his nomination, Brad seconded, all voted in favor. Janice invited the Commissioners to attend a meeting on Tuesday February 23 with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and others on the *Rt 47 Scenic Farm Byway*. Dennis made a motion to accept the *minutes* for February 1, 2010. Jim seconded and all approved. Janice mentioned two students who have approached her for volunteer work or internship. The Mount Holyoke College student is interested in a landscape architecture project, and will work on a design for simple low-maintenance native plantings at the *Beachgrounds picnic area*. The UMass forestry graduate student is interested in an internship. Janice sent him an email with some ideas for projects based on the experience he listed, including restoration of the CCC cabin at *Judd Park* or water bars and trail repairs at *Black Stevens* or *Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook* conservation areas. Dennis mentioned the idea of doing a timber survey of some conservation land for a possible timber sale or forest management plan.

7:15 PM PUBLIC MEETING on a Request for Determination filed by the *South Hadley Fire District 2 Water Department* for demolition of obsolete water supply structures in the Riverfront Area of Elmer Brook off Amherst Road. Mark Aiken from the Water Department was present to answer questions. Mark said the well was abandoned in 1995, and the buildings are now a safety hazard and should be removed. They had spoken with DCR about a possible purchase of the land (65 acres), and DCR would require the removal of the buildings as well. The land is presently under Article 97. The cistern is 12' deep, the sand filter bed 5' deep. The contractor will probably remove the roofs and sides, saving the nice old wooden beams, and then crush the walls, fill with rock, and top with loam and seed. They do not have an RFP yet, but hope to have the work done soon, under frozen conditions. They will install a line of erosion control between the buildings and the stream, as shown on the plans. The Commission asked whether any tree removal was going to be necessary with this work. The exemption for conversion of impervious surface to vegetated does not include tree removal. Mark said they do not want to remove any trees. Commission told him he would have to come back to them if the contractor proposed tree

removal as part of the project. Dennis asked for a copy of the plan once a contractor has been chosen, showing access and removal methods. An abutter asked whether the underground pipes were going to be excavated or left in the ground. Mark replied that the pipes would remain in place with the ties severed. They are waiting for approval from Natural Heritage. Jim made a motion to issue negative determinations # 5 (minor exempt activity in Riverfront) and 6 (no further review needed under the bylaw). Dennis seconded, all voted in favor.

7:30 PM OLD & NEW BUSINESS, continued. *Updates.* Jack went out last week with Yem Lip to view the outlet structure at *Titus Pond* and discuss the DPW's upcoming work on the structure and bank. The structure is very deteriorated. Yem agreed they will file a Notice of Intent. The *Texon* demolition is still in limbo, since there is no signed MOA with the Army Corps of Engineers yet. The appraisal for the *McCray APR* appears to be stalled, waiting for the second reviewer's comments to be received and completed by the first reviewer. Janice told the Commission she GPS'd the main trails at *Black Stevens* conservation area with Lin and Nancy Pickle last week. The Commission discussed whether the trail to the ladyslippers should be put on maps and labeled as such or not. What is the status of ladyslippers? Is it illegal to pick them? Should the Commission put up signs asking people not to pick them? Janice asked for ideas for *Earthday* this year. The Jacob's Edge group is interested in coming back. There is some trash to pick up at Black Stevens, but another project might be construction of a simple bridge across the stream to connect one of the trails that crosses it. Janice mentioned that the Kestrel Trust is sponsoring a *wildlife tracking workshop* March 7 if anyone is interested.

7:50 PM ADJOURNMENT. Jim made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Brad, and all voted in favor. Next regular Conservation Commission meeting will be March 15th at 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Stone

Janice Stone,
Conservation Administrator