Present: Bill DeLuca, Chair; Jim Canning, Vice-Chair; William (Bill) Bacis, Member; Neva Tolopko, Member; Steph Clymer, Member; Tom Dennis, Member; Julie Watson, Associate Member; Anne Capra, Conservation Administrator/Planner; Colleen Canning, Senior Clerk Planning and Conservation; Micheal Matyszewski, 7 Valley View Drive; Allyson Garcia, Master Plan Implementation Committee; Alexis Allen, Master Plan Implementation Committee; Mike Fontaine, IGM; Dan Delaney, Fuss and O’Neil; Stephen Frantz, 300 North Main Street; and Joanna Brown, 25 Charon Terrace.

Chair DeLuca called the meeting into order at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Item #1 --- 6:00 PM Public Meeting continuance for Request for Determination filed by Michael Matyszewski for removal of trees at 7 Valley View Drive (Map 23, Parcel 115)

Chair DeLuca called the Public Meeting continuance into order at 6:00PM.

The applicant, Michael Matyszewski of 7 Valley View Drive, was present at the Public Meeting.

Michael Matyszewski addressed the Commission. He explained that three different arborist assessed the trees proposed for removal in his backyard. The arborists offered similar assessments. The hydrologic soils in his yard could create hazardous conditions as large trees wouldn’t be able to establish an adequate root base. The applicant stated that the information gathered pertained to the quality of the soil, not the health of the trees. Therefore, he was unclear how to proceed in addressing the Commission’s requirements.

Vice-Chair Canning remarked that a plan for removal would be required for the Commission to act on the applicant’s request. The Conservation Administrator added that certified arborists are familiar with the type of reporting that the Commission is looking for. Reporting would include the tree’s species, location and condition along with a plan for removal.

The Conservation Administrator commented that the removal of standing dead trees could be permitted following on-site verification by the Commission. She reiterated that the concern was preventing damage to surrounding trees. This could be achieved through conditioning removal methods through the permit. Additional removal or pruning could be permitted following a written assessment by a certified arborist.

Commissioner Clymer inquired if there would be a benefit to having the vernal pool re-assessed. The Conservation Administrator explained that the vernal pool assessment from the initial site development was used in determining jurisdiction. If the vernal pool was assessed to be smaller, with a smaller buffer, the proposed area for tree removal would still be in jurisdiction.

Commissioner Clymer inquired if there were arborists that could assess the trees who wouldn’t also be involved in subsequent removal. Dan Delaney, Fuss and O’Neil, recommended Urban Forestry Solution as he worked with them professionally many times.
The Public Meeting needed to be continued to allow the applicant time to gather the requested documentation.

**Motion:** Commissioner Tolopko moved to continue the Public Meeting to January 8, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Commissioner Bacis seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) commissioners present voted in favor of the motion.

**Agenda Item #4 — Discuss and Consider Review and Comment on the Goals and Objectives for the Master Plan Update, presented by Master Plan Implementation Committee**

Allyson Garcia and Alexis Allen, members of the Master Plan Implementation Committee, were present at the meeting.

Alexis Allen overviewed the Master Plan Update process. She explained that the consultant working on the Master Plan Update was compiling tasks associated with objects that satisfied the goals of the Master Plan. The Conservation Commission was being asked to review the draft and cite which tasks, goals and objectives were relevant to the work of the Commission.

Vice-Chair Canning commented on the importance of developing a measurement system to assess how well the Boards and Commissions addressed their tasks.

The Conservation Administrator noted that she participates in the Master Plan Update as staff and that the objectives in the draft were generated following lots of public input after public meetings, workshops and surveys.

The Commission decided to schedule a session to discuss the Master Plan prior to the next regular Conservation Commission Meeting. The working group will be held on December 18, 2019 at 4:00 PM in the Planning and Conservation Conference room.

**Agenda Item #2 — 6:30 PM Public Hearing Continuance for Notice of Intent filed by Orchards Golf Club for an operation and maintenance plan of the golf course grounds at 18 Silverwood Terrace (Map 52, Parcel 164)**

The Conservation Administrator updated the Commission on the status of Orchards Golf Club’s Notice of Intent. She explained that the DEP had not yet issued a file number therefore the hearing could not close. The applicant’s consultant was optimistic that the ongoing enforcement investigation would wrap up allowing a file number to be issued. The Commission need to make a motion to continue the Public Hearing to a future meeting date.

**Motion:** Vice-Chair Canning moved to continue the Public Hearing to January 29, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Commissioner Bacis seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) commissioners present voted in favor of the motion.

**Agenda Item #3 — 6:45 PM Public Hearing for Notice of Intent filed by Ledges Golf Club for general maintenance of the golf course at 18 Mulligan Drive (Map 23 & 42, Parcels 1, 48, 71, 72 & 73)**

Chair DeLuca called the Public Hearing into order at 7:00 PM.
Mike Fontaine, representative of Ledges management team, was present at the Hearing along with his consultant, Dan Delaney of Fuss and O’Neil.

Dan Delaney opened the discussion by offering an overview of the filing. A Notice of Intent had been filed for ongoing general maintenance at Ledges Golf Course. A File number and associated comments had been received from DEP and NHESP’s review of the application found “no take”. The previous general maintenance order had expired and, in filing a new notice, the applicant also re-delineated the area. Within the new delineation, there was a discrepancy from the previous delineation associated with existing maintenance activities. To the east of the property, south of Mulligan Drive, an area was previously identified as Bordering Vegetated Wetland, and now it was not.

The Conservation Administrator responded to the overview. She reiterated that the Notice of Intent included a new wetland delineation and refined work scope. The proposed operation and maintenance plan was similar to the existing plan; with one update being the installation of an additional port-a-potty.

The Conservation Administrator explained that the DEP observed signs of possible mowing within the Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW) near the driving range. The mowing was likely performed by an abutting property owner. However, as the owner, the golf club was responsible for bring their property into compliance. The Conservation Administer noted that this could be an area for potential mitigation work.

The Conservation Administrator detailed some of her comments. She explained that including the course’s hole numbers on the plan would make review of the document easier. Additionally, an explanation of directional language (left/right) would be beneficial as it made aerial review of the plan challenging. She added that, within the Commission’s agenda background material, all her comments were listed; many of which mirrored the DEP’s comments. She would send the applicant the comments for their reference as they refined their draft.

Chair DeLuca remarked that the applicant needed to generate a document that would both satisfy the requirements of the DEP and work as functional document for the maintenance staff to use on site.

The Conservation Administrator noted that both DEP and NHESP inquired about the golf course’s impact on the surrounding environment. Mike Fontaine, IGM, explained that work practices complied with DEP standards. He explained that Ledges received a National Audubon Certification. Therefore, land stewardship was important to the club. The Conservation Administrator commented that the documents pairing with that certification could provide information to satisfy the agencies’ concerns.

Stephen Frantz, 300 North Main Street, addressed the Commission. He inquired if the Golf Course used Glyphosate or neonicotinoids. Mike Fontaine, IGM, responded that Glyphosate was not used. He was unsure of neonicotinoids but could verify and report back.

The Public Hearing needed to be continued to allow the applicant to respond to the comments of the DEP and the Conservation Commission.
**Motion:** Commissioner Bacis moved to continue the Public Hearing to January 8, 2020 at 6:15 PM. Commissioner Canning seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) commissioners present voted in favor of the motion.

**Agenda Item #5 --- Discuss and Consider Peer Review for Wetland Delineation at 88 Park Street**

The Conservation Administrator opened with background. She explained that the owner of 88 Park Street was seeking to subdivide the property and develop a second residential structure. The Commission was familiar with the project as a Request for Determination of Applicability had been filed and acted upon to bring site work into compliance. At that time, the property had been delineated but the delineation was not affirmed by the Commission. The applicant has now hired a different firm to file a Notice of Intent to develop the newly formed lot. The wetland was newly delineated and the new firm observed different conditions from the first delineation. As this was the case, the applicant was requesting that the Commission determine that a peer-review be performed to verify the delineation. A motion from the Commission would allow the Conservation Administrator to coordinate a peer-review of the delineation following the filing of the Notice of Intent.

**Motion:** Commissioner Tolopko moved to require peer-review of the wetland delineation of 88 Park Street upon receipt of the Notice of Intent for development of the property. Commissioner Bacis seconded the motion. Six (6) out of six (6) commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

**Agenda Item #6 --- Discuss and Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2019**

As the draft minutes had just recently been submitted, most of the Commission members did not have time to review the draft minutes. This item was deferred for consideration to the next meeting.

Commissioner Clymer excused herself from the meeting at 7:57 PM

**Agenda Item #7 --- Administrator’s Report including updates on projects, violations, next meeting dates**

7 Edison Drive Beaver Activity and Tree Concern

The Conservation Administrator explained that the property owner of 7 Edison Drive had communicated ongoing concerns about beaver activity and hazard trees around the stream that abuts his property on Conservation Land. The Commission had considered requests of the property owner in previous meetings concerning downed trees in the stream but the Commission denied the request to remove it citing ecological value of woody debris in the river. The property owner was now observing beaver activity and had requested the Commission trap and remove the beavers.

The Conservation Administrator explained that the law was clear about lawful beaver removal. If there is a public safety hazard, an emergency order could be issued for beaver removal. Outside
of that, open season for beaver tapping can be performed by a license trapper during open season from November to April.

Chair DeLuca stated that the Commission was not inclined to trap beavers on Conservation property. If the beavers dammed the stream, the Commission could return to the discussion to consider solutions. Separately, private property owners were entitled to trap on their own property pursuant to Massachusetts General Law. The Conservation Administrator will visit the site to assess the conditions of the trees along the stream to see if they were candidates for removal.

**DEP Workshop**

The Conservation Administrator explained that the DEP Wetland Workshop was cancelled due to the recent snow storm. The Commission would be notified of the rescheduled date.

**Agenda Item #8 --- Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice).**

**Upcoming meeting dates**

The Conservation Administrator reviewed the upcoming Conservation Commission meeting dates as follows:

- December 18, 2019
- January 8, 2020
- January 29, 2020
- February 12, 2020 (Moved from February 19, 2020 due to school vacation week)

**177 Woodbridge Street Enforcement Order**

The Conservation Administrator shared that the property owners of 177 Woodbridge Street met with her to discuss their anticipated Notice of Intent to remedy the clearing that was performed along Bachelor Brook. The applicant intends on filing soon.

**29 Hildreth Avenue Clearing**

The Conservation Administrator explained that a tip was received relating to clearing and installation of an antenna at 29 Hildreth Avenue along an intermittent stream. She visited the site with the property owner who recently acquired the property. The property owner noted that he had a deed restriction on his property which reflected a 20 foot buffer along the stream. However, the Conservation Administrator explained that the deed restriction did not mean that the project did not require permitting through the Commission. The Conservation Administrator advised the property owner of the Commission’s requirements and the Commission could anticipate the filing of a *Request for Determination of Applicability* to bring the project into compliance.

**47 Lawn Street Request for Determination of Applicability.**
The Conservation Administrator explained that the property owner of 47 Lawn Street had submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) to hook-up to Town Sewer. The proposed project would use trenching to gravity feed into the existing sewer interceptor. The Public Meeting to consider the RDA was scheduled for the next conservation Commission meeting on December 18, 2019.

**MVP Listening Session**

The Conservation Administrator invited the Commission to attend the next Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Listening session on January 15, 2020 at 7:00 PM. Black Stevens Pond and its associated watershed would be the topic of discussion.

**Glyphosate Correspondence**

The Conservation Administrator noted that Steven Frantz, South Hadley resident, submitted correspondence to the Commission regarding glyphosate. The correspondence included glyphosate restrictions and glyphosate alternatives.

Commissioner Dennis expressed interest in learning more about the biology of glyphosate; rather than the politics of glyphosate.

Stephen Frantz addressed the Commission. He explained that he met with the Board of Health in an attempt to ban glyphosate on town-owned property by creating policies based on science. He was open to sending the Commission more information about the biology of glyphosate.

The Conservation Administrator inquired how long it takes soil biome to recover after glyphosate application. Stephen Frantz responded that it takes between three to five years.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Canning, Senior Clerk Planning and Conservation

**Appendix**

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<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Document Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ledges Golf Course draft wetland delineation and associated NOI filing</td>
<td>Conservation Files</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glyphosate correspondence from Stephen Franz.</td>
<td>Conservation Files</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation Administrator’s itemized comments on the Ledges NOI filing.</td>
<td>Conservation Files</td>
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