

MINUTES
Becket Conservation Commission
Becket Town Hall, 557 Main Street
6:30 PM, February 9, 2016

Commissioners Present: Alison Dixon, Chair; Cindy Delpapa; Karen Karlberg, Barbara Brand

Commissioners Absent: Richard Pryor, Vice Chair

Members of the Public: Rebecca Perry

Meeting opened at 6:39 PM with Ms. Dixon presiding.

- 1. Approval of the Minutes of meeting of December 17, 2015**
Motion by Ms. Karlberg seconded by Ms. Delpapa; to accept the minutes of December 17, 2015 as distributed. 2 in favor 2 abstentions.
- 2. Request for an extension of time on a NOI submittal:** A letter was received from Mr. Bill Johnson of Jacob Hollow Assoc. asking for additional time to file a required Notice of Intent related to an enforcement order. Mr. Johnson is dealing with a serious illness making it difficult for him to compile a thorough filing. The two other members of the Assoc. are in Florida at present. Former Becket Conservation Agent Shepley Evans spoke with Mr. Johnson in January and assured Mr. Johnson and extension would not be an issue. **MSV (Karlberg/Delpapa) to grant an extension of the filing until the April meeting. The NOI should be submitted no later than the Friday before the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous vote.** (note April meeting has been moved to the third Tuesday in April due to a conflict at Town Hall)
- 3. Request for an extension of an existing Order of Conditions:** The Commission received an email from Mr. Michael Lennon of ACT on 19 January, 2016 requesting the Order of Conditions for the Sherwood Green *Phragmites* control (DEP # 102-0393, issued May or 2013) be extended so the substantial growth of the invasive can continue. The Commissioners felt it was important to visit Sherwood Green to assess existing conditions. Additional background materials were unavailable, including the original NOI and management plan, complicated by the current lack of an agent. **MSV to table this request until the next Conservation Commission meeting, (Delpapa/Karlberg). Motion carried by unanimous vote.**
- 4. Certificate of Compliance:** The request is for the Werden Road property of Mr. Crowe and is related to work required under an enforcement order. The request was approved at the last meeting but Commissioner's signatures were not obtained at that time.

Discussion: The Commission has a brief discussion about the use of the *Country Journal* for the posting of the meeting notices. Because of the publishing schedule this paper and the

meetings switching to a Tuesday evening, the ability to meet the required notification timeline requires submittal of the announcements a great deal in advance. It was noted the *Berkshire Eagle*, a daily paper, would allow more flexibility. The cost difference of posting a notice was raised. It decided the new agent, when hired, should look into the merits of changing papers for Commission announcements.

Correspondence:

- The 2015 report on the weed cutting and harvesting on Sherwood Forest lakes was received. The report included recommendation for the 2016 season. Based on a review of the files, it is believed this report refers to work under an Order of Conditions for DEP file number #102-0399.
- A final follow-up required under the Certificate of Compliance for the Crystal Pond dam repair was received. The January letter included images from October, 2015 showing the vegetation on the dam slope and crest. It was noted the vegetation on the dam crest is sparse and will need additional attention this spring. An additional report will be sent to the Commission in the autumn of 2016 detailing the success of the 2016 growing season.
- The Commission received an anonymous tip regarding significant fill being brought on to a property in Sherwood Forest in an area adjacent to a resource area. The tip included images of stockpiles of soil. An enforcement letter was sent by Agent Evans just before his resignation in January, 2016 to the property owner Robert Ronzio. The letter included a cease and desist order against more filling, a requirement to contact the Commission by 12 April, 2016 to arrange a site visit and also to submit remediation plans to the Commission before the May Commission meeting. It was noted there was already a file on this Nottingham Court address. It contained an email exchange between DEP staff in October 2013, copies of color photographs showing fill in areas adjacent to the lake but no information on the disposition of this DEP exchange. Cindy will follow-up with DEP to see if any enforcement or other actions were taken.

Miscellaneous:

Annual Report and Budget: Chairperson Dixon provided a copy of the Conservation Commission report prepared by former Agent Evans for the annual town report. Ms. Dixon was able to get a short extension to the submittal deadline, Commissioners with edits should get them to Alison by Thursday morning. The budget has already been submitted.

Rescheduling Meetings: Because of a conflict with Town Hall activities, the Commission has been asked to change the date of both their April and November meetings. It was agreed to move the April meeting to the 19th. The November meeting's date was not selected at this time.

Number of Commissioners: Mark Stinson provided a copy of the pertinent regulations about the number of Conservation Commissions required under the MA Wetlands Protection Act. The regulations say there must be at least three commissioners but no more than seven. The number of commissioners is otherwise left to the individual

communities to decide. It was noted it has been a challenge to maintain a full complement of seven members on the Commission and this has made it difficult, on occasion, to reach a quorum at a meeting. Consensus was reached to ask the community to consider and vote on reducing the number of commissioners from seven to five. Cindy will look into what is needed to get such an article on the Town Warrant and will draft a warrant article for consideration.

New Agent: The town administrator has received three applications for the position so far. The position announcement has been posted on the town's web site. Alison will work with the town administrator of setting up interview times/dates when she can participate in the process. Commissioners are encouraged to think about what duties the new agent should be asked to do in order to facilitate keeping the commissioners well informed and the commission running smoothly, effectively and efficiently. Some initial recommendations included: keeping a log of all incoming inquiries and what actions were taken; an up-to-date listing of all required reports, follow-ups, deliverables, etc.

MSV (Delpapa/Brand) Motion made to adjourn. Unanimous approval.

The Meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
A. Dixon and C. Delpapa