

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

STEPHEN WASHBURN, CHAIRMAN
KRISTEN CAPEZIO, VICE CHAIR
CARLY ROCKLEN, TREASURER
JOHN GEAR
HEATHER MILLER
CATHERINE WALSH
PETER BAMBER



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER/
CONSERVATION AGENT
HOLLY JONES, MSCI

OFFICE MANAGER/SR. ADMIN. ASST.
LYNN MARCHAND

Conservation Commission Meeting April 21, 2021 7:30 P.M.

Present:

Stephen Washburn -Chairman, Carly Rocklen -Treasurer, John Gear, Heather Miller, Catherine Walsh, and Peter Bamber

Also Present: Holly Jones, Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent.

Please note the April 21, 2021 meeting was held remotely using GoToMeeting software pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §18, and the Governor's March 15th Executive Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place. Although no in-person attendance of members of the public occurred, the town of Norwood made every effort to ensure that the public can access the proceedings in real-time via technological means.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Stephen Washburn at 7:30 p.m. followed by a roll call.

Conservation Commission Business:

1. Hunting and trapping on Conservation Commission (property)

Ms. Jones addressed the Board stating that there was an incident of trapping that the ACO responded to. A resident contacted Mr. Washburn. Ms. Jones did additional research and the type of snare trap that was used was already illegal in the State of Mass. She stated that gun hunting on Town public property was also prohibited by a Norwood General Bylaw unless permission was granted by Selectmen.

She stated that there were additional types of hunting not yet addressed: humane full-body traps allowed to be used by persons with trapping licenses and also bow hunting. It was noted that there were tree stands located on Conservation land on University Ave. She said if the Commission wanted to enact regulations, that would likely be the parcel most impacted. Ms. Jones also reached out to the vice president of the Norwood Sportsman Club to get his take on any type of ConCom regulations and how that would impact hunters in Norwood. He stated that he didn't know anyone that was hunting on Conservation Land. He said hunters usually hunt on the area near the airport and on private property, as well as out of Town and out of State. He did not think regulations would have a large impact on Norwood hunters.

Discussion was had regarding:

- tree stands- if allowed, should be strap on so it can be released and nothing that damages the tree.
- trapping -not a market for the furs, not allowed without special permissions in most cases
- postings -to prevent hunting/trapping, safety of trail users
- public hearing -to get input from residents prior to making a decision about regulations

2. Structures and incursions on Conservation Commission property

Ms. Jones said the issue was brought to her attention by Mr. Greeley who found a large structure on University Ave (lean-to/cabin) fairly deep in the woods. She asked how the Commission wanted to address it. Mr. Washburn said there was a considerable amount of disturbance: tree clearing, stumps, shovel, 10-12' penetrations into the ground, a firepit.

Discussion was had regarding:

- public education- what you can and can't do on Conservation property.

- banning structures on Conservation land
- posting a sign on the structure stating the violation of the structure, intent to remove it, leave contact information
- who would remove the structure/DPW support
- carrying it out would be difficult vs. dismantling it and spreading it out/leaving it
- restoring the area

Motion I: Mr. Bamber made a motion to dismantle the structure. Ms. Gear seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

At the request of the Chair, Ms. Jones will reach out to the DPW Director regarding the dismantling.

3. Potential regulation changes: riverfront standards, variance mechanism, land use fee schedule

Ms. Jones iterated suggestions for discussion topics related to regulation changes: standards for riverfront areas for intermittent streams, variance mechanism for cases where there are significant hardships or activities that are extremely unlikely to impact wetland resources, and a land use fee schedule to change the odd fee amounts, hunting, no motorized vehicles on Conservation property separated out.

Motion I: Mr. Bamber made a motion to have a public hearing on June 30th on the aforementioned topics and regulations. Ms. Gear seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

4. Correspondence: Norfolk County Mosquito Control District

Ms. Jones stated a letter was received notifying the Conservation Commission that they were going to be doing some ditch maintenance work at the airport. Historically they have dredged the ditches but had not done so in 10 years. They will dispose of the dredged sediment off-site. The goal is to allow water to flow more easily and reduce potential mosquito habitat around the airport. They are seeking comments/input/concerns about the project before proceeding. Ms. Jones noted that they do not have regulatory control over mosquito districts.

Mr. Washburn felt it would be a good opportunity for a public outreach and education regarding this program.

Ms. Rocklen brought up endangered species in the proposed area of work. Ms. Jones said she would follow up to make sure they had contacted Natural Heritage. She said she would invite them for an education discussion and to answer questions on May 19th.

5. Trails and land management update

Ms. Jones thanked Mr. Greeley and the Neponset River Water Association for a very successful cleanup at the State Street lot. She said 3 truckloads of trash bags were removed.

6. CPS report

Topics from last meeting: approved Minutes, fire bell approved amounts and allocations, closing out of the playground project, discussion over CPC project status tracking sheet, challenges of project status updates - conversations on structuring the project to put the onus on the applicant to do the reporting that's needed and to make the process more transparent.

7. Conservation Agent's Report

Ms. Jones said they are on track with having the pavilion erected at the park in May. She said Planning and Conversation Departments have finished their staffing search and they are anticipating an Admin. and Asst. Planner starting in May.

8. Minutes -None

Motion: Mr. Bamber made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gear seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0 by roll call vote.