



**OFFICE OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313
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Conservation Commission Minutes
Monday, January 22, 2024

Approved: **February 12, 2024**

Chair Alan Chaney called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

Members present: Marijan Andacic, Leah Basbanes, Kate DeLoureiro and Al Starbird

Members absent: Juan Amodei, Alan Chase

Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2023

Leah made a motion to approve the January 8th meeting minutes as presented. Marijan 2nd the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Bills/Payroll

No bills.

Al S. made a motion to sign payroll. Kate 2nd the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Swallow Mill Pond Grant Award Related

The Administrator noted:

- an ANR submission from the property owner to split off the 4.76-acre parcel has been submitted to the Planning Board and will be considered at their February 5th meeting.
- title search is underway by Town Counsel
- updates to the draft Conservation Restriction are underway to be submitted to DCS reviewers before Feb. 1st.
- proof for signage has been received for CC review and approval pending finalizing the order (a spare post for the sign mounting is already on hand)
- the land grant management plan updates have been started by chair Alan
- an early-Spring workday on the property will be needed by the Commission.

Open Space and Recreation Plan expires March 2025

Alan noted this plan is required for state grants and it is important to get started early on updates. Leah thought the Town worked with NMCOG on the updates in 2018. A survey of the town is recommended to assess priorities and desired needs. Use of the Town



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website, social media, and the Neighbor to Neighbor to promote responses by citizenry will be utilized.

Leah volunteered to review the plan for what is needed to get the update process started.

MASSTRAILS Grant Submission for FY24

Chair Alan shared the new estimates for the proposed Drew's Boardwalk were received from Hoyle Tanner. Total construction cost had increased by \$17,108 to \$242,968 since last year's grant application.

The Administrator shared feedback received from the MASSTrails Director for the prior year's grant application. MASSTrails had expressed the project was very expensive and a very short segment of accessible trail for the available funding. She'd noted the 100K maximum possible award this year and asked if design or construction costs could be reduced. She also noted the application had been unclear about how the project met the needs of populations with limited mobility.

The Commission discussed whether the 2024 grant application should be held off for another year to determine if other funding sources could be determined.

Kate made a motion for the DCC to not submit for a FY24 MASSTrails grant. Marijan 2nd the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Tracking Ground Mounted Solar Array – 165 Pleasant Street

Property owner Joe Dean was in attendance to answer questions from the Commission.

The Administrator received and shared an email letter with an updated proposed site plan from Solar Renewables.

The Commission asked clarifying questions on the proposed locations of the tracking solar arrays and distance to the bank. A request for erosion controls during the excavation was recommended. Mr. Dean noted that some trees were going to be taken down for the array installation.



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A site visit on Saturday, January 27th at 10am was agreed upon to review the trees and proximity to the banking slope area.

DCC Questions for Brattle Development (41 Lowell St) 1/14/24 Technical Review Meeting

As an abutter to the proposed development, Alan Chaney recused himself, and Leah oversaw the discussion. Marijan is the representative for this proposed LIP development and sought input from the Commission for the upcoming meeting of Town departments and boards.

Leah offered a concern around the proposed eight single-family units within the 100' buffer zone of the pond on the site. The limited site plan offered to date is difficult to assess clear wetland buffer zone lines. Leah asked for clarification around those distances. She further asked whether the shoreline of the pond could be re-vegetated to provide a 25-50' natural buffer.

Leah noted that the developer will have to issue a Notice of Intent to the Commission for any work within 100' of the pond/wetlands area.

Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in Advance of meeting

Possible Land Conservation

Alan noted news of a conservation potential 83-acre parcel along Salmon Brook. The property abuts existing Town conservation land, and the owners are speaking to Mass Wildlife Fish & Game about purchase. An initial offer has been made and rejected but negotiations are continuing. Donation pledges through the DRLT are being collected for the specific purchase which can be returned if a deal is not reached.

Hall Street 1-acre Land Donation

Owner is offering to donate a land-locked single acre to the town which abuts existing conservation open space associated with Alexander Way.

Al S. made a motion to recommend to the Select Board the acceptance of the land donation for conservation purposes to be administered by the Conservation Commission. Motion seconded by Marijan. Motion passed 4-0-1, with Leah abstaining.



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Al S. made a motion to adjourn at 8:15pm. Motion seconded by Marijan. – Motion passed unanimously.

The Conservation Commission will meet next Monday, February 12th at 6:30pm, at the town hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Rock
Administrative Assistant
Dunstable Conservation Commission

APPROVED