

Leverett Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 6, 7:15pm

Leverett Town Hall - First Floor Meeting Room
9 Montague Road, Leverett, MA

The meeting was called to order at 7:17 p.m. by Commission Chair, Isaiah Robison.

Commissioners Present: Laurie Brown, Maggie Kraus, David Powicki, Isaiah Robison, Ralph Tiner
Public Attendees: Dean Gustafson (Soil/wetlands scientist, All-Points Technology Corporation), Carl Gehring (Planning and Zoning Agent for Verizon Wireless), Deb Leonardo (Administrative Assistant, All-Points), Jacob Macko (W.D. Cows Forestry Technician); Mitch Mulholland (Friends of Leverett Pond), Gregg Woodard (Friends of Leverett Pond); Jono Neiger (prospective Commissioner)

- Reviewed and approved February 6, 2017 minutes. Unanimously approved (motion made by David Powicki, seconded by Isaiah Robison)

- 7:20 p.m. Public Meeting for Request of Determination of Applicability - All-Points Technology Corporation for Cellco Partnership (d/b/a Verizon Wireless)
 - Verizon proposes to construct a monopole wireless telecommunications facility at 309 ½ Long Plain Rd. The proposed gravel access road would pass inside the 100' Buffer Zone of a confirmed vernal pool/Bordering Vegetated Wetland.
 - The Commission discussed the project's impact to vernal pool inhabitants. Dean clarified that the schedule for the project is not yet solidified, and may potentially occur in the salamander migration period next spring. He will recommend to postpone construction if work is slated to occur during a high migration period.
 - Ralph Tiner recommended that a sign be placed permanently to remind construction and maintenance workers of the possibility of herpetofauna on the site.
 - Jono Neiger asked about plowing and road maintenance on the site. Dean replied that the road would only be plowed as necessary, for a service call. The potential impacts of sediment and salt were discussed.
 - The project needs to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Boards.
 - Isaiah Robison made a motion to issue a **Negative 3 determination**, under the following conditions:
 - *Work will not be conducted between March 1 and May 15.*
 - *A sign will be permanently placed on the worksite to remind and notify workers of potential herpetofauna.*
 - *Road salt will not be applied in the work site.*
 - *The Conservation Commission will be notified 48 hours in advance of the commencement of work.*
 - Seconded by David Powicki; vote unanimous.

- 7:47pm DEP 200-0166: Friends of Leverett Pond Annual Proposal for 2017

- Mitch Mulholland and Greg Woodard presented their invasive weed management plan for Leverett Pond in 2017. The proposal consists of two herbicide applications over 8 acres: Diquat in the spring to treat curly-leaf pondweed, and 2,4-D/Triclopyr at the end of June to treat Eurasian milfoil. FLP also proposes to use a hydrorake over 4 of these acres. Handraking and use of geotextile fabrics are also planned. No new chemicals or techniques are part of the plan.
- The FLP is also working on obtaining the necessary permits for repairing the dam. They have mapped out a potential right-of-way that may pass through some wet patches. The Commission will schedule a site visit to determine the WPA implications of the road.
- Isaiah Robison made a motion to approve the FLP's 2017 Annual Proposal. Seconded by Ralph Tiner, vote unanimous.
- 8:07pm p.m. Administrative Matters
 - Commission membership
 - Maggie Kraus has been confirmed and sworn in as a commissioner.
 - Jono Neiger attended the meeting as a prospective commissioner. With his extensive experience in ecological landscape design and also as a conservation commission agent in Palmer, Jono was welcomed to the Commission. His nomination to the commission was approved by David Powicki and seconded by Ralph Tiner. Vote unanimous.
 - Jono has already been appointed by the Selectboard, with his appointment contingent on approval from the Commission.
 - Isaiah will prepare a short speech for Town Meeting to acknowledge Chris Nelson's 19 years of service.
 - Report from MACC Annual Conference
 - Maggie and Miho attended workshops on low-impact design, flood resilience, enforcement, solar arrays, and wildlife habitat evaluations.
 - Expiry of Open Space and Recreation Plan
 - The OSRP needs to be updated for Leverett to be eligible for certain grants from the Division of Conservation Services.
 - Agent will reach out to the FRCOG for assistance with this project.
 - Leverett Planning Board Hearing: Variance for solar tracker at 54 Cave Hill Rd (March 22, 7:45pm)
 - No wetlands issues were identified at the site.
 - Reserve Fund transfers
 - The Expenses account is nearly empty. A reserve fund transfer request was made for \$287.45 to cover the costs of the MACC Conference and for a training webinar.
 - Community Preservation Act Trails Grant Application
 - The application was presented at a public hearing on March 1. The CPC will be voting on April 5 to determine whether the project will continue to Town Meeting.

- Teawaddle Hill Farm - Response from Kestrel
 - Kestrel has a stewardship endowment for the property, to be used to protect the property in case of illegal events.
 - Kestrel would be happy to support a CPA request to improve trails, including fundraising a match.
 - Leverett Trails Appreciation Day at the Bill Rivers Property
 - Tentative date: June 3, 10:00am - 1:00pm
 - The Trails Committee mapped a proposed route in the eastern portion of the Bill Rivers property, to be unveiled at the Appreciation Day event.
 - The Kings of Leverett Exhibit and Dedication
 - On Saturday, 4/1 at 3:30pm, The Conservation Commission will host a dedication event at the covered bridge in the Gordon King property.
 - *Note: The Commission voted to start at 2:30pm, but the event organizers could not begin earlier than 3:30pm.*
 - David will prepare a short speech for the dedication.
 - Senior & Fitness Trail: a small group will be meeting on March 9 to discuss the proposed trail by the elementary school.
- 8:28 p.m. Old Business
 - 51 Camp Rd Update
 - Agent received a call from a resident concerned about digging near Leverett Pond. Agent re-visited the site and confirmed that the work is being conducted as approved in the Determination of Applicability. The resident was contacted with this information.
 - 8:32 p.m. New Business (Issues around town)
 - Old Coke Kiln Rd Bridge
 - The Highway Department is contracting with MacFarland-Johnson to construct a new bridge at Old Coke Kiln Rd. The proposed wooden bridge will be constructed within the footprint of the road, and the abutments will not be impacted. There may be minor impact to the Bordering Land Subject to Flooding during installation of guardrails. MacFarland-Johnson is planning to file a RDA for the project.
 - Considering the short lifespan of a wooden bridge, Isaiah will discuss with the Highway Department about installing a more durable structure, perhaps with concrete stringers.
- Next Meeting Date(s): April 3, 2017, 7:15 p.m.
 - Meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m. (motion made by Ralph Tiner, seconded by Isaiah Robison).