

Leverett Conservation Commission

Date: Monday, November 6, 2023

Remote Zoom Meeting

In Attendance:

Julia Firl, Voting member
Seth Heminway, Voting member
Joan Deely, Voting member
Jono Neiger, Voting member
Gail Berringer, Voting member

Melissa Coady (Tighe & Bond)
David Askew (Eversource)

Meeting start time: 7:02 PM

Minutes

1. Attendance

2. Review & Approval of Minutes

- September 18th Meeting: approved
- October 26th Meeting: approved with minor edits from Seth and Jono

3. Public Hearing/Public Meeting

- Update from Robbs on landscape planning process @ 51 Camp Rd. – not present
- NOI hearing 184 N. Leverett Rd. (Bob Dolan, Eversource) – storm washout remediation
NOTES: Melissa shared ortho-map; damage was to Eversource ROW and private properties; red polygon is deposition area; remove deposits; up to 2 feet deep; replant w/ native veg; use skid steer to remove material to dump truck; won't try to remove every bit of material (don't want to do more harm than good in more thickly forested areas); Jono – also concerned about activity causing more harm than good. Equipment will work around trees on access road (no cutting planned, but maybe some selective limbing and brush removal); See Section 3 of narrative, first bullet; there may be 2 small trees (10" DBH) on the Dolan property that may need to be removed within the 100' buffer zone; placement of timber mats and gravel... is this necessary? David says definitely matting will be necessary to not tear up woods road; if gravel has to be used in certain areas, straw wattles will be used down-gradient; erosion control measures as needed between access road and wetland; LCC wants to see erosion measures when installed (before work); LCC needs to know when

project is scheduled to begin; no plastic webbing will be used in wattles; 12"x12" timber "mats" made of logs are 4'x16'; mats will be removed and hauled offsite; matted roadway will also be restored by hand once equipment and mats are moved; Lukens property contains the woods road, which will be used to access the Dolan property; yellow hatched area will be HAND RESTORED due to inability to get equipment in there; Jono says there may be other areas (e.g. behind outbuilding) that may also warrant hand restoration; 6-foot wide mini skid steer, rubber trax, (Bobcat) w/ blade; Gail – how will equipment get across streams? Timber mats, or maybe lighter rubber mats over streams; Eversource will leave up to contractor; Joan – how long will process take? 2 weeks from mobilization to de-mobilization; will have small staging area on road; plan is to do work before winter sets in; restoration plantings will occur in the spring; how will site be stabilized? Ans: lots of wattles across entire wetland; expect sedimentation will continue minimally through the winter; what is the status of the stream that got washed out? Dave: will try to remove 6" at a time to find "original" channel and restore to that channel; Tighe and Bond will be on site for 2.5 days; Gail – what measures will be taken to try to prevent another event like this? Eversource has completely restored ROW road; has installed 5 new water bars upslope and re-structure drainage ditch at top of hill that was main source of flow issue; level spreaders, etc.; entire washout was upslope of new culvert that was fairly recently installed; Seth – is there any federal or state guidance for increasing frequency of major rain events? Can ConComs have a role in encouraging new legislation or funding for climate change remediation? Eversource has internal team of engineers, etc. to handle more frequent issues with all their gravel roads; Jono – will there be any changes to maintenance schedule? Eversource inspects all roads and ROWs regularly; top of road was eroded, but not completely covered in sediment; road was since restored and has lots of runoff controls; Jono – recommends thin layer of straw over bare soil over the winter (yes – in plan!); straw mulch will likely be removed prior to planting and re-done if necessary post planting; Jono – is Bob Dolan aware that even more shrubs/veg will be removed due to use of equipment? Eversource – says yes, he's aware; the sediment largely wiped out the vegetation; shrub area behind shed will not be touched with equipment; David shared photo from 7/19/23 of complete coverage of shrub/herbaceous veg by sediment; Joan – will new soil need to be added? Suitable soil matrix is expected to remain intact; if it's not damaged/compacted/accidentally hauled off, we'll have to revisit; clean fill is extremely hard to find – especially for use in wetlands!; wetland delineation was based on best estimates based on field visits after the flood event; Jono wondering if extent of delineated wetlands is true/correct; OOC – inform LCC of when removal work will be done and when planting will be done; Lukens asked that wood debris be removed from middle stream channel to prevent flow diversions; mats will be removed in winter; plantings will be done all by hand (no need for mats or equipment)

Tighe & Bond will record OOC; send original OOC to Tighe and Bond; Gail motion to approve NOI as submitted w/ amendments; Seth second; Melissa may record during rebuttal period;

- Friends of North Leverett Sawmill (FONLS) – not present
- Julie Evans Marlowe: renovation/addition @ 101 Shutesbury Rd – not present; Joan explained filing process

4. Administrative Matters

- 3 signatures on RDA for Kevin Schnell; Scan & send to Jono to sign digitally; digital copy is okay to proceed, but it needs to be hand delivered or sent via registered mail; make 4 hardcopies (1 to landowner; 1 for LCC records; 1 copy for DEP; 1 to Kevin Schnell) RDAs can be signed & submitted digitally
- LCC representation @ Nov. 14th Town Meeting – Joan & Seth can likely attend; Bridget will be there;
- Update on hiring Erin Jacque – Jono spoke w/ Margie; will be voted on by Selectboard this week. Salary rate to be \$28 per hour, interim Agent, 2-4 hours per week; weekly digest of messages/happenings/requests to LCC;
- Julia: send out draft job description for LCC to share w/ Shutesbury – include enough flexibility to be able to hire Erin & accept applications from others
- Update on records retention, more storage – Joan in continuing conversations
- Seth, Joan, & Jono in favor of transitioning to in person meetings;
- 2 cutting plans – 1 @ Sarah Todd's property; New England Forestry Foundation/David Smith property on Shutesbury Rd;
- Farewell & thank you to Gail Berrigan who has served on the LCC since April 2019

5. Adjourn – Julia motion to adjourn; Joan second; all in favor

Meeting end time: 8:31 PM