

SOUTH HADLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

June 8, 2009

Approved at 7/20/09 meeting.

PRESENT: Jack Fleming, Chair; James Canning, and Dennis Swartwout (7:05 PM). Brad Allen excused. Janice Stone, Conservation Administrator.

7:00 PM OPEN FORUM Opportunity for the public to come in and ask questions, discuss wetland concerns with the Conservation Commission. Janice gave the Commissioners updates on the following items: Conservation land projects (girls scouts completing painting of two main trails at Black Stevens between Plains School and High School, someone else is painting other trails without permission, Janice has emailed Mount Holyoke College student to find out if she finished invasive species report for Bachelor Brook property); Apple Rd (discussion about what kind of permanent monumentation should be used, decided pressure treated wood 4' high better than iron stakes in ground); Beachgrounds Park (lighting has been approved without Amendment to OOC); Orchards Visit on June 17 at 9 AM; St Patrick's church parking lot expansion project (Janice spoke with applicant and representative, delay due to investigation for contaminated soils, results last week and then they will decide about going forward); Janice met with DAR staff about the McCray APR and got some estimates on appraisal value and cost and process; Shadowbrook detention basin (work has been completed and woody vegetation removed from inside fence, but no vegetation in pond yet and some areas of slope need to be reseeded); Granby landfill has filed for an expansion onto land in South Hadley off Bartlett Street; gate at Town Farm/Bachelor Brook (ATV has driven around gate and into cornfield, what next?).

7:15 PM DISCUSSION on a Request for an Amendment to the Order of Conditions (288-392) for the *Mill at Stoney Brook*, for vegetation removal for dam maintenance at 124 College Street. Kate Dempsey from the condo association was present to answer questions. She explained that they are advised to perform vegetation removal and maintenance on the areas within 10 or 20' of the dam. Their present maintenance Order does not include vegetation removal near the river or dam. They are requesting that this new work be considered as an Amendment, and that the Commission not require a new Notice of Intent. Commission discussed project. Dennis then made a motion to approve considering this dam maintenance as an Amendment to the present Orders. Jim seconded, all voted in favor. They can now submit plans and publish a legal notice for a public hearing on this next meeting June 29th.

7:20 PM OLD & NEW BUSINESS. Bills Payable. Jim reviewed, and made a motion to approve the payment of the bills. Dennis seconded, all voted in favor. Updates. Janice discussed with the Commission options for permanent monumentation at *Apple Rd* lots. Surveyor has installed some rebar with gray PVC pipe around it, a couple feet out of the ground. This is probably okay for woodland, but in the backyards of houses could the owners do something else? Needs to be "permanent" (at least difficult to remove), and visible from the road, so we can see that it is being adhered to. Discussion of 8' long pressure treated 4x4s, half in the ground, or large rocks/boulders, granite posts. How tall should they be? Costs? Rebar is probably too dangerous, if people run into it. Discussion to be continued. APR status. Janice met with Dept of Agricultural Resources last week about appraisals, estimate of development value? McCray is now on the list for an appraisal. If some party is willing to cover part or all of the cost, that project will go higher on the list. Janice will meet with some town personnel and get back to the Commission about the appraisal. *Orchards* site visit next week (17th). *Rt 47 bridge* "parking area". Riverfront, but cleared and not loamed and reseeded. Large rocks in part of frontage lead cars in for parking. Much larger area than was there before. Janice had contacted the state about completing the project. Jim Reidy said they will do whatever Conservation wants to finish area.

7:30 PM DISCUSSION on the proposed expansion of the *South Hadley landfill*, with presentation by Jim Reidy, DPW superintendent, and Yem Lip, town engineer. The Chair started with a statement that the Commission was disappointed that they have not been involved in the negotiations on the expansion before this. They expect to be from now on. Jim said the last year and a half has been primarily dealing with the financial and legal aspects of the contract. Jim and Yem did a powerpoint slide show describing the parts of the project of concern to the Commission (expansion of footprint into Bynan Conservation Area, and impacts on wetlands and endangered species). Discussed vertical expansion with MSE berm, and lateral expansion into 21 more acres of Bynan land. Vertical would provide 1-3 years, while lateral is underway. MSE wall could be up to 32' tall, final elevation of landfill to 405'. Jim showed map (Exhibit A) that shows limit of possible land to work with for expansion. Janice asked why map does not show the compost area as (available) land fill land and swapped land for conservation off limits. Commission discussed with Jim that compost land should be shown and tallied as part of landfill land already in such use. Exhibit A does not show compost area as landfill land. It should not be considered part of conservation land now. Compost area is town's responsibility, but not conservation land. Jim said compost land will not be considered part of 101 acres of conservation land. Brian Duncan discussed history of compost area swap; should the 5 acres be considered part of the indeterminate 21 acres? Discussion about compost area and land available for new landfill. Whole outside boundary is 162 acres. Original 40 acres delineated for landfill expansion. Leaves 122 acres, with 101 acres to remain in conservation land. The 5 acres of compost land, not shown within 40 acre landfill boundary, should not be part of that 101, so that leaves 16 new acres for landfill expansion. All agreed in the end that the Bynan conservation land must be at least 101 acres, and not include the present compost area. The lateral expansion could add 13 years to the life of the landfill. Janice asked what the minimum size expansion would be to be financially viable for the applicant, another 13 as in the past? Not known.

After the landfill agreement is approved by Town Meeting the applicant will move forward with the permitting for wetlands impact, replication, endangered species habitat etc. Discussion of financial assurance mechanism to cover the cost for repair or replacement of MSE berm. A MSE berm of this size has not been approved by DEP in the state as of yet. The Town is responsible for the landfill site after closure (6 months after closing, filling and capping). Questions about landfill liners and liability over time for the Town. If the landfill expands to 2 million cubic yds or more, Interstate will be responsible for groundwater concerns postclosure forever. Brian asked if the Town will require more monitoring wells for the 21 acre expansion area. Groundwater and gas monitoring around the perimeter will be required. A lot more permitting review still to come from DEP. Jim Reidy said the site assignment application has just been submitted, and hearings will start soon. No expansion is guaranteed. When will Conservation review begin? Sometime after agreement approved at Town Meeting. Should be soon. Commission thanked Jim and Yem. Commission discussed landfill issues a little more. Definitely need to be included in negotiations about where the 101 acres will be. Need certified proof of the 101 acres.

8:45 PM ADJOURNMENT. Jim made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Dennis, and all voted in favor. Next Conservation Commission meeting will be June 29, 2009 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Stone

Janice Stone,
Conservation Administrator