

Holland Conservation Commission
27 Sturbridge Road, Holland, MA 01521

HCC Minutes for April 25, 2023

Note: This meeting was held in the Community Room. The remote participants used the Go-To-Meeting app. The meeting was recorded.

Members attending: Rick Lundin, Samuel Spratlin, Dawn Kamay, Jessica Wales, Marcia Beal and Agent George Russell.

Members of the public who attended: Stacy Stout, Town Administrator; Glen Krevosky of 601 Main St., N. Oxford, Mike Thibault representing the owners of 32-34 Hamilton Drive, and Karen Peret of 79 Sturbridge Road.

Carl Hammond and Andy Harhay attended remotely.

Dawn Kamay called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

The Commission reviewed the April 11, 2023 minutes. Changes were required and Rick Lundin made a motion that the minutes be approved at the next meeting after the changes are made. Sam Spratlin seconded the motion and all approved.

Site visits made were:

Lot 12 Vinton Road

34 Hamilton Drive, owners Adam Jeskey and Jennifer Messina

33 Lee Avenue, owners Brian and Ellen Scully

19 Lee Avenue, owner Sam Spratlin.

Discussion:

The Commission is able to use \$2,000 a year from its own funds. Jessica Wales will pursue the purchase of a new computer which both the Agent and the Town Administrator reported was not “fixable” and should be replaced.

On May 11, 2023 between 10 and 2 PM Jean Pillo will present a program on lake monitoring in Woodstock CT at Ramon Lake.

The discussion on highway permits was tabled.

As per Town Bylaw 15.5.2 we need to ascertain the current tax status of any property which is the subject of a permit. Agent George Russell has developed a form for tax compliance which was adopted

by the Commission at its last meeting with the one change of deleting the owner's name and substituting the map/parcel number. The Holland Tax Collector is on board with this form and process. Jessica Wales said that as of April 25, 2023 we will require a signed form indicating tax compliance.

Agent George Russell presented a proposed legal ad which indicates all legal notices will need to indicate if a request is based upon the Wetlands Protection Act or on local by-laws or both. Further, all votes by the Commission on a permit must indicate if the project is being approved under the WPA, the local by-law or both.

To comply with the Open Meeting Law, all hearings are scheduled for 7:00 PM. Unless there are compelling reasons to do otherwise, they will be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda.

Public Hearings

7:05 PM - Wetlands Specialist Krevosky presented plans for a continued hearing for Gayon Don Amarasinghe for a single family home as shown on Map 5 lot C 1.1, aka Lot 12 on Vinton Road on the Sturbridge-Holland line. The applicant proposes to create a 1,035 square foot wildlife vernal pool improvement from a bordering vegetated shrub swamp area located 70 feet south of the proposed house. Revisions were sent today. The lawn was moved 24 feet from the pool area. Monuments will indicate wetland areas. Wattles will be placed and there will be no stock pile of removed material. The seller allows for a permit process to go forward before the property is purchased. The date of April 25, 2023 constitutes the final revision date on the plans. A 20 foot buffer is created around the proposed wild life impoundment where no lawn area will be allowed. At 7:32 PM the hearing was closed by a motion from Jessica Wales, seconded by Rick Lundin and passed by all. Jessica Wales then made a motion to accept plan A which was seconded by Rick Lundin and then passed by all with the stipulations as recommended by the Agent.

7:30 PM - RDA for Sam Spratlin of 19 Lee Avenue who wishes to install a 130 square foot patio 20 feet from the lake using permeable pavers and no stock pile. Jessica Wales made a motion to close the hearing and approve the RDA with a negative 3 determination. Rick Lundin seconded the motion and all approved.

7:42 PM – NOI # 184-0425 – 34 Hamilton Drive – Adam Jeskey and Jennifer Messina wish to replace the 170 foot stone retaining wall. There will be no stock pile and no straw wattles are needed. At 7:49 Jessica Wales made a motion to close the hearing which was seconded by Rick Lundin and all approved. Jessica then made a motion to approve the stone wall plan dated April 25, 2023 which Rick Ludin seconded and all approved.

7:53 PM – RDA from Brian and Ellen Scully of 33 Lee Avenue wish to rebuild the steps into the waterway by hand. At 7:55 Jessica Wales made a motion to close the hearing and to pass the approved plans with an RDA Negative 2 determination. Sam Spratlin seconded the motion and all approved.

The meeting continued with a discussion with Stacy Stout, the Town Administrator, and Karen Peret of the Finance Board as an interested party. Their purpose was to find out what duties could be done by a clerk instead of by HCC members and the Agent. A chart was presented that none of the members of the Commission had seen which really needed to be a meeting in itself. Jessica Wales wanted the Commission to review the list that was presented which the Commission did. Members Sam Spratlin, Dawn Kamay and Marcia Beal were upset that the budget prepared without our knowledge was to reduce our Agent's hours by half and a clerk who was a friend of Jessica Wales would do these extra

duties that were already being done by certified MACC members and our fully experienced Agent. Members of the Commission felt it would take considerable time to train the clerk. It was stated that two of our clerks did not wish to work with Agent George Russell and they did not want to share the office. We went several months after that using a clerk who trained for a month and then was removed to work on Stacy Stout's special projects. She had worked four hours a week for the Commission and now there was no clerk.

We have all worked hard and we have one of the most successful Commissions in Town Hall. Dawn Kamay and Marcia Beal attended a Select Board meeting and were told that Stacy Stout was in charge of the Commission as she represented the Select Board. Marcia Beal stated she could not understand why they would destroy a successful department and what was to be gained from doing this?

During the Conservation Commission meeting members of the Commission expressed their feeling of lack of respect for the members. Dawn Kamay and Marcia Beal considered quitting the Commission. Stacy Stout considered returning the hours to the Agent, but distress was felt by everyone. Marcia Beal suggested Stacy Stout's list be sent to the Commission members to examine and make comments for a future time, but the information presented to the Commission during the meeting had to be completed by the following Thursday for the budget meeting.

9:27 PM – Sam Spratlin made a motion to close the meeting which was seconded by Rick Lundin and all approved.

The Agent's report is attached to and made part of the minutes.

Marcia Beal
Secretary