



MICHAEL PAIEWONSKY
Chair

CITY OF MELROSE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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Melrose Conservation Commission Minutes for December 19, 2024

Present: Michael Paiewonsky, Paul Moore, Forest Tiedeman, Jason Jancitis, Charles McCabe, and Emily Anderson. Associate member Kaitlyn Calhoun was also present.

Absent: Craig Molway and Associate member Dorian Rose were absent.

Staff present: Ingrid Winkler

Mr. Paiewonsky opened the public meeting at 7:30 pm. All members participated in person.

Public Comment: None.

Review of Minutes:

Conservation Commission members reviewed draft minutes from November 21, 2024, meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to approve meeting minutes for the November 21, 2024, meeting, seconded by Mr. Moore. Motion approved 6-0.

110 Penney Road:

At the last meeting, the Conservation Commissioners considered giving the homeowner, Chad Higgins, a deadline to have the wetland delineation completed and discussed best management practices to minimize damage to the resource area from erosion and sedimentation. They asked staff to contact the homeowner to request that the homeowner install a silt fence and straw bales or wattles and spread straw on the slope to prevent some of the inevitable erosion from rainfall. Staff reached out to Mr. Higgins with these requests on November 25 and again on December 3, December 10, December 12, and December 16 to emphasize the time sensitive nature of the request. On December 3, Mr. Higgins confirmed his phone number and said that he did in fact receive emails from staff, however since then, staff had not heard back from Mr. Higgins. On December 16, staff left a voice mail message inviting him to attend this meeting. It appears that no erosion controls were installed on the property when staff drove by the property on December 19.

Discussing next steps to achieve compliance, the Commissioners decided to seek advice from the City Solicitor. Staff will reach out to the City Solicitor. Staff will also revisit the encroachment onto Conservation Land behind 155-157 Main Street.

Bench in Memory of Eric Devlin:

DPW removed the damaged tree at Ell Pond Park along Main Street, however the tree replacement has not yet been scheduled; it will most likely happen in the spring. The plaque will be funded by OPCD. The Commissioners approved the design of the plaque, and staff will place the order.

Naming natural features and trails: A resident recently contacted staff to inquire about naming a peak in Sea View Park. Staff learned that naming geographic features is complicated and not something that the City of Melrose is able to pursue.

Trail Steward Program:

A new trail steward report identified some large metal objects within Flagg Acres along the “pink” trail that appear to have been there for a long time. Staff was unable to locate the objects and has reached out to the trail steward for more precise location information.

Staff suggested that perhaps volunteers could help monitor conservation parcels around the City, sending staff periodic reports or contacting staff if issues arise. Staff will reach out to the trail steward list to see if any of the volunteers might be interested in stewardship of conservation parcels in their neighborhoods.

Pond Maintenance updates:

After the Conservation Commission received the End of Year Report for ponds maintenance from Water & Wetlands (W&W) on Tuesday, staff had a discussion with Joe from W&W regarding plans for ponds maintenance in 2025. Based on that discussion and recommendations from the W&W End of Year Report, the Commission is considering taking a different approach for treatment of Ell Pond than what was done in previous years. The new approach would incorporate more monitoring and sampling, using sampling results to determine treatment plans. Most likely, algaecide treatment will be required as in the past. The Conservation Commission will try a public education/outreach campaign to reduce the use of fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen and phosphorus. Water quality will hopefully also improve when the Ell Pond Park Stormwater Management Plan is implemented. Phase I of the Plan aims to address some of these issues. W&W suggested trying relatively low-cost filters called EutroSORB, placed at the inlets (there are 5), at a cost of approximately \$250 each. These would need to be replaced after 8-12 weeks. This, along with improvements from reduced nutrient load, might help control phosphorus.

The Commissioners discussed doing more testing and sampling. They would like to test the inflows to see what enters Ell Pond and, if the EutroSORB filters are used, sampling above and below the filters to determine their effectiveness. While W&W said that the filters can be very effective, that is not necessarily true in every scenario. Staff will reach out to W&W and other municipalities to inquire about their experiences using EutroSORB filters.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be January 16, 2025, at 7:30 PM.

Motion made by Mr. Tiedeman to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Moore. Motion approved 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. 39, 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.