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Chair

CITY OF MELROSE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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Melrose Conservation Commission Minutes for January 16, 2025

Present: Paul Moore, Forest Tiedeman, Jason Jancaitis, Charles McCabe, and Emily Anderson.

Absent: Michael Paiewonsky, Craig Molway and Associate members Dorian Rose and Kaitlyn Calhoun were absent.

Staff present: Ingrid Winkler

Mr. Moore opened the public meeting at 7:32 pm. All members participated in person.

Public Comment: None.

Review of Minutes:

Conservation Commission members reviewed draft minutes from December 19, 2024, meeting.

Motion made by Mr. McCabe to approve meeting minutes for the December 19, 2024, meeting, seconded by Mr. Jancaitis. Motion approved 5-0.

110 Penney Road:

On behalf of the Conservation Commission, staff sent repeated requests to the property owner to stabilize the site where soil had been disturbed during previous unpermitted work. The requests were that the homeowner apply a layer of straw mulch on the sloped area and install a row of filter fabric, backed by staked straw bales or wattles, along the limit of activity between the disturbed areas and the wetland. The homeowner did not respond to the requests and as of January 15, it did not appear that any site stabilization has been attempted.

Staff reached out to the City Solicitor who recommended that she send a letter to the homeowner compelling him to comply with the Commission's request before beginning any enforcement actions. Staff will follow up with the City Solicitor.

Encroachments onto Conservation Land:

A garage behind the property at 155-157 Main Street is encroaching (located almost entirely) on a City-owned Conservation parcel on Mount Vernon Avenue. Staff drafted a letter to the property owner of 155-157 Main Street regarding this encroachment issue and will ask the City Solicitor to review the letter before it is sent to the property owner via certified mail. Staff compiled a list of other City-owned Conservation parcels with apparent encroachment issues

and, at the Commission's request, will draft an encroachment policy and an educational flyer to share with the public and post on the Commission's webpage with information about Conservation Land. The Commissioners discussed the possible designation of certain paper streets and other City-owned parcels as Conservation Land so that they would fall under the care, custody, and protection of the Conservation Commission. Staff will look into this process and research grant opportunities for Conservation Land acquisitions.

Pond Maintenance updates:

During the last meeting, the Commissioners discussed doing more testing and sampling, especially for Ell Pond, and using analytical results to guide the treatments of the ponds in order to be more deliberate with those treatments. Continuing that discussion, it was suggested that, prior to installation of any filters (EutroSORB filters recommended by Water & Wetlands), samples should be collected during or after a rain event from all inflows into Ell Pond as well as in the middle of Ell Pond to get a better understanding of the sources of phosphorus in Ell Pond. The Commissioners had questions about the flow capacity through the EutroSORB filters and whether those filters can back up. Staff will reach out to Water & Wetlands for clarification on their proposal and quote. Staff will also check expiration dates for previous pond permits and whether the Order of Conditions for Ell Pond might cover control of invasive species other than water chestnuts. Staff will reach out to the Parks Department regarding filing a Request for Determination of Applicability for vegetation management around Ell Pond to cover invasive species management and any tree work, to be done at the discretion of a trained arborist for the health and well-being of trees around the pond.

Bench in Memory of Eric Devlin:

The plaque for the bench in memory of Eric Devlin was ordered.

Trail Steward Program:

Staff located some large metal objects that had been reported by a trail steward along a trail between Mount Hood and Flagg Acres. Staff was unsure about whether to try to have them removed by DPW. The objects are quite large, partially buried, difficult to unearth given their location, snow and leaf cover and frozen ground. When weather conditions improve, staff will coordinate with DPW to clean remove the objects and clean up the trail.

Other Updates:

The Building Department received a request from the contractor at 43 Rivers Lane for a final building inspection and wanted to confirm with the Conservation Commission that all conditions of their Order of Conditions (DEP# 217-0228) were met. No request for a Certificate of Compliance (COC) has been submitted. Staff notified the Building Department of the requirements to receive a COC from the Conservation Commission.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be February 13, 2025, at 7:30 PM.

Motion made by Mr. Tiedeman to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McCabe. Motion approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 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.