



CITY OF MELROSE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 979-4312
Fax - (781) 979-4290

Melrose Conservation Commission Minutes for February 11, 2016

Present: Susan Murphy, Zachary Drench, Kevin Anderson , Aaron Weieneth, Richard Doucette and Kate Hickey

Absent: Michael Paiewonsky

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Minutes:

Motion by Mr. Anderson to approve the minutes, with revisions, from January 21, 2016. Mr. Weieneth seconded the motion and it was voted 6-0 in favor.

53 Dexter Rd- The applicant submitted a written request for a continuance.

Motion by Ms. Murphy to continue to March 10, 2016. Ms. Hickey seconded the motion and it was voted 6-0 in favor.

Discussion Items:

Mill Road update- John Scenna-DPW Director, Elena Proakis Ellis- City Engineer and Tom Pawlina of ATP Environmental Associates present. Mr. Pawlina answered questions from the commissioners on the impact analysis. Mr. Weieneth- We were looking for calculations showing that the new pipe wasn't going to increase the flow downstream, and the project complies with the Massachusetts Stormwater Management Standards (specifically Standard 2). Mr. Pawlina- We are working within a budget, I considered the calculations adequate due to minor deviation from original drain pipe. Ms. Murphy- We looked at the impact on Towners pond because the City's property extends past Towners to Swain's pond. Qualitatively this would appear to be insignificant in the context of that larger watershed. However, the commission doesn't have a complete, detailed picture on how well the city has met the performance standards. Mr. Pawlina- The main project was the replacement of an 18" pipe with a 24" pipe, the costs for modeling varies quite a bit and could easily exceed the budget. To accurately characterize the flow we need to know specifics about the outlet, the City didn't have the budget to fully evaluate it. Mr. Anderson- Are there operational controls in place to minimize impacts to abutters during a severe storm? Mr. Pawlina- There is an opportunity

to relieve the pond, the outlet weir has not been evaluated. Ms. Murphy- Outlet weir is not in good condition, perhaps you could invest in some improvements to it. Mr. Anderson- The calculations are conservative in that they were done assuming no outflow from the pond for the downstream condition. The fact that they show negligible impact with none of the flow leaving the pond is a good indicator that there are no downstream impacts. Ms. Murphy stated she would draft and circulate a letter. Mr. Scenna- The legal issue has been settled between the City and the property owner. The only item remaining is the wetland replication area requirement. All piping components replacements have been completed. Plans for the replication area are to be developed over the winter and completed in the spring. Mr. Pawlina- The only good replication area in the immediate vicinity, that I could identify, is well upland near an upstream culvert that is currently being used as a maintenance area. The Commission stated that the replication area is a requirement that must be completed, it needs to go somewhere. The commission would accept an alternative location downstream within the watershed if it would provide a better enhancement. There are several areas along both Swains and Towners ponds that could use replication improvements. Ms. Murphy will look into identifying some other locations for potential replication areas.

Ell Pond Update- Mr. Scenna- The outlet was constructed 8 years ago in Fall 2007. Its purpose is to maintain the water level at elevation 44.7' and the system has worked as designed over the past year. The DPW does periodic checks on the system against the sensor, both weekly and after major storms and logs the results. The sensor has been accurate to within 8 hundredths of an inch to 1 tenth of an inch from the benchmark. In light of the recent lowering of the pond for dewatering in connection with work on Tremont street. All City personnel are familiar with the Order of Conditions regarding the outlet. The Order of Conditions states that any alteration of the elevation of the pond that is not flood related will require a filing with the City. The outlet can lower the water level by .1" over 12 hours. During the dewatering project the lowest the pond went was elevation 43.3' to 43.6', at that elevation islands begin to appear in the pond. During that time the DPW cleaned trash from the inlets where the pond was dry. Mr. Anderson- How long did it take for the pond to refill? Mr. Scenna- It took about two to three weeks to refill (a few rainstorms). Ms. Murphy- There has been a question on whether historic water levels are in agreement with current water levels in the pond, Does the DPW know the invert of the pipe by the dog park? Members of the Ell pond improvement council have indicated that the pipe was underwater before the gate outlet was installed, now it is exposed.

Mr. Scenna- We have no benchmark information on it.

Ms. Murphy- The Commission can change the approved elevation of the pond if needed.

MS4 Stormwater Update- Mr. Pawlina- The City has been pursuing a grant to improve stormwater quality. The City has been divided up into sub drainage areas and samples have been collected from 11 areas on two separate rain events, all through manholes. All drains were checked during dry weather to confirm no flow prior to sampling. First sample storm was 9/30/2015 followed by another sample storm on 11/13/2015, all samples to be tested for Enterococci and fecal coliform and a report is currently being generated. Sub drainage areas D1,D2,B,F,H1,J1 and A3.2 have shown to contain the highest water quality impairment load and are the areas where BMPs on public parcels

such as rain gardens could be implemented to improve water quality. NRCS shows soils with low permeability North of the pond, better permeability on soils East of the pond. Soil boring tests would need to be done to confirm soil suitability in the spring but, two potential sites are Franklin field and Dunton field. The deadline for the conceptual and preliminary design is June 30, 2016. Mr- Doucette- Is there a sense of the total inflow coming into the pond being covered? Mr- Pawlina- Don't have full calculations at this time, some is coming from the adjacent town (Stoneham). Ms. Murphy- Are future grants possible and will they be funded? Mr. Pawlina- Seems likely, Massachusetts department of Coastal Zone Management coordinates the grant program. Ms. Proakis Ellis- There is also an Urban Waters program through the Mystic River Watershed Association, possible opportunity to fulfill educational requirements for the MS4 grant with it. That program uses the Think Blue Maine program as a model.

Next Meeting:

The next scheduled meeting will be Thursday, March 10, 2016 at 7:30 PM.

Adjourn

At 9:30 PM Mr. Weieneth moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Murphy and it was voted 6-0 in favor.

Approved

Date.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, ' 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.
