

Brookline Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 7:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Conference

Commissioners Present: Marcus Quigley (Chair), Roberta Schnoor (Vice Chair), Pallavi Kalia Mande, Werner Lohe, Pamela Harvey, Marian Lazar (Associate)

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: Tom Brady (Conservation Administrator), Katie Weatherseed (Conservation Assistant)

Guests: See attached.

AGENDA REVIEW/MINUTES

M. Quigley opened the meeting. The Commission reviewed the minutes from December 15, 2020.

R. Schnoor made a motion to accept the minutes from December 15, 2020. P. Harvey seconded. All in favor.

MUDDY RIVER UPDATE

T. Brady stated that a significant amount of work is underway at the moment in regards to the Muddy River Project (Phase 2). He stated that he has received good communication from the Army Corps of Engineers and the contractor.

T. Brady stated that the third (and final) set of material handling facilities has been installed near the Victory Garden in Boston. He stated that he is having staff-level discussions regarding the observed water levels, and is looking to schedule a more formal discussion soon. M. Quigley inquired whether all of the material handling will happen near the Victory Garden. T. Brady replied yes. He added that the sediment testing results just came back for Area 1 and it appears that it should be suitable for in-state disposal.

P. Harvey inquired about a possible site visit with the Commissioners. T. Brady stated that he would be happy to schedule a site visit, and added that the site visit should take approximately an hour and a half. M. Quigley noted that he recently noticed the water levels in Leverett Pond were considerably high, and inquired if this might be the result of diversion. T. Brady stated that there is no diversion, but agreed there have been fluctuations in the water level.

STAFF UPDATE

T. Brady stated that the United States Golf Association is coming to The Country Club, and that a related filing will come before the Commission at their next meeting. He stated that he has had a good dialogue with The Country Club. M. Quigley inquired about the timeline. T. Brady said the Brookline U.S. Open is scheduled for 2022.

T. Brady stated that the Request for Determination concerning the MBTA's vegetation management plan has been appealed and is in the hands of DEP.

T. Brady relayed that the Carlton Street Footbridge project is underway and some activity should begin around April. After signage is erected and erosion controls put in place, vegetation removal will be the first task.

T. Brady stated that on Hammond Pond Parkway, near the townhomes, several beavers have been sighted. A previously established stormwater swale in that area has filled in, and T. Brady met with DCR on site regarding its re-establishment. R. Schnoor inquired how the matter came to T. Brady's attention. T. Brady stated that the townhomes flooded.

T. Brady stated that over in Hancock Village there is a large box culvert under Gerry Road. A small drain line was broken by a contractor and caused discharge. Work was immediately paused, and there was a moderate discharge of silt.

T. Brady stated that some utility work took place on Independence Drive, however proper erosion control measures were not utilized, and water was discharged into a nearby catchbasin. T. Brady has alerted the abutters.

T. Brady stated that the DPW may soon be looking for some letters of support for some grant moneys for the Hall's Pond forebay and the headwall at Leverett Pond. He asked that if any of the Commissioners are in Hall's Pond and see people playing hockey on the pond, please notify the police. There are aerators running year round under the water, and it is not safe.

T. Brady stated that work is about to start back up again at 280 Warren Street.

The new director of the Parks and Open Space Division was recently announced, and the Commissioners should have received an email notifying them. T. Brady noted that she used to serve as the Climate Change Director for Mass Audubon. M. Quigley thanked W. Lohe for representing the Committee on the selection team.

T. Brady stated that he will be presenting an online workshop at an MACC online event at the end of March regarding trees in wetlands.

Erica Holm was present and introduced herself- she is the field operations coordinator for the Emerald Necklace Conservancy. She just wanted to drop by and hear what work is taking place in Brookline. M. Quigley stated that she is more than welcome and hopes to see her in the future.

K. Weatherseed provided an update on the Urban Forest Climate Resiliency Master Plan. She stated that there was some delay in regards to the LiDAR analysis, but work is now underway. She also noted that some additional trees have been identified for the stem by stem inventory.

T. Brady stated that the Division is anticipating some budget crunches moving forward.

T. Brady discussed the recent storm. He noted that the snow was heavy and there was substantial tree damage. He added that the park rangers are looking through the sanctuaries for hazards.

ADJOURN

P. Harvey made a motion to adjourn. P. K. Mande seconded. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by K. Weatherseed