

Brookline Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 7:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Conference

Commissioners Present: Marcus Quigley (Chair), Roberta Schnoor (Vice Chair), Sam Burrington, Will Corrdin, Werner Lohe, Marian Lazar (Associate)

Commissioners Absent: Pallavi Kalia Mande, Pamela Harvey

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 February 2, 2021.

R. Schnoor made a motion to accept the minutes from February 2, 2021. W. Lohe seconded. All in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE NOTICE OF INTENT FOR 191 CLYDE STREET (THE COUNTRY CLUB) FOR UPGRADES TO THE EXISTING CART PATH AND SELECTIVE TREE REMOVAL, SUBMITTED BY BEALS AND THOMAS, INC., ON BEHALF OF THEIR CLIENT, THE COUNTRY CLUB

Mary Kate Schneeweis, of Beals and Thomas, introduced herself and stated that she is representing The Country Club. David Johnson, Director of Grounds at The Country Club, introduced himself and thanked the Commission for their assistance on past projects.

M. K. Schneeweis identified The Country Club on a map and stated that the project in question involves various cart path improvements that are proposed as part of various safety infrastructure improvements for The Club. She stated that some of the work is adjacent to the Primrose Pond, which receives stormwater flow from abutting residents to the north, and then directs that flow southerly through a drainage channel. She stated that the Primrose Pond was expanded in the 1970s when it was artificially manipulated with inlet and outlet control structures. She identified the resource areas associated with the resource: the bank associated with the boundaries of the pond, the drainage channel, land under water, and the bordering vegetated wetland located to the south.

M. K. Schneeweis outlined the proposed work, including widening the cart path to 14 feet (it is currently 10 to 12 feet), which will take place within the 150 foot and 100 foot buffer zones. In association with this widening work, three trees are proposed to be removed. The increase in impervious area will be treated with an

infiltration trench south of the current path. Additionally, the deteriorating concrete headwall that conveys a reinforced concrete pipe beneath the cart path will be replaced. Minor grading will take place. She stated that The Club proposes to either install a pre-cast concrete structure or a pour in place structure with an aesthetic stone veneer to generally improve the aesthetics and safety of that particular feature. The final piece of the project is the removal of two additional trees, as requested by the USGA. She noted that originally five trees were proposed to be removed, but after discussing the matter with T. Brady, the number was reduced. She stated that straw wattles will be placed between the limits of work and the resource areas. M. K. Schneeweis noted that The Club will continue to work with the Commission and provide updates as necessary. She respectfully requested that the Commission issue an Order of Conditions and stated that she would be happy to take any questions at this time.

T. Brady inquired why the infiltration trench has been proposed on the southern side of the pathway as opposed to the northern side. He then asked if the roadway currently grades towards the Primrose Pond and whether the proposed conditions mimic the current condition. M. K. Schneeweis replied that she was uncertain, but could look into the matter. T. Brady commented that the Commission could address that in a condition.

T. Brady and D. Johnson discussed some temporary viewing platforms requested by the USGA that would be located on the western side of the Primrose Pond. D. Johnson stated that a more complete site plan from the USGA will be shared with the Commission at a later date. M. Quigley inquired whether that would require a notice to be filed. D. Johnson stated that if that were the case, the filing would be from the USGA. T. Brady inquired about replanting the shade trees and whether that would impact playability. D. Johnson stated that The Club would likely hope to host a similar event in the future, but that they would be willing to look at potential remediation plantings in different areas around the pond.

R. Schnoor asked why the tree removals were necessary and whether the path could be relocated to avoid the removals. D. Johnson stated that in regards to the three oak trees slated for removal, there are no other feasible alternatives, noting that the road must be centered on the culvert for safety purposes. R. Schnoor commented that the trees appear considerably mature and it will be a loss to have them removed. She added that it is beneficial to have shade near the pond and she would appreciate seeing this function replaced somehow. M. Quigley agreed. T. Brady stated that he appreciates the fact that The Club has decreased the number of trees proposed for removal from five to two. He stated that there seems to be ample opportunity to replant those five shade trees overtime.

M. Quigley inquired about the water management strategy during the replacement of the headwalls. D. Johnson stated that The Club will open a valve and lower the water level, and then use pumps to draw the pond down even further. D. Johnson confirmed that the work on the headwall will be done in the dry. T. Brady noted that

these ponds are unique resources and it is not unusual to see this pond dry in the summer. He believes that the timing would align nicely with this process, and the impact on the intermittent stream would likely be minimal. T. Brady suggested the Commission take a site visit once the snow is gone to understand the impacts, infrastructure and sequencing for the event. He suggested the first week in April or May.

M. Quigley asked if there were any questions or comments from the public. M. K. Schneeweis stated that there was no abutter notification required for this filing due to a provision in the Wetlands Protection Act.

R. Schnoor revisited the matter of the infiltration trench location. S. Burrington stated that the report from Beals and Thomas stated that the grading will drain to the south side, but it did not speak to existing conditions. T. Brady stated that he would want it to mimic the current conditions. M. Quigley asked if M. K. Schneeweis and D. Johnson would be amenable to following up with that information. W. Lohe stated that he feels comfortable including a condition requiring a site plan with the location and grade of the carpath submitted for the Commission's approval. M. K. Schneeweis stated that she can circle back with the engineers regarding the reasoning for locating the infiltration trench on the southern side of the path. D. Johnson confirmed that he can work with T. Brady on the location and grade of the infiltration trench, and welcomed further conversation about replanting shade trees in the area.

R. Schnoor made a motion to close the hearing. W. Lohe seconded. All in favor.

MUDDY RIVER UPDATE

T. Brady stated that dredging is underway. He discussed the reauthorization of the environmental portion of the project, noting that it would involve a full feasibility study. The Commission discussed potential cost estimates for this work and noted that the process would take approximately two to three years to complete, which presents some challenges. T. Brady stated that the Muddy River cabinet would be meeting in early March to discuss this.

M. Quigley inquired whether T. Brady thinks that the water level issue relates to this process. T. Brady responded that he does not believe they are connected. He stated that following March 10th, the next order of business will be to convene a large group and discuss the water level issue.

T. Brady showed images of work area one, identifying the original access point that was included in the Order of Conditions. He noted three potential additional access points that have been proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Commission discussed the benefits and potential challenges of the proposed areas. The Commission approved the second option presented.

STAFF UPDATE

T. Brady thanked the Commission for putting his name forward for Commissioner of the Year. He stated that he was flattered and honored, and feels very lucky that his vocation aligns with his passion. T. Brady stated that the ceremony is scheduled for the evening of April 10th.

T. Brady stated that the new Parks and Open Space Director had her first day yesterday. He stated that the Division is welcoming her on board and helping to transition her in. W. Lohe stated that she is an impressive person and he is excited to see what she does as Director of Parks and Open Spaces.

T. Brady stated that a series of questions have arisen regarding several Conservation Restrictions. He is working to address these questions in a timely manner. He stated that a substantial hazard tree program has started at the Lynch Golf Course. T. Brady also mentioned that the Larz Anderson Lagoon and Hall's Pond are not safe to skate on and signage will be erected indicating this soon.

T. Brady stated that a piece of the Monastery property at Warren Street has been sold, and the Town is engaging with the new owner about the possibility of a Conservation Restriction. It sounds like their intent at this time is to keep the site as it exists now in its open condition.

T. Brady stated that the swale ditch cleaning effort at Hammond Pond Parkway has been completed. He hopes it improves water flow. T. Brady stated that in regards to the Baker School tennis court project, an abutting owner near the Baker School has agreed to provide significant monetary support as well as a new section of boardwalk.

T. Brady stated that in the Order of Conditions for the project at Larz Anderson Park, there was a provision allowing the possibility of dredging. The current bidder has included detritus removal in their bid.

T. Brady welcomed S. Burrington and W. Corrdin to the Commission. The new Commissioners introduced themselves.

K. Weatherseed provided an update on the Urban Forest Climate Resiliency Master Plan. She noted progress to date, including the LiDAR analysis and completion of the stem by stem inventory, and the upcoming public forum.

M. Quigley inquired whether the Commission should issue an Order of Conditions for DEP 120-188, BWB 21-01, The Country Club.

R. Schnoor made a motion to issue an Order of Conditions for DEP 120-188, BWB 21-01, 191 Clyde Street, The Country Club, with additional conditions requiring information pertaining to the infiltration trench, grading, and the replanting of trees. W. Lohe seconded. All in favor.

ADJOURN

R. Schnoor made a motion to adjourn. W. Lohe seconded. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by K. Weatherseed