

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting - 15 March 2021

Members present: Peter Vincent - Chairman, Christina Brown, Bob Avakian, Lil Province, Jeff Carlson
Geoff Kontje

Staff: Jane Varkonda, Lisa Morrison
Also present: Karen Burke from RRK&H

Varkonda reported that the draft final lease was approved by the Stewardship Committee and the ads were placed in the Gazette and the Times.

Burke said that the issue of how maintenance and repairs should be handled was still under discussion. The 2005 lease stated that all maintenance was the responsibility of the tenant. Carlson asked if it made sense to have an inspection beforehand with the new tenant(s). Burke asked who would be responsible for the cost of such an inspection.

Varkonda said that a new roof was recently installed on the Cow Barn as well as new wiring and plumbing. She noted that the horse barn has been largely reconstructed over time. She commented that on the walk around earlier this season, nothing stood out. She said she would be somewhat leery of assuming maintenance for some of the improvements done by TTOR, such as the bathroom in the horse barn. Vincent said he did not want the town to be tied into the responsibility for funding major repairs. Varkonda commented that major repairs had been handled cooperatively in the past, with various town meeting articles.

Avakian asked if the tenant was required to have insurance. Burke replied that they are, but that insurance is not always perfect.

Vincent suggested leaving the lease the way it is. Brown noted that the lease does not prevent the town from pitching in.

Kontje suggested that prior to the lease signing, the Building, Wiring, and Plumbing Inspectors could all do an inspection on behalf of the town of the horse barn and cow barn. Province and Carlson thought this was a good solution. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

Varkonda noted that the silos will shortly be removed. No wireless equipment was ever installed in them. Burke said she would review the section of the leases dealing with the wireless area and make sure that no changes need to be made when the silos are removed from the site.

Varkonda noted that the Burke house will be put on the market soon. She said she had a conversation with Ms. Burke, the owner, recently and was told that a lot of work was needed on the house. Varkonda thought that it would be a good time to find a possible buyer to purchase the house for the town prior to any repairs being done. All agreed.

Attorney Burke said that after reviewing the formula outlined in the current lease for rent increases after the initial terms (5 years for the educational lease, 10 years for the agricultural lease) she came to the conclusion that the formula should not be changed and will make this recommendation to the Stewardship Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:45 p.m.

Approved: _____