

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting – 25 May 2016

Members present: Peter Vincent – Chairman, Lil Province, Christina Brown, Bob Avakian, and Jeff Carlson

Absent: Stuart Lollis, Geoff Kontje

Staff: Jane Varkonda, Lisa Morrison

Farm Institute Jon Previant and Lindsey Brown, Event Director, were present to discuss upcoming special events at the farm. Vincent asked that a new list be submitted showing the times of the proposed events. Ms. Brown noted that the summer camp is already 70% booked and they are currently hosting – along with the youth hostel – 65 girls from Brooklyn. There was some discussion about whether or not yoga was a farm-related activity. Ms. Brown responded that it does bring people to the farm and that, in turn, gets people thinking about agriculture. She said that she did not think the classes would be any larger than ten students and did not think it would have much effect on the traffic situation.

Representatives will return to talk about another possible event, Swine & Dine, which would be scheduled for the end of November.

Vincent asked about the Katama Farm sign. The agent said that the sign needs to be redone. There was also some discussion about having Alan Gowell do a plaque.

The agent said that she is in the process of having Jim Glavin install speed bumps on Aero Avenue. This time the bumps will be wider, so that people cannot drive around them. The road varies in width from between 18 to 30 feet.

Vincent asked about the Master Plan. Mr. Previant responded that they are working on it.

The assistant asked about the rent payment schedule. Mr. Previant said they are working on that as well.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

State Forest Request for a determination of applicability to remove invasive plants in the vicinity of Little Pond. Superintendent Virginia Dautreuil was present to discuss the project. Invasives include bittersweet, autumn olive, glossy buckthorn. Application of herbicide will be either applied by hand to stumps or in a foliar spray via a motorized backpack. Brown asked what kind of herbicide will be used. Ms. Dautreuil replied that it will most likely be Rodeo. The board voted to issue a negative determination.

Cygnus Realty (Kohlberg) NOI to maintain view channel, construct boardwalks, and a boat-storage rack. A report of the site visit was given. Members commented that the site is exemplary in the way it has been managed. No work is currently proposed on the view channel; the applicant is only looking for an order to maintain. Kayak racks will be hidden behind existing vegetation so that they will not be visible from the pond. Boardwalk meets required specifications. Province made a motion to approve the project as presented. Carlson seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Mad Max Request for an amendment to an order to continue installing metal sheathing to the remainder of the bulkhead. Richard Barbini representing applicant. MAC has approved. Sheathing to be installed in the off-season and prior to May 1st. No extension of the piers permitted. Province made a motion to approve the project as presented. Avakian seconded the proposal. Unanimously approved.

Johnson NOI to trim and maintain view channel, off the Boulevard. Nelson Smith from VLS was present for the applicant. A revised plan was submitted and approved. One 7.5 degree view channel will be maintained. A cove of trees up close to the house will be left to help the house be less visible from the pond. The understory may be pruned beyond the trees as discussed with the agent. A stand of phragmites to the right of the view channel may be pruned, provided that the property boundary is confirmed. Avakian made a motion to approve the project as presented. Province seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Rosbeck Sr. It was noted on the Johnson site visit that the view channel on an adjacent property owned by Peter Rosbeck, Sr. had been clear-cut once again. Agent will write up an enforcement order.

Waller Farm In response to a letter from the Land Bank regarding possible incursions onto the Waller Farm by neighbors, the lease with Mr. Talanian for the 1.2 acre parcel was discussed. The lease term has lapsed, however Mr. Talanian has been paying rent on the parcel. It is used primarily as part of a riding rink and horse pasture and is leased at the rate of \$50 per acre. The Land Bank letter mentioned that it appeared that part of the parcel is being used by Mr. Talanian's neighbor Veronica Lundgren as an extension of her lawn. Assistant will contact Mr. Talanian and inform him of the incursion. Assistant will research the rents charged on agricultural lands by other organizations, and estimate the taxes that the town would receive if the farm was taxed the same as privately owned agricultural land.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Approved: _____

