

TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 21st, 2020 – 6:30 PM

LOCATION: Town Administrative Building Meeting Room

Donald Blais, Chair
Dorothy Lawrence, Vice Chair
David Cotter
Peter Izyk
Nicholas Zeo
Brenda Cole
Mike Swiatek

Angela Panaccione, Agent
Sarah Fortune, Assistant

Members Present: Donald Blais, Jr.
Brenda Cole
David Cotter
Peter Izyk
Nicholas Zeo
Mike Swiatek
Angela Panaccione, Conservation Agent
Sarah Fortune, Conservation Assistant

Members Absent: Dorothy Lawrence

Also Present: None

1. **Call to Order:** 6:34 PM – Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair)

2. **Approval of Minutes**

a. 1/7/2020

Motion made by Mike Swiatek to approve the meeting minutes from 1/7/2020 as amended

Motion seconded by Nick Zeo

No further discussion – 6-0-0 – Motion carries

3. **Review Mail/Phone Messages**

a. MACC AEC Sign-ups

Registration is now open for the MACC Annual Environmental Conference, to be held at the College of the Holy Cross on Saturday, February 29th, 2020. Commissioners are welcome to provide their registration to the Assistant, who will register all interested members directly with MACC.

b. Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce Dinner

The Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce invited the Agent to attend their annual dinner, which will occur on February 18, 2020. The Agent requested that the PCC cancel the meeting scheduled for that date to allow her to attend the dinner. Town Manager Ryan McNut will be the keynote speaker at the event. The Agent will also contact Don Frydryk and Paul Les to inform them that the discussion of the Quaker Lane project until March 4, 2020.

c. Water Quality Certification: Main Street Bridge, Three Rivers

The PCC received notification from MassDEP pertaining to the 401 Water Quality Certification for the replacement of the bridge on Main Street in Three Rivers. The Agent informed the PCC that MassDEP permits bridge replacement projects, as opposed to local Conservation Commissions, in an effort to streamline permitting of these projects. The determination from MassDEP pertaining to the Main Street Three Rivers bridge replacement project is that there will be no alteration of a navigable waterway resulting from this project as proposed, pursuant to 310 CMR 4.00. Dive teams will be utilized to fill the scour holes around the bridge piers with grout. No work has commenced on the project to date because the Water Quality Certification was necessary in order for the work to begin. Robert Natario of MassDOT will keep the PCC informed of the status of the project as it moves forward.

4. Violations & Enforcement

a. 2018 Oak Street

The PCC received a complaint about horse manure being placed within 25 to 50 feet of the Ware River at 2018 Oak Street. The Agent referred the complaint to the Board of Health because they recently adopted animal-related regulations, of which state that no manure can be stored or placed within 150-feet of wetlands or within 100-feet of open water due to the likelihood of groundwater contamination.

b. Smith Street & Beech Street

The PCC received a complaint pertaining to the excavation of an intermittent stream channel at 46 Smith Street. Site visits were conducted on 1/16/2020 and 1/21/2020 to determine the extent of alteration of the resource area. Alteration to the bank of the intermittent stream was observed, in addition to animal enclosures within 25-feet of the stream channel. The intermittent stream flows through a 12-inch metal culvert which is heavily degraded and partially crushed on the outlet side. The historical width of the intermittent stream channel is approximately 3-feet, and the width of the channel after excavation is now about 6 to 8-feet; this can result in downstream impacts due to the increased flows and velocity due to the expansion of the stream channel, resulting in additional threats to public safety and private property. The Enforcement Order requires that the violator/property owner attend the next PCC meeting scheduled for 2/3/2020, to hire a wetland consultant and to conduct restoration of the intermittent stream channel.

Motion made by Brenda Cole to issue an Enforcement Order for the unpermitted alteration of the bank and buffer zone to an intermittent stream channel at 46 Smith Street

Motion seconded by Mike Swiatek

No further discussion – 6-0-0 – Motion carries

c. FCP: Peterson Road/Old Warren Road

The PCC received information from Asplundh Tree Expert Company that they have been delivering woodchips to the property at 166 Peterson Road for the purpose of constructing an ATV course across their property, in addition to the Lizak and Baltazar properties. Asplundh has been conducting tree removal for National Grid along roadways and transmission lines and reported that they have been delivering woodchips to 166 Peterson Road because the Town reached their need. The vegetation along roadways and transmission lines are likely riddled with invasive plant species, so this is extremely problematic for the PCC, due to impacts to the area resulting from woodchips containing invasive plants. This is also problematic for the PCC due to the extensive wetland complexes on the properties. The conversion of logging roads to permanent roads is not permissible under an approved Forest Cutting Plan as well. The Agent requested that DCR conduct a site inspection to determine if these allegations are true, and is currently waiting for a response from DCR. If the PCC doesn't get

a response or if DCR does not take action, the Agent will reach out to MassDEP on this matter. If DCR does determine that these allegations are true, they will issue a stop-work order, and the PCC will then take jurisdiction over enforcement.

5. New/Old Business

a. Meeting with Department of Fish & Game at First Street, 1/22/2020 at 8:30 AM

The Agent will be meeting with the Department of Fish & Game at First Street on 1/22/2020 at 8:30 AM to discuss the universal fishing access project off the universal access loop trail. Access to construct the universal access fishing outpost is needed through the Atlas company off First Street, which is currently for sale and may pose an issue for this project moving forward, but the town has a 50-foot drainage easement along the property boundary that abuts the Atlas property that could be used for access. The Department of Fish & Game will fund this project in its entirety.

b. Trail Cameras

The Assistant met with Verizon to discuss the possibility of installing cameras along the trail at First Street as a means to address and prevent vandalism to the trail. Verizon suggested that one (1) camera be installed at the parking area and one (1) camera be installed to view the gazebo, given that most vandalism has occurred at these locations. The cameras will cost \$ 349.00 to purchase and will incur a \$ 39.99 cost per month in order to connect the cameras to the Verizon data network with unlimited cloud storage.

The Agent expressed her interest in purchasing a third camera to install at the location of the future fishing outpost, but is concerned that the extra cost will go over the PCC's available budget.

Motion made by Nick Zeo to purchase up to three (3) cameras from Verizon for monitoring at First Street from the TRAILS account

Motion seconded by Brenda Cole

No further discussion – 6-0-0 – Motion carries

c. Stormwater Regulation Updates

The Agent will be attending a working group meeting on 1/29/2020 at MassDEP in Boston for updates to the state's Stormwater Regulations.

d. MA Open Space Conference on 4/25/2020

The MA Open Space Conference will be held on 4/25/2020 at Greenfield Community College in Greenfield, and all interested PCC members are welcome to attend. The Assistant has been asked to present on the topic of landowner outreach. The Agent might present on the topic of updating Open Space and Recreation Plans, depending on her availability.

e. Palmer Artisan Fair on 5/2/2020

The Palmer Artisan Fair will be held on 5/2/2020, and the Agent would like to include the annual rain barrel and compost bin program at this year's event as a way to increase overall attendance at the event given the popularity of the rain barrel and compost bin program. The Agent will update the PCC when she has received a

response from the Palmer Cultural Council on the request to include the rain barrel and compost bin program at the event.

f. Rain Barrel/Compost Bin Program (Possibly at Artisan Fair)

Please see the section above on the Palmer Artisan Fair.

g. Earth Day Cleanup on 4/18/2020

The PCC will be organizing an Earth Day Cleanup on 4/18/2020. A photo taken at last year's event has been featured in the top 10 national photos for Earth Day Cleanups.

h. Culvert Assessments & Stormwater outfall mapping

Culvert assessments and stormwater outfall mapping has been conducted from review of site plans, but a majority of the field work has been on hold due to weather and until the town has been informed if they received an Asset Management Grant. If the town receives the grant, assessments and mapping will continue to serve as the math component of the Culvert Replacement Grant.

i. 604(b) Grant

The Agent reported that 17 of the 25 septic systems targeted for review under this grant are likely in a state of failure. The Agent will continue to work with the Board of Health to obtain property owner approvals to conduct on-site inspections of septic systems.

j. 2020 Trail Grant: UTV purchase

The PCC will be applying for a 2020 Recreational Trails Grant to fund the purchase of a UTV for trail maintenance and conservation land stewardship. The grant application is due on February 1, 2020.

k. MVP Action Grant

There is no update on this agenda item.

l. Conflict of Interest Training

The PCC received the Conflict of Interest training packet which shall be returned to the Town Clerk upon completion.

m. 2020 Trail Grant UTV

The PCC will begin working on a 2020 Trail Grant to obtain funding to acquire UTV's for the purpose of conducting land management and stewardship on the 800-acres of town-owned conservation land.

n. Master Plan

Dorothy Lawrence will represent the PCC on the Master Plan update committee due to her overall resume and experience in municipal planning. All other PCC members are welcome to attend meetings of the Master Plan Committee.

6. Set Next Meeting Date

- a. The next meeting of the PCC is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

7. Meeting Adjourned: 7:31 PM

Motion made by Mike Swiatek to adjourn at 7:31 PM

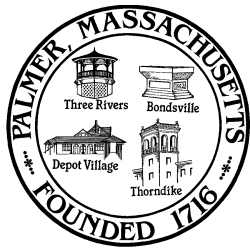
Motion was seconded by Nick Zeo

No further discussion – 6-0-0 – Motion Carries

Sincerely Submitted,

Sarah A. Fortune

Palmer Conservation Assistant



TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Documents

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The following is a list of documents used at the above-mentioned meeting, in addition to those included in the agenda packet which is part of the official record of the meeting:

Number	Description	Agenda Item	Notes
1.	Meeting Minutes: 1/7/2020	Approval of Minutes	Retained in 2020 minute binder in office
2.	MACC AEC registration form	Review Mail/Phone Messages	Retained in MACC 2020 file in office
3.	Water Quality Certification: Bridge – Main Street, Three Rivers	Review Mail/Phone Messages	Retained in 2020 mail file in office
4	Enforcement Order: 46 Smith Street; Unpermitted alteration to bank of intermittent stream	Signing of Documents	Retained in enforcement file for 46 Smith Street