



TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Land Management Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
Monday January 30, 2017 – 4:00 PM

Sarah Brodeur, Chair
Peter Izyk, Vice Chair
David Cotter
Donald Blais

Agent: Angela Panaccione

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Members Present: Sarah Brodeur, Dave Cotter, Peter Izyk, Lisl Donaldson, Howie Fife, Sheri Jyringi, Angela Panaccione (Agent)

Members Absent: Donald Blais, Jr

Also Present: None

Meeting Opens: 4:18 PM – Sarah Brodeur (Chair)

Member Reports: New members Howie Fife & Sheri Jyringi introduced themselves and explained their interests in land management.

Review Mail/Phone Messages: None

Public Inquiries: None

Approval of Minutes: Table until February meeting

New Business/Old Business

1. **Midura Conservation Land Expansion:** Angela printed information on abutting parcels targeted for acquisition and got an abutters list for the whole area from the Assessors. Additionally, the Commission will hold a BBQ for all abutters of Midura, on Saturday April 22, 2017 at 12pm, at the Midura Field to discuss the plans and see if any abutters are interested in either selling to the Commission or placing a CR on the property as part of the grant application.
2. **Request to Amend Sale of Agricultural & Forestry Products Ordinance (Chapter 8, Article 1):** No update, still waiting on Town Council Ordinance Subcommittee to schedule a meeting to review.
3. **Contact/Hire Forester for Bacon Road Parcel:** Sarah has reached out to Scott Gerrish about preparing a forest cutting plan for the Commission for the Bacon Road parcel. Howie will talk with Scott as well, since both gentlemen are on Opacum's Board of Directors.

Discuss Recreation Trails Grant: The grant is due tomorrow. The proposed project will meet all the needs identified above by providing access for people of all abilities to a peaceful forest experience with views of the Swift River. The grant funds requested for the project will include construction of a parking area for handicapped vehicles, two resting/viewing areas along the trail with benches, and a terminus overlooking the River with benches, another universally accessible fishing area with an ADA ramp, as well as a handicapped accessible table picnic table by the fishing area. This site was specifically chosen for the project because the existing terrain is relatively flat (2-foot elevation change total over ¼ mile, less than 5% grade in any area) so achieving ADA compliance with 0% cross slope & gradual elevation changes will not be an issue with the

proposed meandering above ground trail design. Shims and extra fill will be used on sides when they do not align to prevent having any cross slope. The trail width will be 5'5", with a firm and stable tread. A 2" lip on edge of side boards will allow individuals with sight limitations access as well (See Attachment 3). Our above ground 16'X20' lookout will address issues in an area with irregularities in ground (roots of large trees present).

The design will be the same as the Fort River Universal Access Birding and Nature Trail in Hadley and Andrew French, Project Manager for Fort River met Angela & Sarah on site today and shared his knowledge from being project leader on numerous universally accessible trails and recreation projects for USFWS. The entire trail project will be constructed completely above ground in order to mitigate any impacts to natural and cultural resources. Additionally, the above ground construction will be an upgrade to an existing trail system, and is therefore covered under a blanket Order of Conditions addressing all applicable permitting issues (with the possible exception of the Universally Accessible Fishing Area). When we begin the project he has offered to take the main site workers on a tour of Fort River prior to construction so he can go over specifics and show them the final products they will be constructing (trail bed, raised look-outs on pads). He also said he should also be able to stop by the site a few times during construction to answer any questions that may arise.

We have letters of Support from:

- Palmer Land Management Subcommittee
- Palmer DPW
- Palmer Council on Aging
- SCA AmeriCorps Massachusetts
- Boy Scout Troop 160
- Boy Scout Troop 164
- Chicopee 4 Rivers Watershed Council

DER Grant for Field Data Collection for Culvert Replacement Design: Angela submitted the grant application to DER last week.

Identify Other Action Items to work on:

1. Make invitation to Midura Cookout
2. ID areas for public education and outreach

Set Next Meeting Date: Tuesday February 21, 2017 at 6pm

Adjourn: 5:55pm

Motion made by Donald Blais, Jr to adjourn at 5:55 PM

Motion seconded by David Cotter

No further discussion – vote taken: 5-0-0 – Motion Carries