



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

JULY 26, 2017

MINUTES

MEETING AT SOMERVILLE CITY HALL
93 HIGHLAND AVENUE
3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
7:00 PM

Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili, based on a recording of the meeting.

Commission Members in attendance: Jamie Lefkowitz, Mathias Neuber, Owen Wartella, Aladdine Joroff

Commission Members absent: Michael Fager, David Turin, Rachel Borgatti

Others in Attendance: Bill Rogers (Winter Hill Yacht Club), Joe Basile (Winter Hill Yacht Club), Eline Bakker

Staff: Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

Mathias Neuber brought the meeting to order at 7:00 followed by introductions.

Unfinished Business (7:01 pm)

- 1) Winter Hill Yacht Club (WHYC) clubhouse paved parking lot.
 - Commission sent letter to WHYC on July 10th, 2017, and an updated letter on July 21st, 2017, asking them come to meeting to explain why this work occurred without informing the Commission.
 - Explanation from Bill Rogers (WHYC member for 36 years) and Joe Basile (Commodore) and discussion:
 - Parking lot was paved 2 years ago. Five years prior to paving a gas line was put in; work for that project did come before Conservation Commission (DEP file #287-0047, COC issued). At that same time, they put in ~6-in water main line for future sprinkler system, dug a trench to run the line to the front of the yacht club. The work tore the grass apart. After the water and gas lines were put in, they flattened and paved where they needed to in order to ameliorate trip hazards (broken asphalt and chipped concrete), fix torn up lawn area, and make the place look nice.
 - DCR owns the property, and issues annual permits to WHYC. Club has asked for but never received help from DCR or Federal Realty. When WHYC asks DCR for permission to do work they did not respond.



- WHYC has about 155-160 members. Also host social events (council of aging meetings, veterans cruises, etc.). At one point had ~1.5 acres for parking across from WYHC (~350 parking spots). Now can fit 40 cars at the club (paved area).
- Commission stated that the contractors who did the water line work and the paving work should have come before the Commission prior to doing work. Replacing permeable grass next to the River with pavement is a problem because of the pollutants that now runoff into the river. A shared goal is to have clean water in the Mystic River. Our jurisdiction includes a 100-foot buffer zone from the river. By law, all work that may impact the river must come before the Conservation Commission.
- Discussed ways to minimize the impacts to the river now that the work has been done. WYHC mentioned that there was a dry well (trench drain filled with stone that had a steel grate on top) that was designed to catch water going across the lot, but it never worked and is now inoperable because it was filled with sediment and paved over. There is a vertical berm around parts of the site and Jersey barriers along the river edge. At this point, there is no feasible action to remediate the issue that would not be a substantial cost. There is no drainage, soil is contaminated. Could put in buffer strips or permeable pavers or trench drains and reservoirs. Situation is not good.
- Commission emphasized to the WHYC that going forward, any type of work or construction activity that could affect water runoff or water quality MUST come before the Commission.
- Commission also decided to implement an education outreach strategy to members, to open the line of communication and inform all of them about the role and jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission, and how we can help with any issues on the waterfront.
- WHYC leadership changes every year (11 individuals run the club); elections are the 1st Wednesday in December, and new leadership starts in January.
- **Action item:** Commission will send yearly letter to WHYC in January to post on the board, which will include information about contacting Commission about any issues on waterfront.

Unfinished and Discussion (7:47 pm)

1) Ongoing Projects

- Aquatic Management Program (mechanic in-water weed control of water chestnut): current project (DEP 287-0043) was issued in July 2012, and based on Permit Extension Act it is valid until July 2019. Prior water chestnut removal program was permitted in July 2010, and has now expired (DEP file #287-0031).
 - **Action item:** check with Groundwork Somerville about filing COC for 287-0031.
- Boukili emailed Dan Driscoll regarding COC filings for expired permits for Mystic River Path extension (DEP file #287-0032 and #287-0033) and permit for completed Baxter Park project (DEP file #287-0044). No response received.
- Algonquin J-1 System Mystic River Crossing Replacement project (DEP file #287-0057) might begin late July or early August.
- DCR Mystic River Outfall Maintenance project (DEP file #287-0059) estimated to begin early August.
- In-water control non-native and nuisance vegetation in Mystic River amended OOC (DEP file #287-0054) started work. Matt Salem sent memo to the Commission on July 26th, 2017.
 - **Action item:** obtain contact information for project supervisor and alternate, and photographic evidence that MassDEP signage was installed, and ensure all other OOC conditions were met.
 - **Action item:** add requirement of photographic evidence of signage to standard special conditions.

2) Outstanding Action Items:

- Discuss best means of dealing with wetland law violations
 - Shared and discussed information from MACC handbook.
 - Re: two-year statute of limitations on violations, every day that there is illegal fill in the wetlands area is a violation (i.e., ongoing violation).
 - Can contact city departments about violations, ex. Engineering Department, Mayor's Office.



- Get the word out about the Conservation Commission. Put together a 1-2 page educational piece to put out in newsletter, etc. Goal is to encourage community support for Conservation Commission activities and jurisdiction, and increase vigilance for activities in buffer zone.
- **Action item: find educational materials from other communities to draw from (ex. Lawrence, Newton, Wellesley, etc.).**
- Commissioners/ Agent to keep eyes out during site visits, etc.
- All Commissioners – read through old bylaws document prior to meeting
 - Commissioner Joroff provided suggestions for updates, including clarifying wording, removing elections section, moving the duties of the treasurer and clerk (etc.) to the agent, adding statement about complying with open meeting laws.
 - Would be useful to establish associate membership policy.
- Establish Conservation Commission policy revision committee
 - Continue this item until September meeting.
- Boukili – talk to Mystic River Watershed Association about “no feeding the waterfowl” signage
 - MyWRA did not have sign available, but reached out to Anne Carroll at DCR.
- Boukili – talk to Chris Lowman about MWRA Alewife stormwater station.
 - Chris Lowman is contractor for Barletta engineering, working on this project. It is a maintenance project for rehabilitation of stormwater pump. Project ongoing until 2018. Boukili found documents describing project online. Utility maintenance project outside of our jurisdiction.
- Boukili – reach out to Dan Driscoll (DCR) about Baxter Park and Mystic River Pilings COCs
 - Emailed 7/14/2017, no response.
- Boukili – reach out to Gene Crouch regarding water quality monitoring report for Assembly Square (from May 9th sampling event)
 - Emailed twice (7/14/2017, 7/24/2017), no response.
- Boukili – prepare spreadsheet of Assembly Square water quality sampling data, and share spreadsheet and reports with Engineering Department.
 - Not yet complete.
- Boukili – reach out to Matt Salem and MyWRA regarding start date and site visit for in-water herbicide treatment for Mystic River (OOC 287-0054 amendment).
 - Discussed earlier in meeting (ongoing projects)
- Boukili – start search for new Commissioner.
 - Last search was very recent (February), so will reach out to folks from that applicant pool.

Other Business: (8:23)

- 1) MACC roster. Can sign Commissioners up for online MACC handbook.
 - **Action item: Boukili to sign up Commissioner Neuber for MACC online access.**

Approval of minutes:

1. Unanimously approved May 23, 2017 minutes with no amendments at 8:26 [motion – Wartella, second – Lefkowitz].
2. Unanimously approved June 27, 2017 minutes with one amendment at 8:28 [motion – Joroff, second – Lefkowitz].

Adjourn

1. Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 8:29 [motion – Lefkowitz, second – Wartella].

List of Meeting Documents:

- Agenda
- Minutes May 23th meeting



- Minutes June 27th meeting
- Ongoing Project Data Spreadsheet
- Winter Hill Yacht Club documents: letters sent to WHYC from Conservation Commission, photos from Google Street View and Google Earth (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017_07_26_Meeting_Documents\Winter Hill Yacht Club)
- Memo from Matt Salem re: DEP file #287-0054, MysticRiver17_Herbicide_ProjectUpdate.pdf.
- MACC information about violations K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017_07_26_Meeting_Documents\MACC- Violations
- Documents found online regarding MWRA Alewife Brook pump Station rehabilitation project: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017_07_26_Meeting_Documents

