



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

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018, 7:00 PM
MINUTES

MEETING AT SOMERVILLE CITY HALL
93 HIGHLAND AVENUE
3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

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

Commission Members in attendance: Rachel Borgatti (Chair), Michael Fager, Mathias Neuber, Owen Wartella, David Turin, Cristina Kennedy, Aladdine Joroff

Commission Members absent: None

Others in Attendance: Jeff Winsor (Parks and Recreation), Jill Lathan (Parks and Recreation)

Staff: Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

Rachel Borgatti called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

New Business:

- 1) DCR presentation on Draw 7 Park
 - *Tabled until next meeting*
- 2) Maintenance work at Blessing of the Bay Boathouse by Parks & Recreation Department (7:44 pm)
 - Work was done on a fence along Blessing of Bay Boathouse, within 25 feet of the river, without notification or permission from the Conservation Commission. Jill Lathan apologized and took full responsibility. She did obtain permit from DCR and did not realize that a permit from Conservation Commission was needed.
 - Trees were cut down along bank – this work was not done by Parks and Recreation Department and was not part of fence replacement project.
 - Commissioner Fager explained purpose and jurisdiction of ConCom.
 - Carli Fence was contractor for project. Did work in July 2017. They should know that permit is needed from Conservation Commission.
 - Jeff Winsor has before and after pictures, will share with Commission. Fence has same footprint as before.



- Discussed need to share ConCom letter and/or educational brochure would be useful to share with various city departments.
- Discussed plans for the Dilboy Auxiliary Field, and Conservation Commission jurisdiction applies.
- Discussed future ideas for Blessing of the Bay Boathouse:
 - Upgrade the area near boat storage area, where there is now compacted soil with weeds that provides habitat for bees and ground wasps. Area also becomes very slippery and muddy. Idea is to place textile mat and then stone dust. Once idea is flushed out, Parks & Rec will bring it before the Commission. Useful to bring map, a few alternatives, and information about who will be doing the work. This would require an NOI.
 - Some of the boards on the wooden dock need to be fixed. When have more information, submit an RDA for this project. Would like to discuss details further to ensure the river is properly protected. For example, don't use any gas equipment, don't work on treated wood over the river, etc. Also, verify that pilings are in good condition and don't need to be replaced.
- *Action: Talk to DCR about including a check box for Conservation Commission permits on their permit forms (ex. is this project within 25 feet of a wetland? If so, contact local Conservation Commission).*
- *Action: Send letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction.*
- *Action: Send NOI and RDA forms to Parks and Rec Department.*
- *Action: Acquire before and after pictures of Gentle Giant fence installation from Parks and Rec Department.*
- *Action: Send email to DPW, Planning, Engineering, Capital Projects, and any other departments who might review construction or development projects. Remind them of Conservation Commission jurisdiction and requirements that must be following when working near the river.*

Updates and Discussion

- 1) Communication about WPA jurisdiction to City Departments, Gentle Giant Rowing, Charles River Canoe and Kayak
 - Discussed along with New Business item #2, "Maintenance work at Blessing of the Bay Boathouse by Parks & Recreation Department"
- 2) Community Gardens Review (7:05 pm)
 - Conservation Commission oversees Community Garden program, and can provide guidance and suggestions. DPW does maintenance, mulch and gravel delivery, and turns on/off water.
 - Next steps for Community Gardens:
 - Open Gardens Day – possibly link to Open Studios or Common Boston or a bike tour?
 - *Action: Commissioner Kennedy to take lead on finding an appropriate time for Open Gardens Day. Reach out to Somerville Garden Club and Somerville Bike Committee.*
 - *Action: Talk to Garden Coordinators about accounting of garden fees.*
 - *Action: Commission to start a list of suggestions for Garden Coordinators about how to be more open/ inclusive, especially to folks on the waitlist (ex. "garden-sitting" when gardeners are on vacation).*
 - Keep "Community Gardens Review" as a recurring agenda item.
- 3) Ongoing projects (7:26 pm):

- MBTA Charlestown Bus Facility Project (DEP file #287-0058): site visit and Memo from Engineering Department
 - Boukili shared photos from March 12, 2018 site visit - some pre-construction site work in Somerville, more work ongoing in Boston including in-water work inside turbidity curtain.
 - Memo from Engineering Department was submitted on February 28, 2018, in accordance with Condition #33 of the OOC.
- Algonquin J-1 System Mystic River Crossing Replacement (DEP file #287-0057): site visit
 - Boukili shared photos from April 23, 2018 post-winter site visit. Erosion controls generally held up. Will make repairs to controls and fence before spring construction.
 - Tie-in has to be done between May 15th and May 21st. Have to be off the site on June 1st. Will do full restoration before June 1st. Have 3-year maintenance requirement on DCR permit.
 - *Action: Ensure Algonquin J-1 System project team fills the on-site depression during restoration.*
 - *Action: Check the curbing at the entrance, and ask team to restore if necessary.*
- Mystic Dock Removal project: temporary restoration measures washed away during winter storms.
 - *Action: Ensure Mystic Dock Removal project team restores the site.*

4) Outstanding Action Items (8:21 pm):

- Everyone to provide comments on *Conservation Commission Policies* document.
 - DONE
 - *Action: Commissioner Joroff to revise ConCom Policies document, then Commissioners to read through it again to make sure everyone is willing to follow it.*
- Everyone to provide comments and suggestions on the draft of the public education brochure.
 - DONE
 - *Action: Commissioner Joroff to revise public education document.*
- Commissioner Wartella to look for general audience brochure examples and to start working on one for Somerville.
 - *Continued to next meeting.*

5) Discussion about high speed boats and wakes (8:26 pm):

- Commissioner Borgatti has talked to Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), have seen some boats proposed to transport people between airport to casino. Appear to be high speed boats. Will they impact our resource area? Commissioner Fager does not think they will enter our geographic jurisdiction.
- Even if they do enter our jurisdiction, enforcement is likely up to the State Police or Coast Guard.
- *Action: Commissioner Borgatti to send letter re: ConCom concerns about high speed boats and wakes and ask about routes.*

Other Business:

1) Schedule Assembly Square walk through (8:38 pm)

- *Action: Boukili to send out Doodle Poll re: ASQ walk through. Early evenings are best. Notify Gene Crouch and FRIT when have date.*

2) City Nature Challenge (April 29th) (8:44 pm)

- City Nature Challenge is an international urban BioBlitz. Commissioners Kennedy and Fager leading walk at Draw 7 Park at 10 am on April 29th.



- Challenge is for an entire week, using i-Naturalist website and app (citizen science app). Can work on challenge on your own.
- 3) *Action: add Conway onto next month's agenda.*
- 4) Commissioner Wartella teaching class *Fundamentals of Erosion and Sediment Controls* at MACC Conference in Hyannis in two weeks.
- 5) Commissioners interested in having a discussion about the new zoning code at a future meeting.
- 6) Commissioner Borgatti on steering committee of Boston Habitat Ecosystem Network. Biannual meetings and various field trips open to public, including science communication session in May. MyCoast app, useful for reporting storm damage and flooding.

Approval of minutes:

- 1) Unanimously approved February 27, 2018 minutes with two amendments at 8:57 pm [motion – Fager, second – Neuber, vote: 7:0:0].

Adjourn:

- 1) Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 8:57 [motion – Wartella, second – Kennedy].

Outstanding Action Items:

April:

- *Action: Talk to DCR about including a check box for Conservation Commission permits on their permit forms (ex. is this project within 25 feet of a wetland? If so, contact local Conservation Commission).*
- *Action: Send letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction.*
- *Action: Send NOI and RDA forms to Parks and Rec Department.*
- *Action: Acquire before and after pictures of Gentle Giant fence installation from Parks and Rec Department.*
- *Action: Send email to DPW, Planning, Engineering, Capital Projects, and any other departments who might review construction or development projects. Remind them of Conservation Commission jurisdiction and requirements that must be following when working near the river.*
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- *Action: Talk to Garden Coordinators about accounting of garden fees.*
- *Action: Commission to start a list of suggestions for Garden Coordinators about how to be more open/ inclusive, especially to folks on the waitlist (ex. “garden-sitting” when gardeners are on vacation).*
- *Action: Ensure Algonquin J-1 System project team fills the on-site depression during restoration.*
- *Action: Check the curbing at the entrance [Algonquin project], and ask team to restore if necessary.*
- *Action: Commissioner Joroff to revise ConCom Policies document, then Commissioners to read though it again to make sure everyone is willing to follow it.*
- *Action: Commissioner Joroff to revise public education document.*
- *Action: Commissioner Borgatti to send letter re: ConCom concerns about high speed boats and wakes and ask about routes.*
- *Action: Boukili to send out Doodle Poll re: ASQ walk through.*
- *Action: add Conway onto next month's agenda.*

January:

- *Action: Reach out to Sewer Department to check on maintenance schedule of Vortech Units at ASQ.*

November:

- *Action: Commissioner Wartella to look for general audience brochure examples and to start working on one for Somerville.*



List of Meeting Documents (located here: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018_04_24_Meeting_Documents):

- Agenda (2017_04_24_Agenda.pdf)
- Ongoing Project Data Spreadsheet (Ongoing Project Data.xlsx)
- February meeting minutes (2017_02_27_Minutes_Draft.docx)
- Blessing of the Bay boathouse photos (2 photos K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018_04_24_Meeting_Documents\Blessing of Bay pics)
- MBTA Charlestown Bus Facility Project site visit photos (9 photos K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018_04_24_Meeting_Documents\updates and discussion\3a- Site Visit Photos March 2018)
- City of Somerville Engineering Department Memo re: MBTA Charlestown Bus Facility Project (3a- Eng Dept Memo to ConComm_FINAL rev.1.pdf)
- Algonquin J-1 System Mystic River Crossing Replacement site visit photos (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018_04_24_Meeting_Documents\updates and discussion\Algonquin J-1 System site visit photos 2018-04-23)
- Draft Conservation Commission policy document (5b- Draft Somerville ConComm. Policy (Nov. 2017).docx)
- Draft Conservation Commission educational brochure (5c- Conservation commission two-pager (11.28 draft).docx)