

January 22, 2003
Conservation Commission
Approved Meeting Minutes

Meeting opened at City Hall Annex, OHCD conference room at 7:14 pm

Present were: Conservation Commission Chair, Delia Kaye, members Michael Fager, Janet McGowan, John Reinhardt, Cassandra Koutalidis, Associate Dan Bianco, Agent Anne Phelps, and residents Thalia Tringo and Lori Segall (Climate Action Commission).

Minutes

Minutes from Dec. 4th were reviewed.

Vote: Motion made by MF to approve the Dec. 4th minutes, as amended. DK seconded. All approved.

Minutes from Jan. 8th were reviewed.

Vote: Motion made by JR to approve the Jan. 8th minutes, as amended. MF seconded. All approved.

Administration

Re: CC membership of Elisabeth Miley – although Elisabeth offered to stay until a new member was appointed, since the mayor accepted her resignation, Elisabeth said her “Good-byes” to the Commission via email in December. We all wish her the best!

Re: OHCD grant of CDBG funds for Durrell – following an email exchange with Jura, and a conversation between Anne and Steve Post, Jura, Anne, Janet, and Sherri have arranged to meet to review a MOU on Fri., January 24. Delia asked what the deadline is to get the funds and still allow time to spend them within this fiscal year (the Federal fiscal year under which the grant is given)? Anne said she will ask Leslie, and hope to get a “guesstimate” for Friday’s meeting. Janet offered to email the results of the meeting to everyone.

Old Business

Annual Report – after some discussion and further suggestions for changes from DK and MF, it was decided to table a vote on approval until the next meeting.

319 Grant – Anne reported that a meeting was held among Heather Rowe, the mayor’s administrative assistant, Thom Donahue, engineer for DPW, Kate Ashton, the grant’s writer, Carol Antonelli, Accounts administrator for DPW, and Anne, in which the delay in beginning the grant was discussed. DPW has no funds set aside to pay for costs before reimbursement. Ed Bean has not set up accounts for the grant, because no source of funds to “up-front” the cost has been established. The solution suggested is to wait until the beginning of the next fiscal year, July 2003, to start the grant. Anne said she would

have to get approval from Jane Pierce, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), because it puts the city behind schedule in performing the work of the grant.

After speaking with Jane, Anne received a letter stating that this was unacceptable, the city should begin work immediately, and submit a new timeline showing how the city would make up the missed time, or forfeit the grant. The mayor's office is reviewing the situation.

IKEA

IKEA submitted its permit application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and the first hearing is set for Jan. 30th. Anne asked for help in reviewing the plans before she provides comments to Planning. CK said she will help.

CK said we should be getting interim plans from IKEA as they are developed. Since we are not, our relationship with Mr. DiGirolamo as liaison is not working as it should. CC consensus is that Anne should communicate this to Mr. DiGirolamo by letter, with copies to Bill Dillon and Doug Husid.

Budget

Anne asked for permission to spend approximately \$75 for a sign for Durrell, \$250 - \$300 for a new printer, and \$135 - \$190 for a CC banner to display at events = total about \$565.

Vote: CK moved to approve the expenditure of approximately \$565 by Anne for a sign for Durrell, a new printer and a CC banner. MF seconded. All approved.

New Business

MACC conference – attendees – Anne said that MACC will give a \$10 discount/person attending the spring conference/workshops (from \$75 to \$65) if we register and pay for it by Feb. 1. She asked that all who want to attend let her know by Fri. Jan. 24 so she can make arrangements. CK said if there is an issue of who gets to attend, based on budgeted funds, CC members and Anne get first priority, then contributing Associates, then new Associates. Anne has budgeted \$400 for this. Five people, Anne, Rachel, Janet (maybe), Cassandra (maybe), and Dan are interested in attending, at this time.

Climate Action – Lori Segall, the director of the Somerville Climate Action Commission, informed us their Commission was officially created in April, 2002, after meeting as a citizen's group for two years prior to that time. Their goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by Somerville. They have been performing general outreach at fairs, and got a Tufts intern to help develop a baseline inventory of local energy use, calculating the associated greenhouse gases.. They are interested in helping to form a Tree Committee and working on passing a tree ordinance. Their meetings are 7-9 pm, on the first Tues. of the month at the Tufts Administration Building (TAB).

Mystic River Spring Clean-up – will be on April 27th. JR will find out more details and report back about this and the Herring Run at the next meeting.

MWRA Work on Water Main – at Alewife Brook Parkway and Mystic River Parkway was drawn to the Commission's attention on or about Jan. 9th, 2002, and Anne visited the site and wrote a memo detailing observed violations of the Wetlands Protection Act connected with the work.. Despite some efforts to rectify the situation, some violations are still occurring.

MK moved that the CC send a letter to MWRA directing it to correct the violations before the resumption of work. DK seconded.

Discussion followed, and it was decided the letter should state that corrections before the work is resumed, or within one week, whichever occurs first.

Vote: All in favor.

Anne will write the letter.

OS Plan review/approval

It was noted that the definition given to Ezra for open space had been modified in two places in the OS revision. Janet asked who is the lead/author on this revision. CK said OHCD is this time, since they are paying for the major work by Ezra. It was the consensus of the CC that we ask that the document be edited, and that, unless Sherri objects, we should insist that Ezra use the CC definition of Open Space. Further discussion deferred to the next meeting.

Letter to Belmont re: Alewife Brook – deferred to next meeting.

Committees

Stormwater Management Plan – Anne reported that the committee is working on language to include a stormwater ordinance in the Draft Management Plan, and would like a representative of the CC at a sub-committee meeting to help with this. DK urged the sub-committee to be conservative in what it includes for now, since the city may be held to what it puts in the draft that is submitted with the NPDES permit application.

Vote: MF moved to adjourn. DK seconded. All approved

Meeting adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Phelps, Agent