

Groton Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2022 @ 7 pm

Members Present: Stephen "Slim" Spafford, Forrest "Ray" Blake, Virginia Parker, Cindy Carpenter, Justin Weekley

Members Absent: Gina Rescigno

Non-Members Present: Deb Johnson, Tyler Phillips (from Headwaters Consulting)

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

Reading of the minutes from our meeting on May 12, 2022.

Motion to accept the minutes. Motioned by Slim, seconded by Ray. Unanimous approval.

Wetlands Permit

- ❖ Tyler Phillips (hereafter "Phillips") presented the plans and accompanying photographs of the site for the proposed bank stabilization plan which includes the construction of rock vanes on Punch Brook. This will be on property within 322 North Groton Rd (tax map/lot 6-17). The rock vanes are designed to slow the current reaching the brook bank and the focus is on bringing in native vegetation (alders) that will take hold over time and further help the stabilization of the bank.
- ❖ Ray asked how long the process will take. The presenter confirmed that they are only looking for work during low flow times. Project slated to begin in August and if they are not done by the time the flow changes, they will need to pause the project.
- ❖ Virginia asked if the initial tree blockage that caused the channel change has been fixed. Phillips confirmed that was done soon after the storm in 2018 but it was found that it was not enough. The change in the flow of the brook had already been established.
- ❖ Ray asked if this is a common remedy. Phillips confirmed this is not the common method, as rip rap is often used. Phillips stated that this approach tends to not last in the long-term. The property owner for this project is willing to take on this different approach as it is more viable long-term.
- ❖ Virginia asked what type of rocks will be used. Phillips confirmed they intend to source rocks from Piermont as they have a lot of angular rocks that will stack well. The rocks are designed to touch at 3 points to maximize stability.
- ❖ Ray requested the name of the contractor on the project.
- ❖ Slim asked about the longevity of the alders to be planted. Phillips confirmed they will go out 2 years post-project to report the conditions. The proposal requires 75% of the alders to survive at the 2-year mark. If less are present, they would need to be replanted to be compliant with the permit application.
- ❖ Virginia asked if the downstream landowners have been notified. Phillips confirmed that abutters will be notified if/when the CC signs the letter waiving our right to intervene in this

project. The abutters (those within ¼ mile of the project) will be notified via letter that the permit will be available at the town hall for review and comment.

- ❖ Ray asked how this project will affect the flow of the river downstream. Phillips said it will slow the velocity of the water at the immediate bank but there are no expected impacts to the overall stream further down.
- ❖ Deb Johnson recommended that the conservation commission could contact the NLRA, as this brook flows into their territory and also because they may have monetary assistance that they can provide to the landowner to complete this project.
- ❖ Slim agreed that notifying the NLRA was appropriate and he will do so.
- ❖ Deb Johnson commented that alders are currently being affected by an invasive species and asked why they were chosen as the vegetation here. Phillips confirmed they are chosen as they will do well in this shady area, and that their roots serve as an assistance to other vegetation that will eventually take over.
- ❖ Virginia made a motion to accept and sign in the affirmative the Conservation Commission's waiver to intervene in the proposed bank stabilization plan on tax map/lot 6-17. Cindy seconded. Unanimous in the affirmative. Slim signed the waiver as chair of the commission.

Fishing Derby

- ❖ Another successful year. We had approximately 30 kids participate from both within and outside Groton.
- ❖ The tagged fish was not caught, remained elusive. Plenty of other (rather large) fish were caught.
- ❖ Additional signage and flyers to be discussed at our next meeting to plan for next year

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm

Respectfully submitted by Virginia Parker