

## Webster Conservation Commission

Minutes for October 14, 2020

Attendance: Sue Roman, Chair, Members Isabel Brintnall, Linda Clark, Mary Jo MacGowan, Dan Moran, and Chris Schadler; Alternates Sally Embley and Michele Tremblay. Absent: Betsy Janeway

The meeting was called to order via Zoom shortly after 7:00 p.m. Sally volunteered to take the minutes. Sue welcomed Michele to the Commission as a new alternate. Sally was seated as a voting member for this meeting.

Minutes from September 9 As not all members had a copy handy, Sue offered to make the corrections noted and then to submit the minutes for posting as final minutes. Linda made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; MJ seconded and the motion passed.

Update on Wetlands Ordinance Sue gave a status report, noting that the Planning Board (PB) had voted on October 8 to approve the most recent draft and pursue the process to bring it to Town vote. This version, which now has to be reviewed by legal counsel, includes clarifications on setbacks and vegetated buffers for lots less than 2 acres, as well as additional new wording on agricultural uses. Alerted by Chris that Webster's attorney may not be available, Sue said it will be necessary to retain an attorney familiar with land use law to review it. Members suggested several law firms that could be contacted.

Preparing for Town Meeting in March Short (two-page) summaries will be developed by early November. Sue will outline the ordinance and its provisions; Sally will summarize the GZA report findings; Isabel will prepare a bibliography of scientific references; Sue Rauth (PB chair) will write about the ordinance's purpose, focusing on the "functions and values" of wetlands. After these are circulated for comment, they will be posted on the town website and adapted into articles for the Webster Grapevine and the Concord Monitor.

Field trips may no longer be possible, but we do have Dan's excellent videos which could be featured on the website and /or linked directly to his You Tube account. (Another possibility is a brand new video -- co-produced by Dan and Bob Quinn -- entitled "Creatures From a Vernal Pool"?) Chris suggested creating a webinar in an interview/ Q&A format to explain specific provisions in the ordinance. If we identify local Face Book groups, we can advertise these resources and any upcoming meetings. Past public hearings have all been held in the Town Hall. It's unclear whether Zoom meetings would be as effective for conveying complicated information.

Easement Monitoring -. There is a new owner for the former Odonnell/Riggs property who should be advised about the boundaries and conditions on this easement. Linda and Betsy will arrange to welcome Mr. Cushing and pay him a visit. Sue reminded the group that the red folders created for each easement contain important boundary information, including GPS coordinates. Linda reported that an excursion is being planned to Ox Pond, located on Corliss property that abuts the Rockefeller easement. Participants should wear orange (it's hunting season), and Dan says there may be a shooting range in the vicinity.

Linda also noted that the Riverdale trails are in very bad shape and need attention. MJ verified the problem, and Michele added that poison ivy is a major concern.

Local Land Use Issues –(1) A house going up on Dustin Road is very near the Warner River, but the WCC has received no notice from DES regarding a possible Shoreland Protection.(SWQPA) violation.

(2) Concerns were raised about land located near the Boscawen Water Precinct on Walker Pond. Chris and Michele will try to learn more.

(3) The solar panel developer who originally proposed an array on the Hopkinton/Webster landfill site is now hoping to purchase or lease extensive acreage in Webster. Portions of this land overlay the stratified drift aquifer that is protected by Webster's groundwater ordinance. The Hopkinton town administrator is scheduled to meet with the Webster Select Board and should be made aware that a commercial exception will be required before this goes forward.

At the close of the meeting, Sue turned her virtual gavel over to Dan and welcomed him as the new chair of the Webster Conservation Commission. Dan thanked Sue for stepping up to guide the WCC during the last nine months, and all congratulated her on the successful delivery of the wetlands protection ordinance. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next WCC meeting will be held on Veterans Day, November 11,once again via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Embley, Secretary Pro Tem