



Williamsburg Conservation Commission
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Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2023
via Zoom

Commissioners present – Marci Caplis, Andrew MacLachlan, Melinda McCall, Joe Rogers

Members of the public present – none

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Emergency work:

- Review of repair of river wall, 7 N. Main St., Andrew Erwin. Since the work was done before notifying the Commission, members acknowledged the need to act quickly and appreciated the notification. Commissioners reviewed the corrective action taken to prevent the deck from falling into the river.
- Emergency Certification, MM 34.1, junction of Route 9 and Route 143, Mass DOT. MESA project review was received. Joe Rogers signed off on the proposal. A motion was made and approved unanimously to ratify the Emergency Certification MM4.1 for stabilizing the river bank.
- Emergency Certification, guardrail near South Main Street Bridge Williamsburg Highway Department. The town Highway Department worked from plans developed by the engineer working for the Greenway Committee to repair the guardrail and replace eroded pavement. Photos were taken, a MESA checklist was completed and a locus map was included in the request. Work will start the following week with certain conditions: work does not occur in bordering land subject to flooding, so no material is added below the flood level; seeding of open disturbed ground; notification of Commission when work is completed. A motion was made and approved unanimously to ratify the Emergency Certification for repairing the guardrail and pavement on South Main Street.

- Gordon Cranston did not remove a massive stump that is in the bank and being washed out.

Consideration of partial COC for Protech Energy solar field:

Protech Energy requested consideration of a partial COC based on two SWPPs from July. While plantings are filling in, there are still areas of interior erosion channels and bare ground, as well as action items on the last report. Commissioners agreed that a thorough walk-through of the site was necessary before making a decision. McCall will reach out to Protech with the question of access and to set up a site visit for Monday, August 31 at 3 pm.

Other business:

- There was erosion on the access road to the Dynamic Energy solar site, but that is in Goshen. The Commission doesn't have access to that site.
- Meeting with the Select Board. Members of the Commission met with the Select Board to discuss issues that arose around flooding and emergency work. Clarification was made between the ramifications of local vs. state emergency declarations. Members emphasized that following regulations correctly will help protect landowners and their neighbors, keep costs down by doing repairs correctly, and help homeowners avoid needing to hire consultants. The idea of a Wetlands by-law or a ticketing system was discussed. The possibility of sharing a conservation agent with other towns was also discussed. Selectman Bill Sayre asked for a monthly report from the Commission.
- Rogers brought up a concern about not having heard from people in town who have been impacted by flooding.
- A Wetlands bylaw feels more important now that the Sackett decision made by the Supreme Court removed federal protection for isolated wetlands. A suggestion was made to check if the Pioneer Valley Planning Association or Emily Stockman would be able to help the Commission.
- Pete LaFogg contacted Rogers about what kind of permitting would be needed for repairing the foot bridge at 92 Ashfield Road, Carolyn Dubois. A consultant was recommended, and if they deem the situation to be unsafe, permitting can be expedited. Ms. Dubois was planning to contact an engineer to look at the bridge as well.
- A letter will be sent to Mr. LaFogg concerning a complaint made by a resident about possible clearing of trees and use of heavy equipment in the riverfront area along LaFogg's field. A reminder about regulations and an acknowledgment of the special rights of farmers will be included.

- A letter will be sent to Ron Hodges asking about plans for rebuilding the bridge that got destroyed in the recent flood.
- The edge of the road on North Street near East Main Street is getting worse. The Highway Department is aware of the situation.

Minutes from June 2023 were approved.

Next Meeting: September 14.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda McCall
Secretary - Williamsburg Conservation Commission