

Wakefield Conservation Commission (Commission) – Minutes – January 2, 2024

Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani; Bob Romano; Peter Miller; Ken Alepidis; Teresa Belmonte

Absent: Paul Wendelgass

Agent: Elaine Vreeland

12/13/23 stormwater training minutes – Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the 12/13/23 stormwater training minutes.

Mr. Luciani made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Miller was not present for the vote.

12/19/23 minutes - Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the 12/19/23 minutes.

Mr. Luciani made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Miller was not present for the vote.

The Commission welcomed Youth Council liaison William Buswell.

Energy park – Article 97 Energy Park parcel – discuss and vote – Attorney Michael McCarthy and Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department (WMGLD) General Manager Peter Dion were present.

Mr. McCarthy stated that the Massachusetts legislature had approved the land transfer. A conservation restriction will be placed in order to protect the property in perpetuity. He added that Town Counsel Tom Mullen as well as the Town Council had reviewed the conservation restriction document. Town Council issued a unanimous approval.

Ms. Davis stated that a pocket park would be created at the site of a de-commissioned WMGLD parcel on Ballister Street. Trees will also be added at Mapleway Playground.

Mr. Luciani asked if there would be a conservation restriction placed on the proposed pocket park.

Mr. McCarthy stated there would not be. It would be protected under Article 97.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to accept the conservation restriction.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-608 - Wakefield Memorial High School – correction to Order of Conditions (OOC) – Ms. Davis stated that the language in the OOC regarding the snow storage setback in condition #59 should be changed from 100' to 50'. This was a clerical error.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a motion to approve the correction of this error.

Mr. Alepidis made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

25' no-disturb policy – The purpose of this policy to help preserve a vegetated barrier to wetland resources. A variance from this setback may be allowed by the Commission based on criteria outlined in the policy.

Ms. Davis felt that the language regarding jurisdictional areas as well as document formatting needs to be consistent across all Commission policies. She noted that Riverfront Area and Land Subject to Flooding should be removed from this policy as it would add to each a 100' buffer.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a motion to approve the 25' no-disturb policy.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Tree removal policy – This policy will serve to promote ecological values as well as streamline the approval process. The Commission will have discretion as to whether replacement plantings are required. Replication planting is to occur as close to the wetland resource area as possible.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the Tree Removal Policy.

Mr. Miller made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Native Planting policy – This policy will encourage the use of native trees and plantings in all areas jurisdictional to the Commission.

Mr. Miller made a motion to approve this policy.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.