

Holyoke Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes 10/14/2021 (Remote via Zoom)

Conservation Commission Members Present: Bernice Bowler (Vice Chairperson), Jeffrey Horan, Mary Moriarty, Rosemary Arnold (left 6:48 PM), John Perdrizet, Chelsea Gazillo

Conservation Commission Members Absent: Michael Dodge (Chairperson)

Staff Present: Yoni Glogower (Holyoke Conservation and Sustainability Director), Alexandra Maysonet (Conservation Commission Clerk)

Members of the public present: Alan Weiss (Cold Spring Environmental), Joseph Lafreniere (Revampit LLC)

1. Call to Order

Vice Chairperson Bowler called the public meeting to order at 6:16 PM and introduced new Commission Member Chelsea Gazillo. Vice Chair Bowler then explained the protocols for remote open meetings.

2. Discussion – Order of Conditions (DEP 186-0290) issued 9/23/21

Location: 461 Mountain Road (MBP 190-00-031)

Description: Proposed modification to well location

Vice Chair Bowler explained that this item had been approved by the Commission at the previous meeting, but with a change in site plans for well location the Applicant was required to come back before the Conservation Commission. Alan Weiss, the project representative, offered an explanation of the changes with plans shared onscreen, with a shift in well location but with a reduction in disturbance from the digging since the abutter had given permission for drilling to take place from the adjacent driveway. Alan Weiss stated overall they would be removing fewer trees and cause less disturbance for the well digging activities.

Commissioner Perdrizet asked about time needed to dig the well. Alan Weiss answered that it would likely only take two days with the new approach from the abutter's driveway. Commissioner Moriarty asked about the new dimensions of disturbance. Alan Weiss answered that the area would be about the same, but a different shape with a longer distance but narrower limit of work for the well digging activities.

Vice Chair Bowler asked Director Glogower whether the language in the variance that was approved would still cover the work under the proposed site changes. Director Glogower read the variance language and advised that it was general enough to cover the site changes, since they are based on general area of work and the reasoning behind the decision to issue the Variance. Vice Chair bowler advised that the changes could be accepted as a minor field change with new site plans kept on file and memorialized in the minutes.

The Commission voted to accept the slight change to well placement based on the new plans provided, and that no Amended Order of Conditions or new Variance would be needed with one (1) absent (Dodge) and two (2) abstentions (Horan and Gazillo).

3. Discussion – Enforcement Order Issued 3/22/12

Location: 920 Main Street (MBP 086-00-019)

Description: Extensive, unpermitted dumping of woody debris into Riverfront Resource Area.

Vice Chair Bowler offered brief background on the history of this Enforcement Order and invited Director Glogower to provide an update on this item. Director Glogower explained that the property owner was interested in selling the parcel but still had not closed out the enforcement Order as required. He shared the Enforcement order on screen and explained that the restoration from dumping in the resource area was partially completed as required, but was never formally closed out by the Commission.

Director Glogower shared the results of a site visit on 10/5/21 with Commissioners Bowler and Horan where they observed the required restoration plantings, no dumping signs, and boundary boulders in place, with no new dumping in evidence aside from a small pile of brush placed erroneously by a contractor for Board of Health, which had since been removed from the site. He recommended that the Commission could lift the Enforcement Order with a simple majority vote if they so chose. Commissioner Horan shared his recount of the site visit and agreed that there seemed to be no reason not to close the Enforcement Order based on observations that day. Commissioner Perdrizet asked about the location of the required barriers, which Director Glogower indicated with photos onscreen.

The Commission voted to lift the Enforcement Order for this item with six (6) yeas and one (1) absent (Dodge).

4. Formal Vote – Approve minutes from 8/12/21 and 9/2/21 meetings

Director Glogower explained that minutes from 8/12/21 were completed but that 9/2/21 were still undergoing revision. Vice Chair Bowler offered a small typographical correction to the minutes as provided.

The Commission voted to approve the minutes from 8/12/21 with five (5) yeas and two (2) absent (Dodge and Arnold)

5. Upcoming Permit Applications for 10/28/21 Meeting

Director Glogower shared that there were no new permit applications that were submitted in time for the upcoming meeting. Vice Chair Bowler suggested cancelling the next meeting. Commissioner Gazillo, Director Glogower, and Commissioner Horan discussed general duties of the Commission and upcoming required additions to Holyoke's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Vice Chair Bowler further suggested changing the date of the 11/11 meeting date due to the Veterans Day Holiday. The Commission decided to move the meeting date to 11/18/2021

6. Mail/other items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Commissioner Moriarty provided an update on the Community Preservation Committee, and their request that each Board and Commission provide their priorities for the coming funding round. Director Glogower answered that the current plan was to submit applications for Scott Tower and trail work at Gloutak Woods. He shared the public tree inventory from the 2021 MVP grant award.

Commissioner Horan provided an update on the Whiting Street Reservoir Advisory Committee and explained their role to Commissioner Gazillo.

Director Glogower shared an update on ongoing ATV trespass at Gloutak Woods, and recommended that the Commission invite abutters to a future meeting to discuss community solutions to the problem.

7. Adjourn

The Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM.