



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING MINUTES
ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
February 22, 2021

1
2 Present: Gene Crouch (Chair)
3 William Moulton (Vice Chair)
4 Cathy Van Lancker
5 K.G. Narayana
6 Gabriel Toledo
7 Greg Wands
8
9 Maeghan Dos Anjos (Agent)

10
11 Absent: Carl Hakansson

12
13 **Meeting held by Zoom**

14
15 **Call to order: 7:02 P.M.**

16
17 **7:02 Mr. Crouch reviewed the protocol for the meeting**

18
19 **7:04 Member Prerogative**

20 Mr. Narayana said that 500,000 lives were lost in the United States during the COVID-19 and
21 asked to observe this in a moment of silence to remember all of those who lost their lives
22 during the pandemic. The Commission and the attendees did observe a moment of silence.

23
24 **7:07 Review 2/8/2021 Meeting Minutes**

25 The Commission reviewed the meeting minutes.

26
27 Mr. Narayana made a motion, seconded by Mr. Toledo to approve the Meeting Minutes as
28 amended. Motion passed 6-0-0. (Roll call vote: KN, GT, GW, CVL, WM, GC).

29
30 **7:09 Member Prerogative**

31 Mr. Narayana announced that anyone over the age of 65 years old can call 2-1-1 to register and
32 schedule an appointment for the COVID-19 Vaccine. Mr. Crouch asked what is 2-1-1. Ms.
33 Van Lancker said that it is like 4-1-1 but for COVID-19. Ms. Van Lancker said that she was
34 able to register online.

35
36 Mr. Mark Dasoni said that he got vaccines for his father and himself and they came to his
37 house to administer the vaccine.

38
39 Ms. Jennifer Ball (Assistant Town Manager) said that they changed and require a minimum of
40 750 vaccines for five days per week.

41

42 **7:15 NOI, Town of Ashland, off of Megunko Road/ Memorial Drive, trolley brook trail**
43 **improvements**

44 Mr. Bill Paille (Representative- BSC Group), Mr. Keith Hannon (Representative- BSC Group),
45 and Ms. Jennifer Ball (Assistant Town Manager) were present for the hearing.

46
47 Mr. Crouch provided a summary from the last meeting, and said that he had not had a chance
48 to review the NOI at that time. Mr. Crouch said that there was no effort in mitigation. Mr.
49 Crouch said that there are no performance standards for working in the 25' No Disturb Zone
50 (NDZ), because the Commission does not expect work to take place in that area. Mr. Crouch
51 also commented on the Stormwater Management narrative.

52
53 Mr. Paille spoke to the stormwater on site and said that when he was out there he did not
54 notice any runoff, or erosion by the stream. Mr. Paille said that this is encouraging to him in
55 that the crown is right and the slope is right. Mr. Paille explained that if you are coming from
56 the trailhead, the runoff will be directed to the left, across pavement to the trail, then they will
57 work on the right side and cover it with rip rap and loam and seed it. Mr. Paille said that they
58 are leaving the trees.

59
60 Mr. Narayana asked if he would be digging deep at the entrance near Megunko Road. Mr.
61 Paille said that they will be adding gravel than a six-inch reveal.

62
63 Ms. Van Lancker said that the Commission had asked for mitigation and suggested that they
64 come back with something. Mr. Hannon said that they had discussed this internally, but found
65 that it was challenging to find mitigation due to the limited space. Mr. Hannon said that they
66 had discussed removing the rip rap with sandy material to improve habitat for turtles at the
67 pond. Mr. Crouch asked if Mr. Hannon was aware that the pond was dredged out by the EPA
68 and may have residual contaminants. Mr. Hannon said that it is not the idea to disturb the soil.
69 Ms. Van Lancker asked if there are any other areas to improve. Mr. Hannon said that he saw
70 that everything out there was functioning habitat, and did not see anything.

71
72 Ms. Van Lancker asked if they had received the BMP manual for work on railroad beds issued
73 by DEP. The Agent said that she forwarded it to Mr. Paille earlier in the day. Mr. Paille said
74 that there are four categories and he thinks that they fall under the residential/rural category.
75 Mr. Paille said that they are going to incorporate the BMP measures by adding conditions and
76 specs in the plans, and the bid documents. Mr. Paille said that the contractor will be held
77 responsible. Mr. Paille said that they will also have a discussion with the contractor.

78
79 Mr. Crouch agreed with Mr. Paille's assessment on the assignment of the category. Mr.
80 Crouch explained that the track line cuts through the property and elevated arsenic levels were
81 found in other parts of the track. Mr. Crouch said that there is likely petroleum hydrocarbons.

82
83 Ms. Van Lancker said that this should be in the submission to the Commission.

84
85 Mr. Crouch said that for the mitigation to offset the work in the NDZ, he [Mr. Crouch] is not
86 sure where they can do that [mitigation]. Mr. Crouch asked if they can do mitigation where
87 the utility line runs up to the [back of the] solar array [which is on the Nyanza cap]. Mr.
88 Crouch asked if they can revegetate that or enhance it. Mr. Paille said that they could but is it

89 significant enough to offset the work in the NDZ. Mr. Paille said that the contractor is
90 probably going to use that as a staging area. Mr. Paille shared his screen and showed the area
91 that they are discussing. Mr. Crouch asked if he would plant trees and shrubs. Mr. Paille
92 suggested that they can create a buffer that displays a message not to go beyond that point [the
93 buffer]. Mr. Wands suggested possibly planting that area with wildflowers. Mr. Moulton said
94 that he does not know about using a wildflower mix in that area.
95

96 Mr. Wands asked if this area is cleaned [of contaminants from the Nyanza 21E site]. Ms. Ball
97 said that they [the Town] will need to check with the EPA and DEP, and that they [the Town]
98 can do that when the EPA and DEP do their annual review of the site.
99

100 Mr. Crouch asked about mitigation. Mr. Crouch said that they cannot cut down mature trees as
101 mitigation within the corridor as that would not make any sense. Mr. Crouch said that
102 plantings can be placed along the side of the trails and in places at large drop offs, which can
103 be used as barriers. Mr. Crouch said that his company uses shrubs instead of railing with DCR.
104 Mr. Hannon said that they can use educational signage related to habitat function. Mr. Crouch
105 said that he is favor of that, and that they could include historical information about the trail.
106 Mr. Crouch said and emphasized that he does not want signs posted at vernal pools. Ms. Van
107 Lancker said to use signs about wetlands.
108

109 Mr. Wands asked about invasive species clearing. Mr. Crouch said that he only noticed
110 buckthorn out there. Mr. Wands said that it is there, and that the Friends of the Upper
111 Charles Trail had cleared bittersweet out there. Mr. Crouch asked Mr. Hannon what invasive
112 species he has noticed. Mr. Hannon said that by the pond there is *phragmites*. Mr. Hannon
113 said that herbicide needs to be used if you are going to start dealing with invasive plants.
114

115 The Commission concluded that mitigation to offset work within the NDZ should consist of
116 the following:

- 117 • Planting along the path
 - 118 • Restoration at the access road used from the trail to construct the solar array
 - 119 • Augmentation plantings to replace fence.
 - 120 • Educational signage
 - 121 • Invasive species control
- 122

123 Mr. Joel Arbeitman (Chair of the Upper Charles Trail Committee) asked what the next steps
124 are. Mr. Crouch said that he would like to see the mitigation items on a plan and in the
125 narrative. Mr. Moulton said that an invasive species management plan should be developed
126 and include an explanation of how you would control those. Mr. Crouch said that if they can
127 get those to us, the Commission can review those documents. Mr. Narayana asked if they
128 should keep maintaining it. Mr. Crouch said that if the mitigation work is part of doing work
129 in the NDZ than the maintenance is part of the mitigation requirements. Mr. Wands said that
130 they had indicated that there will be a group of people going out there to maintain the trail.
131

132 Mr. Robert Scherer wanted to thank everyone. Mr. Scherer asked if there is any particular part
133 of this proposal that they can take a look at, or is it pretty much that this is the plan.
134

135 Mr. Mark Dassoni (49 Hawthorne Road) asked about testing. Ms. Ball said that they did have
136 conversations with DEP and EPA. Mr. Crouch said that if the design criteria are followed,
137 there should not be any comments from DEP.

138
139 Mr. Narayana made a motion, seconded by Mr. Toledo to continue the hearing to March 8,
140 2021. Motion passed 6-0-0. (Roll call vote: KN, GT, GW, CVL, WM, GC).

141
142 Ms. Ball asked Mr. Crouch if he would include the BMP manual in the bid documents. Mr.
143 Crouch said that his company doesn't.

144
145 **8:21 Amended OOC 95-931, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Route 126**
146 **(Pond Street), drainage, traffic, and safety improvements**

147 The applicant withdrew the application. The Commission accepted the withdrawal of the
148 amended OOC for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. No vote was made.

149
150 **8:22 NOI, 58 Exchange Ashland, LLC. 16 Union Street, Lot 2, four-unit residential**
151 **building (continued from 1/11/2021)**

152 The applicant requested a continuance.

153
154 Mr. Narayana made a motion, seconded by Ms. Van Lancker to continue the hearing to March
155 22, 2021. Motion passed 6-0-0. (Roll call vote: KN, GT, GW, CVL, WM, GC).

156
157 **8:23 NOI/SMP, Magunko Realty Trust, 9 Pennock Road, single family home**
158 **(continued from 1/11/2021)**

159 The applicant requested a continuance.

160
161 Mr. Narayana made a motion, seconded by Ms. Van Lancker to continue the hearing to March
162 8, 2021. Motion passed 6-0-0. (Roll call vote: KN, GT, GW, CVL, WM, GC).

163
164 **8:23 Agent's Announcements**

165 The Agent announced that a Chapter 40B filing was submitted to the ZBA for Arbella and the
166 hearing is tonight. Mr. Crouch said that it is right now.

167
168 **8:24 Meeting Adjournment**

169 A motion was made by Mr. Narayana, and seconded Ms. Van Lancker to adjourn the meeting.
170 Motion passed 6-0-0. (Roll call vote: KN, GT, GW, CVL, WM, GC).

171
172 **Documents Reviewed by the Conservation Commission on 2/ 22/ 2021**

- 173
- Document entitled, *Agenda* dated 2/6/2021
 - Document entitled, *Meeting Minutes Ashland Conservation Commission* dated 2/8/2021
 - Plans entitled, *Ashland Trolley Brook Trail 100% Design*, and dated 2/ 17 /2021
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