



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Public Meeting – Monday, August 16, 2021 at 7:00 PM 147 Hampshire Street, Main Conference Room MEETING MINUTES

The following meeting minutes were taken by Tracy Dwyer and are respectfully submitted.

Present Commission Members: Jennifer Letourneau (Director), Purvi Patel (Chair), Erum Sattar, Kathryn Hess, Michelle Lane, Kaki Martin

Absent Commission Members: David Lyons (Vice Chair), Elysse Magnotto-Cleary

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, DPW; Jane Morse; Vanessa Curran, DCR; Anne Carroll, DCR; Keith Gazaille, Solitude; Lisa Kumpf, Charles River Water Association; Gene Crouch, VHB; Ian Ramey, Copley Wolff Design Group; Matt D'Amico, Cabot Cabot Forbes; Jared Walsh, Bolher; Kelly Siry, VHB; Patrick Callahan, Halvorsen; Stephanie Beaver, VHB; Allison Desbonnet, Copley Wolff Design Group; Ann Tennis; Kevin Lawson, American Legion Marsh Post; Eric Monkiewicz, VHB; Stella Lensing, DCR; Tew Humide; John Sullivan, Cabot, Cabot & Forbes; Zack Richards, Bohler

Purvi Patel opened the meeting.

7:02 – Notice of Intent

DEP File # TBD

Aquatic Plant Management – Charles River
Department of Conservation and Recreation
Continued from July 19, 2021

Purvi Patel stated that this project is also being heard at other Conservation Commissions in Boston, Newton and Watertown. She said that there was a third-party review for the NOI and also that public comment was left open from the July 19, 2021 meeting. Vanessa Curran from DCR, Anne Carroll from DCR and Keith Gazaille from Solitude who is assisting with the project. Vanessa stated that it is standard practice DCR and Solitude work on that they conduct a pre-management survey, maps will be produced for all areas that will be managed and will be submitted to the Conservation Commission prior to the start of the project. There will also be visual surveys and point-intercept survey conducted after management. The point-intercept surveys entail 555 points in the 700 acres of the river where they to rake tosses in the river where

they will identify what species are pulled up. These surveys will be conducted once a year which will detail changes to invasive/native species over time and detail the effects of treatment. These surveys will also allow them to identify any plant distribution in other areas of the river. Vanessa also wanted to clarify that they are not trying to control water chestnut with sonar, management will be with hand pulling from watercraft. They will manage early in growing season and get the seeds. If the water chestnut gets beyond the point where they can't manage by hand pulling, they will use a hand cutting method with is done from a barge. Anne Carroll stated that plants will be taken off site and disposed of, there will be no need of storage or disposal near the river. Vanessa stated that the curly leaf pond weed will be more difficult to manage, the Department of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has put in a springtime restriction from February 15 to July 15 and pond weed does grow earlier in the season. This species is not a huge threat to the river, and they are mostly concerned with the Milfoil and Fanwort along with Water Chestnut. If the pond weed becomes a nuisance to the river, and dominants the river and they will work with DMF about the springtime restriction because it's the only time to treat the curly leaf pond weed. DMF sent a letter to the Conservation Commission on August 16, 2021, a few points Vanessa went over was the time of year restrictions the springtime restriction of February 15 through July 15 and then again, another time restriction is September 1 through November 15. They will avoid working during those times, DMF recommend monitoring if working inside the time restrictions. They would need to create a monitoring plan for water quality testing as well as oxygen levels, pH and temperature.

Vanessa talked about the schedule for this year, survey done, report given to Conservation Commission. If they can not comply with the time restrictions, then they would do the monitoring DMF has recommended. For 2022 they would also be looking for permitting for the lakes district. May/June they would do a survey to submit to Conservation Commission and meet to review on management plan. In July 2022 to do a low dose sonar treatment in the whole river and hand pull water chestnuts as needed. In August 2022 they would do a Sonar booster as needed based on results and monitoring as well as hand pulling water chestnuts. In September 2022 they would do a point-intercept survey and in December their year end reporting. By years 2024/2025 they would start out again with the survey and meeting with the Conservation Commissions, but they said by then they would see a significant reduction in the invasive species and looking more at spot treatments.

Jennifer Letourneau Director of the Conservation Commission went through the third-party review. There was a suggestion for a second survey and DCR has a greed to the second survey as explained earlier. But the improvements should be outer depth water, limits of beds, whenever waypoints are made. Waypoints should include both shallow and very shallow water depths. The review also recommended that the survey should be made with high resolution down imaging. All specimens of Pondweed should be retained to identify, and a GPS waypoint file should be created, and the water depth should be recorded at all waypoints. Jennifer stated that she talked with DCR earlier and they had responses to all these points. Vanessa stated that #4 that all pondweed species should be retained for identification, she wanted to be able to talk to Dr. Knoecklein, because she wasn't sure why he was asking for that. Regarding all of the other points she asked Keith to speak but she said all of the waypoints and water depth calculations will be done. Keith said these will all be done with the surveys they intended to do. He said they will fine tune where the beds are growing. A lot of work was done in 2019 that addressed a lot of these points.

Jennifer stated that she spoke to Anne earlier in the day, but wants to clarify that the pre-management survey that will be submitted to Conservation Commission it will have littoral zones on it and polygons on it that will identify where the plants are growing and what species are growing, so over time they can visually see what is happening over time? Vanessa agreed that is what will be submitted.

Jennifer when on it review more of the third-party review. He generally agrees with the timeline given but would like waypoints and Keith went through that. Reports of hand pulling will be given. How would curly leaf pond weed be treated? Vanessa stated that its hard with the time restriction, but this species is not a problem, if it does become a problem, they will work with DMF and the time restriction monitoring.

Jennifer stated that DCR has complied with all of suggestions in the third-party review. Jennifer stated that she recommends a letter from DCR be sent to the commission with all the responses in written form for the record.

Jennifer stated that Newton has approved what has been submitted to commission. Vanessa stated that they will be heard at the Boston meeting Wednesday and Watertown on September 1. Purvi asked how they would proceed given the timeline/schedule they are proposing. Vanessa stated they could just treat downstream for this year.

Kathryn Hess asked there will there be work down after September 1 this year. She said they would do a monitoring plan per DMF, but they did not talk about the thresholds they would consider. If they saw a drop in dissolved oxygen, they did not talk about what they would do? Vanessa said she talked to DMF and they are looking for two rounds of sampling two before and two after with anywhere between four to six locations in the lower basin of the river, they confirm with them. Dissolved oxygen is of most concern to them, once the samples are given to DMF if they saw a drop, they would stop their treatment and work with DMF on how move forward. They however are not anticipating any issues with the treatments they are recommending. Kathryn asked again what the schedule for the fall would be, there is hand pulling but what about the spot treatment would it create a large biomass to dye off and is that concern with the dissolved oxygen? Vanessa, stated that with the ProcellaCOR that does not happened its more gradual over time, it could take three to four weeks for plants to die off. Anne stated that is same way with the sonar, it kills the plants over time not all at once. Kathryn also asked what the time frame was for after treatment for the testing to happen? Anne stated she thought it was twenty-four to forty-eight hours after treatment but will confirm. Jennifer stated that she talked with the manufacturer of ProcellaCOR and it was explained to her that this treatment shatters the plant, so there is not bio-mass left over, no floating dead plants.

Purvi wanted to confirm that the Charles River Watershed was in favor of this project. Anne stated that Lisa from CRWA was on the meeting.

Michelle Lane asked if there was going to be any monitoring of the soil? And the herbicide effect on the soil? Vanessa said there was no plan for monitoring the soil and these types of treatments the herbicide is taking up by the plant and there are no effects on the soils. Keith said as part of the EPA with the herbicides ProcellaCOR was a favorable one because there was little to no effects on the water or soils.

Erum Sattar asked about David Lyons comments which were emailed to the commission. David Lyons, Vice Chair of the commission was unable to attend but had email questions in advance of the meeting. David emailed "Is there any plan to mitigate hypoxia, if/when it is observed." Vanessa feels its not necessary, they are treating the milfoil and DMF recommendation treat with sonar ½ one year and ½ the other year but they did not recommend that with ProcellaCOR, so it is not necessary. No more than 50 percent of water body will be treated and DCR agreed that is accurate.

David Lyons' emailed question "If timing will account for temperature-induced stratification. (Since warmer water is less dense, lake and river stratification is usually most pronounced in late summer; stratification exacerbates dead zones by reducing mixing, so it would be prudent to time application to avoid this additional risk factor). Although this is more of a concern in lakes, the slow flow rate of the Charles does make this a concern, especially in the littoral zone." Vanessa stated that the DMF restrictions is a problem, because they are allowed to treat from July 16 through August 31 and that is a warmer time of year, but that is the time of year when there would be least impacts. Anne stated that is the time of year when there should not be any spawning going on.

David Lyons' emailed question "DCR/Solitude might consider post-application water quality sampling at the tow and three weeks post-application mark. This is not included in the discussion of monitoring. Monitoring algal concentrations and dissolved oxygen at these intervals could help detect early signs of eutrophication and hypoxia and allow the department to course-correct appropriately and perhaps adjust application schedules moving forward." Jennifer stated that DCR wasn't sure when the testing should happen after treatment but would DCR consider a third-round testing at two and three weeks after treatment? Vanessa asked would the testing be for algae. Jennifer stated alkaline and dissolved oxygen. Vanessa stated that there has been blooms in previous years and doing a test after treatment knowing that there have been blooms in past year would not be definitive as an effect from the treatment.

DL any plan to mitigate hypoxia?

Anne stated that if there are any concerns after the first testing by DMF they would stop all treatment if concerns were expressed by DMF. Jennifer ran through the proposed plan for 2022 and Vanessa stated that there was not monitoring being done outside of DMF's time restrictions from July 16-August 31. Also, DMF's recommendation for Sonar treatment for ½ of the river at a time was so there would be refuge for the fish to go to.

7:54 – Public Comment

Lisa from Charles river Watershed Association is in full support of the proposed project. She stated that all of the careful questioning by all has done been done by CRWA through meetings with DCR. She said that she hopes that work can get started soon that this does not become a huge problem.

7:57 – Public Comment Closed

Purvi asked if there was an agreement by the commission to add in a special condition for monitoring outside of DMF's time restriction. She agrees with Anne from DCR about the incentive to work between the six-week period where monitoring is not required. Vanessa stated that Newton did not require it so this would be different from Newton's Order of Conditions if this commission requires it.

Erum Sattar asked because its outside the period and the staggering treatment that would not be a problem or you have data from other projects. Keith said that they have data to support lack of change in dissolved oxygen in a non-treatment year.

Erum is it worth assessing the data that Keith is speaking about. Anne stated DMF is not requiring any testing within the window of time. Anne stated that one of the projects in Barnstable and would share data or Jennifer could be in contact with Barnstable Conservation Commission or contact DMF.

Jennifer asked the commission what they would recommend for her to do she would be happy to do. Jennifer is concerned with the no monitoring.

Anne stated that if the stars aligned this year and they would be able to do a treat it would be ProcellaCOR during DMF's time restriction so monitoring would need to take place.

Erum stated that most of the treatments would happen next year and that testing would not happen but she thinks that the monitoring for the commission would be helpful although she knows that DMF is not requiring it.

Michelle asked that if there is a lack of information regarding the effects of the treatments on the non-targeted and targeted species. Keith target species they do know the impacts, and from prior projects they have an idea of how it will treat the non-targeted species. Which lead them to what types of products they were using. Anne also stated that there have been lots of studies and Ken Wagner did studies where native species have survived through treatment.

Michelle asked does DCR have studies on the treatments for the commission to look at. Anne said she could send over some studies.

Purvi asked the commission to accept the Order of Conditions the way they are outlined, so this year the ProcellaCOR treatment would need to be done with DMF's monitoring requirement and next year it would be without monitoring per DMF.

8:10 - The commission was 3 in favor and 2 against. For the approval of Order of Conditions by the commission.

8:11 – Notice of Intent

DEP File #

Marsh Post Parking Lot Reconstruction Project – Greenough Blvd
Department of Conservation and Recreation

Stella Lensing from DCR is the project manager for this project. Stella stated to the commission that as of right now there are no safe connections from the Eliot Bridge to Greenough Blvd or shared use paths. This project would entail a parking lot reconfiguration of the American Legion to create a safe path for pedestrian and cyclists as well as to restriction large vehicle circulation in the parking lot for the American Legion as well to the boathouse.

Gene Crouch from VHB stated that this project is to improve the land around the Charles River Reservation as well as Greenough Blvd. This project would reconfigure the pedestrian, cyclist and parking around the Marsh Post building as well as improve access to the parking lot off Greenough Blvd and the stormwater management facilities at the site. This project is to match

into the current Greenough Blvd project. The project will not impact any waters or land under water or vegetated wetlands. The project however will impede the twenty-five-foot river front area and the one-hundred-foot buffer zone, which is also the buffer to Hells Half Acre, the vegetated wetland adjacent to site. There is no habitat impacts and no FEMA flood plain onsite. Gene stated that there are some trees that will need to be removed as part of the project, as well as some shrubs that will be replaced with grass. There are also four trees that will be relocated onsite. There is also a tree on the riverbank and the tree was severely damaged, so that tree is planned to be removed. Gene stated that the plan is to relocate and reconfigure the access to the parking for the Marsh Post off Greenough Blvd, the bike path and trails will be reconfigured and crosses the access road in a better location. The concrete at the access near Greenough Blvd as well as the concrete up near the Marsh Post will be a scored concrete/a patio concrete. This will allow for trucks to back-up close to the Marsh Post for deliveries but also is for access to paths and trails. Gene stated that there will be new infiltration chambers, will take stormwater run off from the site and treat it, overflow will lead catch basins which will be discharged into a stormwater pipe that goes out into the Charles River. Gene stated that grass and soil areas will be stabilized, during regattas trucks and boat trailers use grass areas, they are going to create stable areas for the traffic during regattas.

Kelly Siry from VHB went through stormwater management onsite. Kelly stated right now there is not stormwater treatment onsite, so they are making improvements with this project. Jennifer asked where the outfall was, Kelly stated it was where the Linden tree being removed is near the river. Kelly stated that parking lot run off will be treated in the infiltration. The existing catch basin in parking lot will be removed and one will be made into a manhole in the grassy area. The site will have 67% phosphorous removal and removal of 37% of solids. DCR knows that this project is adjacent to the Charles River as is subject to the TDML of phosphorous to the river, so they are proposing a jelly fish unit onsite to control this.

Jennifer went through the review memo from James Wilcox from DPW. Gene did not provide a response to the memo yet. Purvi stated that some of the points in the review memo could be managed after approval, but some of the recharge standards, jelly fish unit and calculations will need to address before approval and will need to continue the hearing. Jennifer stated she agreed with Purvi's take on Jim Wilcox's review memo that some are administrative and can be taken care of after approval.

Kathryn Hess stated she would like Jim Wilcox's addressed.

8:36 – Public Comment Opened

Kevin Lawson the Adjutant of the March Post typed into the comments section “The Marsh Post would like to know first where we can get a copy of these plans. Second what happens to our yard where we keep the trash on the bravo side of the building. Third is the like lane behind the post going to be torn out? Fourth will our flag and memorial be replaced? And there has been talks of creating a memorial for the city veterans”.

Gene said that they would send plans to Kevin if he would share his email address they can be emailed. Also, Stella stated she thought that their Lease and Permits section shared the plans to the Marsh Post. She would ask Paul Casey to resend plans. Stella stated that the trash yard will be in the same location but they would have to roll out the trash so a truck can pick it up, trucks won't be allowed to back-up to the location of the trash receptacle. Stella stated that the bike trail

will stay in the same location it would just be repaved and the flag and memorial will stay in place, they will not be moving that.

Kevin typed into the comments “that doesn’t work for them”. Stella stated that is for the Lease and Permits section and this is not the venue for that discussion. Purvi stated this was not under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission.

8:40 – The commission unanimously agreed to continue this to the September 20, 2021 meeting. The proponents will need to address Jim Wilcox’s review memo comments.

8:40 – Notice of Intent

DEP File # TBD

180 Fawcett Street

Cabot, Cabot, and Forbes

Zack Richards from Bohler stated they have been working with the City since Fall 2020 and they were close to submit a special permit. This project just nudges the FEMA flood plain map in the northwest corner. The project is not located on the flood plain because of the elevations. Jennifer stated that she received an additional memo before the start of the meeting stating and showing that this is 100% out of the flood plain as it exists and proposes.

Purvi stated if this project is not in the flood plain and the commission received documentation as well as confirmation from Jim Wilcox that it was not necessary to continue with the hearing.

8:45 - Public Comment closed.

8:46 - Negative Determination was unanimously agreed upon by the commission.

8:47 – Administrative Topics

Meeting minutes were approved from the July 19, 2021 meeting.

8:48 – Meeting Adjourned

