

Carlisle Conservation Commission
April 1, 2020
Minutes

Consistent with Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Carlisle Conservation Commission was conducted via remote participation.

7:40 p.m. Confirming Member Access:

Chair Dan Wells held a roll call vote to confirm that all members, staff and persons anticipated on the agenda were present: Lee Tatistcheff – aye; Vice Chair Angie Verge – aye; Helen Young – aye; Alex Parra – aye. Commissioner Ken Belize was not present. Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard – aye; Administrative Assistant Mary Hopkins – aye. Conservation Commission Open Position Applicant Navneet Virk Hundal – aye.

Chair Wells - Introduction to Remote Meeting:

“In order to mitigate the transmission of the virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspended the requirement of Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and have been encouraged to participate remotely.

The Order, which is posted on the Town's website, allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment. For this meeting, the Conservation Commission is convening by telephone conference as posted on the Town's website identifying how the public may join. Please note that this meeting is being recorded. Accordingly, please be aware that other participants may be able to hear you and anything that you broadcast may be captured by the recording. All participants should keep their phones muted unless recognized by the Chair to reduce background noise and feedback. All supporting materials that have been provided to members of this body can be made available on upon request. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda unless the Chair noted otherwise.” Wells concluded with a review of the meeting ground rules to allow for effective and clear conduct of the Commission's business and to ensure accurate meeting minutes.

Administrative Matters:

Conservation Land Signage: Trail signage is being developed in conjunction with CCF outlining new responsibilities for trail users in light of the current public health and environmental concerns related to the COVID-19 emergency.

Minutes:

*Tatistcheff moved to approve the **November 21, 2019** minutes as presented. Verge seconded. Roll Call Vote: Parra – aye; Verge – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye.*

*Young moved to approve the **December 12, 2019** minutes as presented. Verge seconded. Roll Call Vote: Verge – aye; Parra – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye. Motion passed.*

*Tatistcheff moved to approve the **January 9, 2020** minutes as presented. Parra seconded. Roll Call Vote: Parra – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Verge – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye. Motion passed.*

*Tatistcheff moved to approve the **January 23, 2020** minutes as submitted. Parra seconded. Roll Call Vote: Parra – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Verge – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye.*

MassDEP Guidance to Conservation Commissions – COVID-19:

MassDEP is aware of the operational challenges Conservation Commissions (ConComs) are facing due to various constraints related to the Commonwealth's COVID-19 emergency. MassDEP staff are currently working remotely and offices are physically closed until further notice per the Governor's order, so wetlands staff have limited access to the mail. Therefore, DEP has developed guidance for ConComs to assist in implementing the Wetlands Protection Act during this period. DEP plans to update this early next week once the Bill for municipalities is final. DEP will also post FAQs on their website for updates.

MassDEP is also in communication with MA Association of Conservation Commissions (MAACC) and MA Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals (MSMCP) and will continue to coordinate and share relevant information as it becomes available.

The Baker-Polito Administration is taking steps to provide relief to cities and towns during this period, including an emergency order suspending certain provisions of open meeting law. In addition, Governor Baker proposed emergency legislation which, if passed, will provide ConComs with relief from certain mandated deadlines (e.g. requirement to conduct public hearing within 21 days of receipt of a Notice of Intent [NOI]) and allow for electronic filing and signatures in certain circumstances: "An Act to further address challenges faced by municipalities, school districts and state authorities resulting from COVID-19".

Willard reported she is currently participating in weekly MSMCP Zoom meetings and she will continue to provide updates as they become available.

Interview of Navneet Virk Hundal, MD, applicant for the open position on the Conservation Commission:

Wells thanked Navneet for her interest in the position and her willingness to serve on the Commission despite all the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted her cover letter indicates he had provided her with professional wetlands consulting services in the town of Wayland to assist her parents in addressing the somewhat complicated requirements related to closing out an open Order of Conditions. He said the Commission hopes Navneet can provide them with input from both a resident's standpoint as well as from a regulatory perspective as the Commission moves forward in revising the Carlisle Wetlands Protection Bylaw.

Navneet said she and her husband chose this community for the natural beauty, the open spaces and its respect for the delicate balance of nature around them. She said although the process of closing out the OOCs on her parent's house was frustrating at times, it was educational, and she enjoyed the detailed aspects of the process. She said she hopes she can use that learning experience to help the town and assist the Commission in streamlining the process.

Verge moved to recommend that the BOS appoint Navneet Hundal to the Conservation Commission. Tatistcheff seconded. Roll Call Vote: Verge – aye; Parra – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye. Motion passed.

8: 13 p.m. *Tatistcheff moved to adjourn. Young seconded. Roll Call Vote: Verge – aye; Parra – aye; Tatistcheff – aye; Young – aye; Wells – aye.*

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Hopkins
Administrative Assistant