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ADAMS CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021

TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman James Fassell and Commission Members Tom Robinson, Steve Melito, Jeff Randall and Matthew Burdick

MEMBERS ABSENT: Members Natasha Bordeaux and David Lipinski

OTHERS PRESENT: Joseph Nowak, Adams Selectboard; Steve Ivas, Professional Wetlands Scientist; Steven Thompson and Sharon Burke, Specialty Minerals and Recording Secretary Pam Gerry

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Fassell called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Board members need to approve the minutes of May 13 and June 24, 2021.

A motion made by Member Tom Robinson, seconded by Member Steve Melito to table the minutes of May 13, 2021 to the Conservation Commission's next meeting, passed unanimously.

A motion made by Member Tom Robinson, seconded by Member Steve Melito to approve the minutes of June 24, 2021, passed unanimously.

REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION: filed by Sharon Burke, Specialty Minerals Inc. requesting whether the work depicted on plan(s) is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act; whether the area and/or work depicted on plan(s) referenced is subject to the jurisdiction of any municipal wetlands ordinance or bylaw of the Town of Adams for the removal of invasive Japanese knotweed on property at 0 East Road (N. Parcel) (Map 227, Parcel 7) and 273 Columbia Street (S. Parcel) (Map 104, Parcel 9).

Chairman Fassell began the meeting by introducing the applicant, Sharon Burke from Specialty Minerals.

Mr. Ivas began the discussion by introducing himself to the Commission members. He stated that he was a Professional Wetland Scientist with Ivas Environmental representing Sharon Burke and Specialty Minerals. He explained that they intended to remove Japanese knotweed along the Hoosic River in the north parcel of East Road, property owned by the Ziembra family in addition to the south parcel, location of the Adams Wastewater Treatment Plant, property owned by the Town of Adams. Mr. Ivas began by stating that the knotweed could be found on the inside curve of the Hoosic River above the bank. Mr. Ivas let the Commission members know that they had anticipated completing this procedure earlier in the season by performing the cutting of the knotweed to promote growth to the plant and eventually applying the herbicide in the area. Mr. Ivas informed them that it was getting to late to perform both of these tasks, further noting that at the present time, they would cut the knotweed

and hold off on the herbicide treatment until spring and summer, 2022 and perhaps into 2023. Mr. Ivas explained to them that the methods they used to complete this task would be very effective.

Chairman Fassell addressed Mr. Ivas to ask him if he could further explain the methods that would be taken in the removal of the knotweed.

In response, Mr. Ivas let the members know that the method taken was referred to as a “mechanical control” which would be a process of cutting the knotweeds with clippers or machetes and allowing it to grow and inevitably weaken the plant ensuring that nothing “gets in or near the river.”

Chairman Fassell asked Mr. Ivas if they had a qualified company that would perform this method. Mr. Ivas stated that they hired SWCA Environmental Consultants who would be performing the work. Mr. Ivas informed them that Mickey Markus and Naomi Valentine who held many years of experience in this area would be performing the invasive plant management.

Member Robinson was curious to know what type of herbicide would be applied to the knotweed. Mr. Ivas responded by stating that it was called glyphosate in addition to surfactant.

Member Melito stated that he was a beekeeper showing concern that the application could affect the honey bees. Mr. Ivas stated that they would apply the herbicide treatment prior to the planting season so this would not harm the bees.

Member Melito addressed Mr. Ivas to ask him if the Ziemba family had any comments on this proposed request by Specialty Minerals. He stated that they did submit a copy of the Request for Determination to them, further noting that there was no response on their end at this time. Ms. Burke added that she had not had any communication with the owners at the present time.

Member Randall emphasized that the applicant would need a signed agreement by the Ziemba family for them to proceed with this procedure. Mr. Ivas stated that the National Heritage did not inform them that a sign off was required for the Request for Determination to move forward.

Mr. Ivas stated that they would request that the Conservation Commission issue the applicant a “no take letter” that they could sign.

Member Randall stated that MSCW should have been provided to the Conservation Commission and to the Ziemba’s in order to provide some education as to the procedures that would be taken.

Ms. Burke addressed Member Randall to ask him who the contact person would be in the Ziemba family. He stated that there were several family members that shared ownership. Ms. Burke let the Commission know that she would contact them.

Chairman Fassell stated that they have sufficient time to address this matter.

Member Randall informed Mr. Ivas that within the Request for Determination application, section D specified that the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) was notified of this project. Member Randall let him know that he spoke with Mark Stinson, from DEP and he stated to him that he had not received a copy of the Request for Determination for the proposed project.

be happy to demonstrate how the process of removing the knotweed was performed. Chairman Fassell stated that new members of the Conservation Commission may want to take advantage of this.

Ms. Burke noted that Bill Lattrell, Ecological Consultant submitted a summary of their project. Mr. Ivas had responded to this with three comments that were shared with the Commission members. Ms. Burke requested that the Commission be given an opportunity to speak with Mr. Stinson for further direction on proceeding with their Request for Determination.

Member Robinson stated that he "did not have a problem" with their proposed project emphasizing the fact that DEP had become involved and the Commission would be required to follow the proper procedures.

Chairman Fassell stated that the Commission has to assure that everything was performed according to the Wetlands Regulations. He suggested that the Request for Determination be continued to a later date.

A motion made by Member Tom Robinson, seconded by Member Steve Melito to continue the Request for Determination filed by Sharon Burke, Specialty Minerals to the Conservation Commission's next meeting on August 26, 2021 at 6:30 p.m., passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jeff Randall and Matt Burdick were appointed by the Board of Selectmen to serve on the Conservation Commission.

- Ratification of Emergency Certificate: Columbia/Renfrew Street

Chairman Fassell briefly reviewed the details behind the issuance of the Emergency Certificate submitted to the Conservation Commission by the Town of Adams, Department of Public Works. Chairman Fassell stated that there was a partial break of a sewer pipe under the brook near the property owned by John Burke. He stated that the town received permission by Mr. Burke to repair the line which had taken them two days to complete. Chairman Fassell stated that a copy of this Emergency Certificate was submitted to Mark Stinson at MA DEP and he had no problem with it.

A motion made by Member Tom Robinson, seconded by Member Steve Melito to close the Emergency Certification for property at Columbia/Renfrew Street, passed unanimously.

The Conservation Commission members signed the Emergency Certificate.

Mr. Nowak, Adams Selectboard seated in the audience stated to the Conservation Commission that he wished they had given him the same courtesy as Specialty Minerals had received regarding his well-intentioned efforts to remove Japanese Knotweed on East Hoosac Street months earlier. He explained that the activity which he was performing was brought to the attention of Mark Stinson of MA DEP. Mr. Nowak emphasized that he was not doing anything wrong. Mr. Nowak stated that he worked hard for three weeks attempting to remove the knotweed in that location along the river, adding that he was not treated fairly considering the many years of experience he had in the field of Conservation.

Member Robinson was curious to know if any members knew of an outdoor marijuana growing facility proposed to locate on Route 8. Member Nowak stated that they should inquire with the Town Administrator's Office for updates on the facilities future.

Member Robinson stated that in his opinion, prior to the town offering the opportunity for an applicant to operate an outdoor grow facility, it should be offered to "working farms within this town" by providing the same options. He stated that that our town's farmers "need a cash crop and I want them to have first dibs."

In closing, Member Robinson stated that they should not receive a permit for an outdoor grow facility, noting that the indoor grow facility should get started before that was considered.

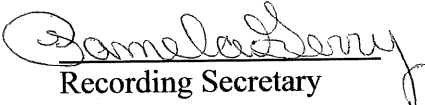
REVIEW MAIL:

ADJOURN:

A motion made by Member Tom Robinson, seconded by Member Jeff Randall to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Date


Recording Secretary

8-30-21