



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – SPECIAL MEETING

:

Wednesday, 11/1/2023 3:00 p.m./ MEETING TOOK PLACE AT WEST BOYLSTON TOWN OFFICES, 140 WORCESTER ST., LAND USE MEETING ROOM, #120

Members Present
Members NOT Present
Invited Guests

William Chase (Chair), Carl Haarmann (Vice-Chair), Emily Eaton and Clerk Toby Goldstein.

Colin Cahill and Jeffrey Perkins (Associate Member)

Andrew Gaughan of Weston and Sampson

Welcome – Call to Order

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Approval of Previous Minutes

N/A

Motion Originator

N/A

Motion Seconded

N/A

Treasurer – Financial Report

N/A

Motion to Accept

N/A

Seconded

N/A

This was a special meeting arranged by the Town Administrator, Jennifer Warren-Dymont, to discuss with Weston & Sampson a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant to inventory and evaluate culverts and targeted streams/land areas in West Boylston. Andrew Gaughan of Weston and Sampson represented. Mr. Gaughan explained that the purpose of this meeting was to identify priority areas in West Boylston. Mr. Chase responded that he knows of one area that floods out on Danielian Street, and two areas that form ice in the winter where two springs come out onto the road, at 98 Prospect Street and at the bottom of Prospect Street. Mr. Gaughan continued that he met with Butch Jackson of DPW, and he and Paul the foreman went over maps with him. They mentioned to him a large area on the flats behind S & S on West Boylston Street, which they thought was the main area. Mr. Chase opined that there will not be a flooding problem there if the river (for lack of a better term) there is cleaned out; Mr. Gaughan agreed. The board discussed plans in the past to clean that area out. Mr. Gaughan said that they also mentioned Danielian Street, over the top of the parking lot of NOLA Cajun Kitchen, and that the road cannot be accessed if it floods out. Mr. Chase explained the situation there; he described that it is right behind the restaurant, and that drainage comes from Meadowbrook Plaza (mentioning that the Israel Brothers at one time had a 21E done because it was contaminated) (they own the Meadowbrook Plaza, to the left and behind the restaurant). He said that there are observation areas with 5 or 6 wells, and explained that the water comes down Danielian Street, (Mr. Chase pointed out these areas on the map) behind houses, dumps onto an area behind what used to be Ace Hardware and where there is now a strip mall, then behind and where a 40-50-foot spot is open, and then it flows under the road. Mr. Chase explained that they never took care of this because they needed a 48-inch culvert (there is a 36-inch one there now). Mr. Gaughan continued that he spoke with the owner of S & S and he said that the land behind S & S was DCR land. Mr. Chase responded that if they could get the brook running again, it would drain out the entire section. Mr. Gaughan noted that the MVP Project first phase is to identify and look at these areas, then next year put in for design and permitting. Mr. Chase remarked that requests to work on these areas have been rejected in the past. Mr. Gaughan opined that once they identify the areas and hopefully show that they are actual problems, they will be able to do the work. Mr. Gaughan explained that the water goes to the reservoir so he thought that the State agencies would be in favor of this. Mr. Chase asked if there are matching funds now? Mr. Gaughan replied to Ms. Eaton that the funding from the Town will perhaps be 25% in kind. In response to Mr. Chase, Mr. Gaughan replied that the Town will have \$10,000,000 up front from DEA. Mr. Gaughan replied to Mr. Haarmann that the first \$10 million will come from the State (which Mr. Chase added comes from the Federal government), explaining that they give \$10 million every year and that 30+ communities were given that this year. He then discussed Fells Place which has a few private culverts which are in back yards, not in roads, and affect only a few people. He said that the State highlighted Gates Brook and that they will prioritize this area (he also mentioned the Police Chief's property near Lawrence Street, which the Chief had complained about). He explained that there might be some culvert replacement and stream restoration (Mr. Gaughan and the board looked at maps that Mr. Gaughan had with him and labeled them with the areas of concern). Mr. Chase explained to Mr. Gaughan the situation at the Police Chief's property at the intersection of Prospect and Lee Streets, which he asserted had the identical problem; he said that the Town had put in a two-foot culvert, it was crooked (they located this area on the map); it flooded out both sides of the street and trees died, and he noted that it floods out every two or three years onto the road. Mr. Chase asserted that if they dug it out and even put in a four-foot culvert to drain it that would help the problem and he explained where the water would go. Mr. Gaughan responded that they also do water sampling in Town, and mentioned that the owner of 36(?) Lawrence Street complains of a stream in his yard and wanted the Town to drain it, but Mr. Gaughan noted that it is privately owned. He mentioned also that there were some major water backups that they noticed behind Walmart and they will drain that whole area as well. Mr. Gaughan noted that the Town has a lot of culverts and streams and pointed out the areas on the map that were the main focus. Mr. Chase asserted that, on Prospect Street, if you get the water across the road from the farmers, it will drain by itself because of the care the property owner takes to clean his property. He also said the top of Lee Street intersects with Blueberry Hill and a culvert from there into the stream (he explained where the water would go on the map) will eliminate water on that side, and explained that this is all Town land so that no easements are needed to make it work. Mr. Gaughan responded that they made a visit to the area of a church today (he pointed out where it is) and explained where they will do a culvert there, so that water will go from Lawrence Street down. Mr. Chase explained that everything comes down in that area, and he added that the Town also needs some moderate forest management and opined that then they will be all set.

Mr. Gaughan commented that the information that he was given by the board was helpful, and he asked if there are any other places of concern that they wanted to mention? (There were no additional places given). Mr. Gaughan commented that they have a couple of weeks of field work ahead. Mr. Chase responded that Mr. Gaughan should let the board know if they can be of any help. Mr. Gaughan responded to Ms. Eaton that they will probably more toward Spring or Summer return to DPW to explain what they recommend for projects. He said that they will probably apply for the next phase of funds for design work in the Fall of 2024. He explained that the agency wants to see what they plan from start to finish before funding the work.

With no further discussion taking place, Ms. Eaton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 p.m. Mr. Haarmann seconded. All in favor.

Submitted by: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Date submitted: _____