

Great Barrington Conservation Commission Meeting via Zoom
and in person at 334 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA
Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Call to Order: Lanoue opened the meeting at 6:45pm. Those present: Andy Didio, Tom Ferris, Michael Lanoue, Andrew Mankin, David Shanahan, Kate Van Olst.

Also present: Conservation Agent, Shep Evans

1. Approval of Minutes of the November 29, 2023 meeting.

Mankin made a motion to approve the November 29, 2023 minutes; **Lanoue seconded**. Lanoue asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0 with Van Olst abstaining.

2. Request for Determination of Applicability under the Berkshire Scenic Mountains Act, Great Barrington Regulations, File # 12-20-2023 from John W. Field Tree Service, Inc. on behalf of Todd & Martha Golub, property at 320 Long Pond Road, Map 34 Lot 12D. The proposed work consists of removing 10 dead, diseased and/or dangerous trees within a mapped Scenic Mountain Area.

Mankin stated this is to take down dead ash trees and one maple and it will not impact Scenic Mountains. It was noted that the trees are in the forest so no need for replanting.

Mankin made a motion to approve taking down ten trees, leaving the roots in the ground; **Shanahan seconded**. Lanoue asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Notice of Intent (DEP File # 167-0461) from S-K Design Group on behalf of Butternut Basin, Inc., property at 380 State Road, Map 42 Lot 2/0. The proposed work includes the removal of an existing Ski Chair-Lift and construction of a new Ski Chair-Lift. Portions of the work are within a Bordering Vegetated Wetland and Buffer Zone. Most of the work will take place in a mapped Scenic Mountain Area also.

Bob Fournier, S-K Design Group and Crispin Tresp, Butternut Ski Area, presented plans to relocate/replace the chair lift and the process/impacts of clearing the corridor, stump removal, erosion control and stabilization of the slopes. The Commissioners expressed concerns about erosion control and complexities of installing/tracking/maintaining it adequately. They also raised concerns about concrete washout areas to avoid impact on the pond/Thomas and Palmer Brook below. Revegetation of the area and follow-on stewardship for invasive control was discussed and it was confirmed there would be four years of treatment/maintenance based on the start of construction. Inspection/maintenance of the area for erosion control and stormwater monitoring was discussed and it was agreed that it is the contractor's responsibility ensure proper functioning and to document/remedy deficiencies. It was agreed the applicant would provide a detailed outline of inspection and erosion control/timing and concrete washout and a meeting to review was scheduled for March 6.

Mankin made a motion to continue the public hearing to March 6 at 6:00pm; **Didio seconded**. Lanoue asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved unanimously.

Evans suggest Jess Toro attend and he would check with Nancy Putnam at DCR to see if she would join.

4. Request for Determination of Applicability under the Mass Wetlands Protection Act from Great Barrington Land Conservancy, property at 15 Dresser Avenue, Map 14 Lot 229. The proposed work consists of cutting down a two-leader Butternut tree and trimming branches from adjacent trees, all overhanging an adjacent barn. No machinery will enter the Riverfront Bank area. Tree stumps will remain to maintain soil stability in the upland riverbank.

Evans stated the request is to remove a butternut tree and other branches hanging over a barn at the River Walk.

Mankin made a motion to issue a negative determination #2; **Didio seconded**. Lanoue asked for any discussion – Ferris recused. By roll call vote the motion was approved unanimously with one recusal.
5. Discussion of the establishment of an Invasive Aquatic Weed control effort in Lake Mansfield.

Bill Meier, member, Parks and Recreation Commission, presented regarding weed management at Lake Mansfield currently impacting water use and recreation and asked for the Commission’s help/direction. Evans explained the Commission is a permit granting authority and not part of Town government that would take responsibility for lake management. It was recommended that a stakeholder group be organized to steward the project and engage specialist engineers/consultants to determine the best approach, project costs, etc. Evans suggested either hand-pulling or harvesting and noted there are valuable lessons to learn from other towns. The Notice of Intent application and permitting process was described and it was noted there is information on the Town website.
6. Motion to allow the use of electronic signatures on Wetland permits.

Mankin made a motion to “hereby recognize and accept the provisions of M.G.L. c.111G regarding electronic signatures and members will henceforth execute documents either with electronic signatures or with wet ink signatures and that both will carry the same legal weight and effect;” **Ferris seconded**. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
7. Discussion of joining with Stockbridge and Sheffield Commissions to promote invasive management and tree planting in Housatonic Riverfront areas.

Evans asked for the Commissioners’ support for joining with other towns to further invasive weed management and planting of trees/shrubs in the riverfront area along the Housatonic River. He stated Sheffield and Stockbridge have expressed interest though the Town is not being asked for any specific actions, just for advocacy/support.

Mankin made a motion to join the Sheffield and Stockbridge Conservation Commissions to promote invasive management and tree planting along the Housatonic River; **Didio seconded**. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
8. Citizens Speak Time – No citizens asked to speak.
9. Adjournment – **Lanoue made a motion** to adjourn; Ferris **seconded**. By roll call vote the motion was approved unanimously at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow, Recording Clerk