

TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING Minutes

For the Westhampton Conservation Commission meeting on October 6, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. in their office at the Westhampton Town Hall, #1 South Road, Westhampton

Members present: Bill, Brad, and Fred (temp. recording sec.)

Also in attendance: Ann Blank, 64 Pine Island Lake and Melissa Nuttleman, PIL Assoc. Sec.

1. Call to Order 7:15 pm (late because main room just had floor redone)

2. Read and accepted minutes of the previous meeting (September 15, 2021)

3. Review correspondence:

Letter from BSC Group (for Eversource Energy) notifying us of upcoming utility maintenance activities that includes pole replacement and new poles along a portion of Loudville Road. This type of work is exempt in accordance with the provisions of MA Wetlands Protection Act and its implementing regulations. Letter filed and Fred will send signed certified mail receipt back to the BSC Group.

Letter with forest cutting plan (File number 331.32501.22) received from W. D. Cows, Inc. for work on 121 acres of their land off of Burt Rd and Spruce Hill Rd. Plan filed.

Initial discussion of the latest email correspondence between Rob Miller, project manager for Montague Road solar site and Cons Com member, Fred Morrison. Rob recently sent four photos attesting to good results after hydro-seeding bare areas of the South Array and would like to begin the removal of silt fencing and straw wattle wrap at both arrays in order to qualify for a Certificate of Completion from the W'ton Cons Com.

4. Old/Ongoing Business: Site visit:

Montague Road, North and South Solar Arrays: Site visit was done on October 6, 2021 by Fred and Bill Randolph to see first-hand and confirm the results after extensive bare patches were hydro-seeded at the South Array. The barren patches have become thickly vegetated with healthy-looking grasses.

Now that both arrays are sufficiently vegetated, the next step would be the removal of the silt fencing and the straw wattles' plastic netting from around both arrays. These erosion controls are no longer needed and, if left in place, would be a long-term barrier to animal migration, esp. for reptiles and amphibians. The silt fencing/wattle netting should also come out along both sides of the Montague Road entrance.

Concerning the erosion controls along the connecting road..... two pluses....the reconfiguration of the silt fencing/straw wattles has successfully opened the previously blocked vernal pool/stream flow and the addition of a larger-size crushed-rock surface on the road seems to have stopped roadside erosion into the nearby wetland/stream/vernal pool. However, considering that this is probably the most ecologically sensitive place at the site, we would feel more comfortable if Rob Miller, Regional Director of PowerFlex New England hires a wetland consultant to assess whether the erosion controls along the connecting road could be removed without jeopardizing nearby resource areas or should stay for a longer length of time.

Once the silt fencing/wattle webbing has been removed from around both arrays and along the entrance road and we hear from the wetland consultant about erosion controls on the connecting road, the Westhampton Cons Com will do a final site visit and then, if all is good, we'll work on the Certificate of Completion for the Montague Road Solar Project.

A motion to send this information to Rob Miller was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

5. New Business:

Ann Blank, 64 Pine Island Lake is interested in having a shoreline cement/stone retaining wall repaired, possibly during the scheduled drawdown. Photos she brought along pointed to the filing of an RDA. She left with a blank RDA form and Fred will send her via e-mail more info on submitting a public notice about a future hearing for her proposed project.

Christie Baker, 19 N. Shore Rd, had a phone conversation with Fred on Oct. 5 about future plans for replacing a run-down house with a new one set farther back from the lake. Fred explained some of steps that had to happen to be able to move things forward; engineered site plans, building inspector, zoning board, Cons Com, etc. Nothing likely to happen until next year.

6. Agenda for next meeting to Town Clerk's mailbox: At this point nothing on the agenda for the next meeting although we'll probably hear something soon from Rob Miller.
Agenda/Notice will be sent to Town Clerk for October 20, 2021

7. Adjourn: 8:05 pm