MEMBERS PRESENT:  Pat Clancy (Chair); Bonnie Potocki, Laura Edwards, Frank Belknap

ALSO PRESENT:  David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner/Wetlands Agent

Mr. Clancy convened the meeting at 7:03 PM

Approval of Minutes January 21, 2020

The January 21, 2020 meeting minutes were approved (moved by Mr. Belknap, seconded by Ms. Edwards, approved by all).

Presentation / Discussion

• Mr. Belknap introduced the idea of identifying unique features and habitats in town that can be documented and recommended for protection or preservation. These would include, but not be limited to, geological features, plant populations, wildlife habitats, and other landscape features that are deemed special or threatened.

  o Mr. Laiuppa suggested that, under the purview of the Conservation Commission, this exercise should only involve public lands or those private lands that the Conservation Commission has received specific permission to document for this purpose.

  o Mr. Laiuppa said that, prior to any of this work being done, there should be well defined guidelines and criteria so that, regardless of who is conducting the study, the observation and designation criteria are consistent.

  o Ms. Potocki said that the National Heritage Program already has guidelines for this type of study and that their work should be reviewed when developing the guidelines and criteria for this study.

Application Presentations

• Mr. Laiuppa said that there had been a preliminary study submitted for the construction of a new cell tower in the vicinity of Manchester Community College. The plan has been withdrawn and, if there are future plans, there will be a new study conducted.

• Mr. Laiuppa said that there was an application in for the renewal of an erosion & sedimentation control and an excavation permit at 1480 Tolland Turnpike.

  o Mr. Laiuppa said that, during a field investigation of the site, he noted previously undocumented wetlands. Prior to any ground disturbing activity the applicant would be required to conduct a wetland delineation and to submit a wetland permit application.
• Ms. Potocki said that the evidence of wetlands on the site should warrant a re-evaluation of the entire application.

• Ms. Potocki asked how many times a permit could be renewed before needing to be withdrawn and re-applied.
  • Mr. Laiuppa said that he did not think there was a limitation but that he would confirm this.

**Wetlands Permit Status**

Mr. Laiuppa gave a status update on one previously submitted wetland application:

• See below under “Wetland Agent Actions/Enforcement”

**Wetland Agent Actions/Enforcement**

Mr. Laiuppa gave a status update on three recent actions that were taken by the Wetland Agent:

• The Boynton subdivision on Wetherell Street had previously received an approval for a wetland permit however, because there are still outstanding requirements to the application submission, the approval of the permit is incomplete. The activity, which includes direct impacts to wetlands, has commenced. Mr. Laiuppa has been in contact with the applicant and informed them that the tree clearing and land grading portion of the project that impacts wetlands and/or upland review areas should not have started prior to the finalization of the permit approval. Mr. Laiuppa told the applicant that they should stop all activity in those areas and install silt fences to protect the resources and to prevent any run-off from leaving the property.
  • Ms. Potocki said that the Zoning Enforcement Officer should get involved.
    • Mr. Laiuppa said that, because there are no final, stamped plans, the Zoning Enforcement Officer cannot act.

• Mr. Laiuppa said that he has been in communication with a business at 138 Sanrico Drive that had recently cleared trees and stumps on their neighbor’s property (152 Sanrico Drive). The activity occurred in the wetland and the upland review area without a permit. Mr. Laiuppa informed the company that did the clearing that they should not have done the work without a permit and without the land owner’s consent. They have installed silt fences and are in the process of putting together a wetland permit application.

• Mr. Laiuppa said that he was informed of some activities involving tree clearing and the stockpiling of stone adjacent to a wetland at 3 Tolland Turnpike. The property owner was told to stop this activity and remove the stones.

**Communications/Training/Seminars**

• Mr. Belknap said that there would be a Land Trust Seminar on March 21 and that he planned to attend.
• Mr. Belknap mentioned a training opportunity called Frog Watch and he was thinking about attending this.

Reports

• Hockanum River Linear Park Committee (HRLPC)
  o Mr. Belknap said that the group is working on safety improvements and trail reconstruction.
  o Mr. Belknap said that, because this year will mark the 50th anniversary of the trail system, they would like to plan an event in the spring to celebrate.
  o Mr. Belknap told the group about the designation of Manchester as a Trail Town USA. This designation was assigned several years ago.

• Case Mountain Recreation Area
  o Mr. Clancy said that, with Mr. Belknap’s help they recently removed a couple of “troublesome trees” along the edge of the trails.
  o Ms. Edwards said that she noticed that some recent trail repairs had been done along portions of the Carriage Trail.
  o Ms. Edwards asked about the status of the map updates.
    ▪ Mr. Laiuppa said that he was waiting on edits from Mr. Clancy.
    • Mr. Clancy promised to get those edits done as soon as possible.

• Manchester Land Conservation Trust (MLCT)
  o Mr. Belknap said that the Land Trust will be talking to the Town’s Land Acquisition and Historic Property Investment Committee about the budgetary shortcomings that the Land Trust is facing in the attempt to purchase the Lombardo property.
  o Mr. Belknap said that the Audubon grant for the purchase of land on Bush Hill Road will go through soon. This parcel will be called the “Alba Pavin Bird Sanctuary”.
  o Mr. Belknap said that the Land Trust was given approximately 6 acres of land from St. Bartholomew Church on Greenwood Drive. This parcel is just north of the Land Trust’s “House Park” on Greenwood Drive.

• Rail Trails and Greenways
  o Mr. Belknap said that the rail bridge that carries the Cheney Trail over Center Street will be open soon.

• Manchester Matters Bulletin
Mr. Belknap thought it would be a good idea to have information about coyotes added to one issue.

**Land Acquisition Committee**

- Mr. Clancy said that the Land Acquisition Committee will hold a special meeting next week to hear from the Land Trust about the need for additional funding for the purchase of the Lombardo Farm.
- The next regularly scheduled meeting will be in March.

**Manchester Sustainability Task Force**

- Ms. Edwards said that the task force met with the Board of Directors (BOD).
  - The task force presented suggestions to the BOD about a full time position for sustainability initiatives, forming a standing committee, and working towards achieving a Silver Certification.

**Old Business**

- Ms. Edwards noted that Tim Bockus, Director of Public Works, did not attend the meeting about Tree City USA.
  - Mr. Laiuppa said that he was invited but that something came up and he would not be able to attend this meeting. He will be invited to a future meeting.

**New Business**

- Ms. Edwards said that, based on recent experiences, she thinks there is a need for the Town to review the process and procedures for the Tree Warden and the appeal process.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM