



NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Raina McManus, Chair
 Laura Robert, Vice Chair
 Bea Bezmalinovic
 Allison Burson
 Jay McHale

Brandon Schmitt, Director
 Telephone: 781.431.1019, Ext. 2298
 Website: www.wellesleyma.gov/NRC

MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2021, 7 PM

Approved 4/1/2021

Present: Raina McManus, Chair; Laura Robert, Vice Chair; Jay McHale; Allison Burson; Bea Bezmalinovic; Brandon Schmitt, Director

Guests: Linda Chow, School Committee Chair; Jim Roberti, School Committee Member; Richard Howell, Wetlands Protection Committee Chair

Announcement: Lisa Moore, the NRC Environmental Outreach and Education Coordinator, was congratulated for receiving the Mass Audubon Liz Duff Excellence in Environmental Education Award. Lisa has provided many opportunities for people of all ages to learn more about and engage with the Town's environment, and the NRC is pleased and excited for her to receive this deserved award.

Public Speak: No one was present for public speak.

Action/Discussion Items:

- **Discuss and Vote: Appointment of Wetlands Protection Committee (WPC) Member Ellie McLane**
 Ellie is currently an Associate Member of the WPC, and is interested in filling vacant full-member position on the WPC. Richard Howell, Chair of the WPC, and Ms. McManus both spoke in support of Ms. McLane being appointed as a full member of the Committee and related her qualifications, which include her current role as a Project Geologist, and her educational background in Physics, Earth Systems Science and Earth and Environmental Science. *After a motion was made and seconded, the Board approved the appointment of Ellie McLane to the Wetlands Protection Committee through June 30th, 2023 by a 5-0 vote.*
- **Discuss WHS Track and Field Facilities Planning Process** Linda Chow, the chair of the Wellesley School Committee, and Jim Roberti, a member of the Wellesley School Committee, were present to discuss how to further the planning process at the Hunnewell track and field for bathrooms, team rooms, and lighting. Ms. Chow shared a slide of next steps for the process. Mr. Roberti discussed the appropriateness of accepting gifts and fund raising, and how especially during times of Covid it is important to give the kids opportunities to get out and be active while keeping the best interests of the neighbors in mind. Ms. McManus discussed that the fixing of the existing lights at Reidy Field and the tennis courts is an ongoing issue as well, dating as far back as 2005, that should be included with the other Hunnewell facilities improvements. **Ms. Robert stated that the delay in fixing existing lighting was due to reprioritization for multiple field renovations, the concept of adding new lighting makes fixing existing lighting more of a priority, and as such CPC and Town Meeting approved an independent assessment June 2020.** The Board deliberated and agreed that the School Committee should continue to move forward with exploring lights and team rooms at the Hunnewell track and field.

Climate Emergency Ms. Burson shared an article regarding potential water restrictions **statewide in response to increased drought.**

- Ms. McManus reminded that the NRC has rain barrels for sale.
- **Open Space and Recreation Plan** Mr. Schmitt asked the Board to help consolidate the long list of action steps.
- **Pollinator Habitat Project: Pollinate Wellesley** Ms. Bezmalinovic updated on plans for activities leading up to celebrating National Pollinator week in June, which will include a webinar series, and a native plant sale.

Liaison Reports:

Trails: Ms. Robert updated that more self-guided tours are being produced. The next Trails meeting is April 12. Maintenance on birdboxes was discussed.

Mobility: Ms. Burson shared that the Mobility Committee's upcoming forum will be on April 15th at 7PM via Zoom. The Committee is looking for the public's recommendations and feedback on the Sustainable Mobility Plan

CPC: Ms. McManus shared that last night the Advisory Committee approved the CPC's \$315,000 proposal to fund the Morses Pond Weed Harvester. It will now go to Annual Town Meeting.

Director's Report:

• **Review and Possible Vote on Permit Requests:**

- **Outdoor Dining at Wellesley Town Green: Café Mangal** Cafe Mangal is requesting to use the Wellesley Town Green for outdoor dining as a result from the pandemic, similar to how they did in 2020. *After a motion was made and seconded, the Board approved the issuance of a permit to Cafe Mangal for their use of the Wellesley Town Green for outdoor dining through September 1st by a 5-0 vote.*
- **Longfellow Pond fitness trail: Wellesley Mother's Forum** Wellesley Mother's Forum requested to put signage along Longfellow Pond, prompting different exercise activities to do as you pass by. *After a motion was made and seconded, the Board approved the Wellesley Mother's Forum request to hold a fitness trail along Longfellow Pond from April 15th to April 30th by a 5-0 vote.*
- **Outdoor Entertainment at Post Office/Church Park: Wellesley Square Merchants Assn.** It was proposed to the NRC to use the Post Office/Church Park as a location for low-disturbance musical performances. There are a few clarifying questions the Board would like answered before they vote on the permit.

- **Project Updates** Mr. Schmitt shared a flyer from the Charles River Watershed Association and their Building Resilience Across the Watershed on April 1st which is open to the public.

Approve Minutes:

After a motion was made and seconded, the Board approved the meeting minutes for the 03/04/2021 meeting and the 2/9/2021 Joint Meeting with the School Committee with a 5-0 and 4-0 vote respectively (Ms.

Bezmalinovic abstained from voting on the 2/9/2021 meeting as it was prior to her election to the Commission.

Schedule Future Meetings:

N/A

Urgent Items Not Anticipated Prior to 48-hours of Posting:

N/A

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Leah Wallner, NRC Clerk*