



NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION REMOTE ONLINE  
MEETING MINUTES

March 3, 2021

Approved 3-17-2022

**Present:** Laura Robert, Acting Chair; Bea Bezmalinovic, Secretary; Jay McHale, Allison Burson, Lisa Collins; Brandon Schmitt, Director

**Guests:** Town Engineer Dave Hickey, Emily Scerbo, Lara Crawford, Jaden Crawford, Martha Collins, Nancy Cooper, Abraham Budson-McQuilken, Deed McCollum, Alastair Ironside, Brent Willess, Christie Kovacs, Judy Barr, Jessica LaPlaca, Tess Miller, Yoav Feingold

**Announcements:** Acting Chair Laura Robert welcomed newest member Lisa Collins to the committee. Ms. Robert also recognized outgoing chair Raina McManus for her eight years of service to the NRC. She also called for Director Brandon Schmitt to set up an NRC retreat for the new committee to reset with a new member joining the group.

**Public Speak:** 1. Lara Crawford of 15 Rice Street proposed a community clean up event to remove invasive species in the area of the Hunnewell Track and Field. She proposed regular clean-ups (e.g., two days per season) and invite volunteers including school users to clean up the area.  
2. Jaden Crawford spoke about the responsibility of the NRC commission with an emphasis on transparency in decision-making and adherence to town policy on receipt of gifts or donations from private parties.

**Action/Discussion Items:**

- **Stormwater Utility Presentation from the Wellesley DPW** – Town Engineer Dave Hickey is joined by Emily Scerbo, Division Leader, Tighe & Bond. They presented an update on the Town of Wellesley’s initial proposal to respond to changes in the EPA’s requirements for managing stormwater runoff. To satisfy future regulatory requirements, improve water quality in the Charles River and local water and meet the climate change and sustainability goals, the DPW is developing a Stormwater Enterprise Fund. Stormwater utility fees will be assessed using pervious surface measures following a model used in other towns including Lexington. The DPW is meeting with various groups and hopes to present at the special fall town meeting.
- **Track And Field Building Design Update** – Ms. Robert began with the reminder that the NRC approved this project (bathrooms and team rooms) on Jan. 25, 2018. It was approved in the Spring Town Meeting in 2018. She also reviewed the funding for the project (\$525,000) came from 1/3 from Town Funds, 1/3 from Community Preservation and 1/3 from private donations. On July 25, 2018 the then School Committee Chair Michael D’Ortenzio came back with the cost estimate was higher than expected and they were looking for solutions for the project. On Feb. 23, 2021 the School Committee readdressed the project and current NRC member Jay McHale is helping with the redesign. NRC Director Brandon Schmitt shared the plans to the group which can be seen on the Wetlands Website - <https://tinyurl.com/2p865uy4>.
  - Schmitt and Town Engineer Dave Hickey reviewed the changes made. Hickey explained they are looking into precast concrete buildings for cost effectiveness and keeping the buildings clean. Mr. Hickey talked about the Wetlands Commission site visit and how they prepared for protecting the wetlands. Ms. Burson asked about the roof color. Mr. McHale said DRB will

probably decide on roof color. Ms. Robert asked about the trees in the area. Mr. Hickey said there are no trees that are impacted but that the current stand of hemlocks is infected with wooly adelgid. They are waiting to hear from Mike Quinn and Cricket and may go with another species. Mr. Hickey also reviewed the update on the tree by the aqueduct; he also said he heard that our building is in production but there is no completion date or delivery date. The building will be in by mid-spring.

- Public Comment by Martha Collins- 17 Rice Street – Directed to Dave Hickey – asked if we need a new review of an environmental study of the area by the WPA. Hickey addressed the question.

- **Article 31: Non-criminal disposition of private use of public space** - Mr. Schmitt introduced Paul Cramer from the Recreation Commission. Mr. Cramer updated the NRC on new language proposed by the Recreation Commission that will allow for non-criminal disposition in cases of private use of public space. The new language that has been vetted by town council. Currently there is no way to fine private users who use public spaces such as the tennis courts of playing fields for private gain. This an article to set a method to fine those not within the rules. Ms. Burson asked about where the fines would go. Mr. Cramer indicated fees would go into the Town’s general fund. Soccer currently pays a field use fee. *A motion was made and seconded in approval of Article 31 – applying fees to illegal use of public space. The motion was made and approved by a 5-0 vote.*

- **Climate Emergency** - Ms. Burson talked about an article she read about the loss of snow pack and the impact it is having on smaller ski resorts and regional business. Ms. Robert talked about the Wellesley Climate Action Plan that was released and on the Wellesley Website - <https://tinyurl.com/ygyae7mj>. Ms. Robert encouraged all residents and viewers to read through the plan. She also suggested at the NRC retreat to have a liaison for the Climate Action Committee.

### **Director’s Report:**

**PlanIT Geo** - Mr. Schmitt shared information about **PlanIT Geo** (<https://planitgeo.com/urban-tree-canopy-assessment/>) a software subscription service that can be used to complete a tree canopy assessment and streamline tree inventory. He did say the current GIS team is excellent. When DPW cuts a tree down they update the information so the tree data is very good. Schmitt and Ms. Bezmalinovic met with the PlanIT Geo for a demonstration of the software features. The subscription includes a three-year contract for \$10,800, a substantial savings when compared to the cost of aerial flyover. This research would be an appropriate use of the tree bank funds. Use of the tree bank funds will be coordinated with DPW and Planning Boards. Mr. Schmitt’s next step is to make sure this software is the best optional available, the price is fair, that Planning and DPW are supportive, and update the NRC at the next meeting.

- **Electrical Boxes at Diane Warren Field** –The Police Department would like to include two utility boxes near the Warren and Lee fields as part of the public painting program operated jointly between the Police and the Public Art Committee. The Police will get submissions, vote on the designs and get to review and have approval by the Public Art Committee and the Select Board. Ms. Robert abstained from voting because she is on the Public Art Committee. *A motion was made to approve the Public Art Program to paint the Electrical Boxes at Diane Warren Field. The motion was made and approved by a 4-0 vote.*

- **Permit No. 1 – Wellesley Celebrations Committee Arts in the Park** –The Director made an administrative approval of the request by Wellesley Women Artists to host Arts in the Park and Simons Park. This is a reoccurring event and previous events have been managed within the NRC’s parameters.

- **Permit No. 2 private request to film in Clocktower Park** – March 9 from 4-11 p.m. to allow filming of a movie. Jennifer Chisolm is a Wellesley resident and a locations scout for Lifetime TV movie. There is a crew of 25 and maybe some extras. She is requesting permission to film in front of Clocktower. She has received approval from Chief Pilecki and contacted the Unitarian Church about using their parking lot for makeup and parking. Mr. McHale asked for an assurance the park will be protected from the heavy equipment as well as a Certificate of Insurance, which Ms. Chisholm said they will provide. Ms. Burson asked about noise level. NRC would like to see a list of steps to be taken to protect the area. Given the time frame, the Board asked Mr. Schmitt to grant a final approval once additional information had been gathered. ***A motion was made to approve the filming in Clocktower Park conditional on Mr. Schmitt's receipt and approval of final details. The motion was made and approved by a 5-0 vote.***

#### **Continued Public Hearing: Hunnewell Track And Field Lighting:**

- The portion of the hearing opened up with public speak from residents –
- Jaden Crawford
- Martha Collins
- Nancy Cooper
- Abraham Budson-McQuilken
- Deed McCollum
- Alastair Ironside
- Brent Willess
- Christie Kovacs
- Judy Barr
- Jessica LaPlaca
- Tess Miller
- Yoav Feingold

**Discussion:** Ms. Robert talks about the NRC Retreat (which took place 3.9.2022). At the next NRC meeting, each of the Board will come prepared to discuss the current Schools proposal and how it relates to the criteria. A discussion ensued about the next steps and meetings. The group decided Ms. Robert would reach out to the School Committee to discuss next steps. Ms. Robert would like to reset and reorganize the committee. She also asked them to be ready to vote on March 17.

#### **Approve Minutes:**

Pushed approval of minutes (2.17.22) at the next meeting – March 17.

#### **Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 PM.