

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
REMOTE ONLINE MEETING MINUTESAugust 5, 2021, 7 PM

Approved 8-19-2021

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

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Jack Pilecki, Wellesley Police Chief

**Public Speak:** Nobody was present for public speak.

**Action/Discussion Items:**

- **Climate Emergency: Upcoming Legislative Environmental Bills** There are currently multiple bills being proposed at the state-level regarding environmental protection. Ms. McManus asked the Board if there were any bills that stood out to them. Ms. Robert expressed interest in all of the bills. Mr. McHale expressed interest in wanting to wait and see how said bills evolve as they grow their way closer to being voted on. Ms. McManus agreed, sharing a story where a bill has changed in the past, resulting in a change in direction of favor. Ms. Robert asked if the list of bills are on the website. Ms. McManus agreed that the bills can get posted on the NRC website. She also showed specific interest in the bill that refers to allowing municipalities to create their own pesticide laws that are separate from the state.
- **Pollinate Wellesley** Ms. Bezmalinovic shared that soon there will be bike routes posted for Pedals to Petals that are family-friendly as well as include public and private pollinator gardens. She also shared that Sustainable Wellesley sold 50 pollinator kits and felt the project was a success.
- **Hunnewell Field Lighting** Ms. McManus conveyed the result of her conversation with the Chair of the CPC regarding the timing of an application for funding to replace the existing lights at the Diane Warren Field and the tennis courts, which is to adhere to its traditional grant-making cycle during Annual Town Meeting. The CPC is expecting to hear a proposal from the NRC later this fall. The School Committee will also be providing an update on the Hunnewell Track and Field projects at its August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- **NRC Sound Policy** Ms. McManus acknowledged that there have been multiple requests made to the NRC for amplification for use on NRC land. Mr. Schmitt shared that there needs to be more clarity to amplification uses to meet the needs of the applicants while preserving the value of nature and neighborhoods. Ms. Robert discussed that a large source of these requests come from sporting events and that music is not a necessity to play the sport. She mentioned that many of the sports fields are also multi-purpose fields and that there are others using said fields that may be annoyed by this. Ms. Bezmalinovic shared that it may be smart to have consistency across the town for music usage that provides equitable access to sound. The Board debated what it may look like if there was a uniform policy for amplified sound. Ms. McManus entertained the idea of talking to the Schools regarding their sound policy and talking to neighbors regarding their opinions on amplified sound. The first step the Board would like to take is to discuss with the Schools its sound policy.
- **Permits:**

- **Dana Hall Cross-Country at Morses Pond** Dana Hall School Athletics requested to host a cross-country event at Morses Pond. The Board asked many questions and showed concerns regarding the proposed space, including intensity of use, incompatible use, safety of the runners, disruption to the neighborhood, damage to the trail, and the closure of a popular trail for several hours during the day. The Board showed interest in having the applicant come to the next meeting and discuss the permit. Mr. Schmitt suggested that the Board submit questions for the applicant. As the proposed route crosses much land, multiple town boards would also be involved in the approval process. Ms. McManus explained her point of view on the project and proposed that as it is an intensive permit, she feels it would be a good idea to deny the permit. Ms. Robert showed support for denying the permit. Mr. McHale showed interest in submitting more questions to the applicant before voting on the permit. The Board agreed to ask more questions before making a decision, and Mr. Schmitt will contact the applicant.
- **Julie Fund YogaStrong at Diane Warren Field** Jack Pilecki, the Wellesley Chief of Police, was present for any questions the Board may have and to show the Police Department's support and involvement in the event. The organization would like to hold a group yoga event at the Diane Warren Field. The Julie Fund is an organization developed for a Wellesley resident who passed from ovarian cancer and the proceeds from the event would go to this charity. The yoga event is open to the public and anybody is able to register. The event will have amplified sound to give the attendees instructions, but will not include music. *After discussion, a motion was made and seconded, the board voted 5-0 in favor of approving the YogaStrong Benefit for the Julie Fund at the Diane P. Warren Field on September 19<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to noon.*
- **Marathon Training rest station at Hunnewell Field along Washington St.** While people are training for the Boston Marathon, this group would provide a spot for people to rest and have water and refreshments and the restroom. This permit has been approved in the past; they are looking to set up their station near the tennis courts. Mr. Schmitt has requested that they look into an alternative to single-use plastic bottles. *After discussion, a motion was made and seconded, the board voted 5-0 in favor of approving a marathon training rest station at Hunnewell Field along Washington Street on September 25<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 AM to noon.*

### Liaison Reports:

**Trails:** Ms. Robert shared that the Trails Committee was looking at a site that would involve working with DCR to connect a trail by the Charles River to the Newton trail by the arches. This would involve boardwalks as it is a wet area but would be a pleasant new walk. The Committee is also hoping to be posting more guided walks to the website in the fall.

**Mobility:** Ms. Burson shared that Wellesley got another Shared Streets grant. This will be for crosswalk improvement by the high school which hopefully will be installed soon.

### Director's Report:

- Mr. Schmitt shared updates regarding the new harvester, the Morses Pond harvesting project, and the Open Space Plan survey responses. The Board presented questions to Mr. Schmitt regarding the Open Space Plan survey and discussed its structure.

- **Climate Compact Flood Model Demo** This agenda item was tabled to a future meeting. Mr. Schmitt urged residents to go to the Charles River Watershed Association's website and toggle with the new flood model.

**Approve Minutes:**

*After a motion was made and seconded, the board approved the meeting minutes as amended for 7/15/2021 with a 5-0 vote.*

**Schedule Future Meetings:** The Board discussed their preferences to times of their upcoming retreat. This will be formally scheduled at a future meeting.

**Urgent Items Not Anticipated Prior to 48-hours of Posting:** N/A

**Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Leah Wallner, NRC Clerk*