

Whately Conservation Commission
Wednesday, December 20, 2023
Zoom Remote Public Meeting

Commissioners present: Andrew Ostrowski, Ann Barker, Montserrat Archbald, and Scott Jackson
(chair)

Commissioners absent: George Owens

Others present: Paul Wetzel (Smith College) and Sylvie Jensen (Town of Whately)

Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

1. Public Hearing for Smith College's Notice of Intent to remove invasive vegetation to create a diverse forested habitat on its property at 80 Poplar Hill Road. The hearing was opened at 7:05 pm. A site visit for this Notice of Intent was conducted on December 9. Commission Chair Jackson, provided a summary of the site visit. Paul Wetzel from Smith College presented the project. One issue that arose at the site visit was the need to determine which wetlands were isolated (and therefore non-jurisdictional) and which were bordering (and therefore jurisdictional). To address this issue, Paul provided an updated map of wetlands within the project area. On the map, five wetlands are identified as isolated and three as bordering. There was some Q&A and discussion. Chair Jackson pointed out that all materials submitted to the Commission must also be submitted to MassDEP. Paul indicated that he would send MassDEP any outstanding materials. Because the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program had not yet reviewed the Notice, and MassDEP had not yet issued a file number, the Commission was unable to close the hearing. With permission from the applicant, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to continue the hearing until 7 pm on Wednesday, January 17.
2. Native Plant Trust Request for a Certificate of Compliance for construction of a seed processing building at Nasami Farm. A site visit for this request was conducted on December 9. After a brief discussion, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to issue a Certificate of Compliance.
3. Updates and other business:

Sylvie Jensen, Whately's Community Development Administrator, provided an update on a potential pollinator habitat project using town-owned land. There was also some discussion of culvert replacement projects in need of funding.
4. The Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to accept the minutes from the November 15, 2023 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Jackson