

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
September 11, 2023
TOWN HALL FIRST FLOOR MEETING ROOM
7:00 PM
MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioners present: Rene Wood, Chair
Ted Pitman, Vice Chair
Anya Rosoff
Don Roeder

Others Present: See sign in sheet

Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 7PM and noted there were no public hearings on the agenda.

Approval of Minutes for 8/28/23 meeting.

D. Roeder made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/28/23, as amended, seconded by T. Pitman. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Discussion/possible action regarding 405 Silver Street.

At the Commission's 8/28/23 meeting, Western MA DEP Circuit Rider Mark Stinson had raised concerns re: possible wetlands involved in the construction of a new home at this address. Chair Wood reported no wetlands came up on the Town Assessor's mapping system but would check the MassGIS system. T. Pitman and A. Rosoff will check the site from the road and report their findings at the 9/25 meeting. Chair Wood also noted no Conservation Commission box had been checked in the Permit Eyes system. D. Cameron has agreed to check the Permit Eyes system for the Commission on a regular basis. His contract is being updated to include this.

Discussion/possible action regarding 142 Main Street.

The Commissioners reviewed a draft letter, which sought to incorporate their suggestions. Corrections were made and it was approved to be sent with the 5/30/23 ConCom letter and a Permission to Access the Property form.

A. Rosoff made a motion to send the letter to 142 Main Street, which was seconded by D. Roeder and approved unanimously in a 4-0 vote.

Discussion MassDOT Sidewalk Project – Route 7.

The Commissioners had made a site visit before the meeting. The RDA was unsigned and had not been advertised so no decision will be made until the 9/25 meeting. The project was discussed, and it was the unanimous opinion that the RDA was the proper form to file.

Discussion/possible action regarding an Emergency Permit for Boardman Street.

This matter was passed over as there is no request from the Town at this time.

Commission Member Items.

Chair Wood discussed the 9/19/23 meeting with the Board of Heath on the Scenic Mountain Act (SMA) Map and Text. Ted Pitman will represent the Commission. Copies of the Act itself were distributed as were the Commission's adopted Map and Text at 900' elevation and a draft map showing 1200' elevation. The approval cycle was reviewed. A meeting notice will be posted for the 9/19 meeting.

R. Wood went over the agenda for the 8/25 meeting, which T. Pitman will chair. At a minimum, it will include the continued public hearing for the McCain pond/Solitude Lake Mgmt., with a site visit scheduled for 5pm that day; the RDA on MassDOT Route 7 sidewalk project; and an update on Kelsey Road and Highway Dept actions. It was decided to have D. Cameron remotely participate with A. Rosoff as his contact person.

A. Rosoff asked about training. Looking ahead to the 10/10 meeting, D. Cameron will be asked to attend in person with training scheduled for 6pm.

A. Rosoff brought up recent highway department's work on Kelsey Road that she reported has widened the road, destroyed turtle nesting areas; cut land open by the Schneob Brook as well as in the Schneob Brook ACEC; stored soil and rocks within the riverfront area without any awareness on the part of the Commission or filings. The impacted areas are also Natural Heritage protected areas. Chair Wood asked her to get photographs of the area and she will speak with the Town Administrator Tuesday morning on this matter.

Public Inquires.

All persons present had comments/inquiries on the Scenic Mountain Act regulations, Map and Text. In summary, questions / comments were on:

- The lack of transparency in creating the regulations, map and text, and selection of 900' elevation.
- The inappropriateness of 900' elevation.
- When and how the public hearing by the Select Board would be held, procedural matters, what they could decide, and how to later change that decision.
- Whether Chair Wood would recuse herself or sit on the Select Board.
- The way Great Barrington laid out their SMA areas in the Map and text and reported comments by Shep Evans, their conservation agent.
- Request for the Commission to hold a public hearing.

Commissioners responded. Sets of the adopted SMA regulations, forms and map and text will be placed on the Town's website under news, with hard copies available at the Town Assessor's outside map area and the large map and text will be hung in the entry hall. They also encouraged attendance at the Select Board public hearing, which has not yet been scheduled as the Commission has not so requested it, and if not able to attend, to submit written comments. Chair Wood eventually limited the comment time of one member of the public.

Review Mail. Mail was reviewed.

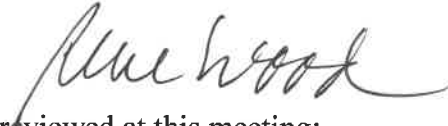
A Freedom of Information request was submitted by Susan Butler.

Adjournment.

T. Pitman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by R. Wood. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Rene Wood
Chair



Documents reviewed at this meeting:

- Meeting Agenda, 9/11/23
- Draft Meeting Minutes, 8/28/23
- Draft letter to 142 Main Street
- Permit Eyes print out on Building Permit for 405 Silver Street
- Unsigned RDA on MassDOT Route 7 sidewalk project and associated images
- MGL C 131, §39A – Berkshire County; Watershed Resources; Natural Scenic Qualities
- Sheffield Conservation Commission Adopted Scenic Mountain Act regulations
- Sheffield Conservation Commission Adopted Map and Text
- Draft map and text showing 1200' elevation impact
- Freedom of Information request from Susan Butler

