

**Town of Blandford  
Conservation Commission Minutes  
May 9, 2022 6:00 PM**

**Commission Members in attendance:** Colleen Doyle, Jon Piper, and Nate Maynard; Dick Gates via conference call.

**Others in Attendance:** Nicole Sanford (Springfield Sewer and Water), George Reichard (resident), Dave Waldron (Hwy Superintendent).

**I. New Business**

**a. Review of Meeting Minutes**

**D Gates made a motion to approve the minutes from 3/14, 3/25, and 4/4. J Piper seconded and it was approved unanimously.**

**b. Springfield Sewer and Water Projects: Request for Determination**

Nicole Sanford submitted an RDA for two upcoming projects in Blandford: 1) Stockpiling of stone at Commission Gate #30 off of Blair Rd for road work/maintenance and 2) Access road work and kiosk installation at LaBondard Conservation Area off of North Blandford Rd.

- 1) R Gates inquired if stone would be stored onsite permanently or if there would be an end date as well as the total cubic yardage. It was agreed that stone would be stored onsite for continued maintenance, not to exceed 20 cubic yards, and that it would be revisited in 3 years when the RDA expires. It was agreed that the scope of work was exempt and negative determination for the RDA.

**R Gates made a motion of negative determination for the RDA at Gate #30 by Springfield Sewer and Water. J Piper seconded and it was passed unanimously.**

- 2) It was agreed that upgrading the existing access road and the installation of the parking lot at the LaBondard Conservation area was outside of the 200' riverfront area and was exempt.

**R Gates made a motion of negative determination for the RDA at the LaBondard Conservation area. J Piper seconded and it was passed unanimously.**

**c. Questions regarding stream modification: George Reichert**

G Reichert had questions about modifying stream flows (Pixley Brook) to create a pond on his property on Blair Rd. He has been aware of the beaver problem on

Blair Rd. leading to flooding of the road and was very concerned about the strategies and approaches the town has taken to manage the issue. His desire was to move the beavers from Peebles Brook to Pixley Brook to encourage damming and formation of a pond on his property. R Gates explained the steps involved in addressing beaver activity: contacting the Board of Health to declare a public health emergency and getting other stakeholders involved in the mitigation efforts (i.e. Springfield Sewer and Water). Springfield Sewer and Water own much of the land surrounding Blair Rd. and have control over the water bodies that are leading to beaver damming and flooding. The issue and mitigation strategies are complex due to this and are currently being discussed with town counsel. Any removal of beaver dams requires an NOI be submitted.

George felt that beaver deceivers, specifically from Beaver Solutions in Southampton, MA, would be an ideal solution. Dave Waldron joined the conversation and relayed some of the steps that have been taken and steps moving forward to address the beaver issue. A major concern is the cost of installing and maintaining beaver deceivers as well as their overall efficacy; as well as concerns from SSW regarding liability to access their lands and wanting the town to provide insurance. R Gates stated that he would speak to the Select Board, but that the beaver mitigation efforts were not solely the Conservation Commissions jurisdiction and involved multiple stakeholders. G Reichard was advised to contact the Board of Health as well regarding his concerns.

**d. Proposed Blandford Conservation Agent**

D Gates spoke with Dave Johnson, chair of the Becket Cons. Commission, regarding potential collaboration with a conservation agent. Becket has an agent that is available to work part time with Blandford ConCom to assist with regulatory paperwork and oversight.

Town Administrator for Blandford, Christopher Dunn, is hoping to find someone who can assist with multiple departments in town and not solely with ConCom. D Gates provided an overview of the scope of work and projects that could use assistance. Collaboration with Becket's conservation agent is not moving forward at this time.

**II. Continuing Business**

**a. Potential New Solar Site off Gibbs Rd.**

No new updates regarding this proposed project.

**b. Belle Fleur**

No new updates. D Gates scheduled a follow up site visit for 5/12 at 6:00pm to review and assess the erosion controls and current status of the site.

**c. Rt. 23 Potential WPA Violations**

D. Gates spoke with the current owner of the former SheepGate Property and he has agreed to a site visit 5/14 at 11:00am. The purpose of the visit is to discuss work on the property and ensure it is not jurisdictional within wetland boundaries.

### III. Other

#### a. Fill and Soil from Clearing of Ditches: Dave Waldron

D Waldron inquired about storing material from the scraping and clearing of roadside ditches on North Blandford Rd. on the Northwest portion of Watson Park where there is existing fill material being stored. D Gates stated that this had been looked into in the past and it was determined to be non-jurisdictional for WPA and outside of ConCom's purview.

#### b. DCR: Beulah Land Rd.

DCR contacted ConCom to discuss potential road work on Beulah Land Road prior to the end of the fiscal year without submitting an RDA. They were informed that they would need to submit an RDA with scope of work.

*Matt*  
*John L. Ryan*  
*Callan Case*  
*Michael Gust*