

Conservation Commission Public Hearing Minutes – September 23, 2021

Time: 7:22 – 8:04 PM **Location:** Remote (by Zoom)

Members Present: Tom Ruskin, Chair; Toni Bandrowicz, Vice Chair; Monica Lagerquist; Colleen Hitchcock; Monica Tamborini; A. Randall Hughes; Molly O’Connell (staff)

Members Absent: Jonathan Grabowski

The public hearing of the Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm.

AGENDA

1. RDA: 184 Puritan Road

John Dick, James Emmanuel, and applicant Ken Stoll were present for the RDA. Mr. Dick reviewed the project scope, a construction of a second story deck, and reason for requesting an RDA.

The Commission asked for clarification on the patio and footing locations. Vice-Chair Bandrowicz noted the Commission has the ability to make a negative determination with conditions.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING: M. Tamborini, seconded by M. Lagerquist. Unanimously approved by roll call.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue a Negative Determination with a condition for the installation of erosion control measure prior to construction. Seconded by M. Tamborini. Unanimously approved by roll call.

2. RDA: 499 Atlantic Ave

Curtis Young, from Lucas Environmental, was present for the application. Mr. Young reviewed the project scope, which is crossing the beach, and the scope of work. The majority of the work is taking place at the applicant’s residence in Marblehead which has been approved by the Marblehead Conservation Commission. The applicant needs access to the property through the beach accessway in Swampscott at Preston Beach.

Chair Ruskin gave the Commissioners a background on this property and owner, stating that they have needed to go through the beach a number of times to do work and it is always done well. He has no concerns that this property owner would not abide by Conservation Commission regulations.

The Commission and applicant discussed potential conditions related to DPW requirements, replacement of any broken cobblestones, and other matters.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING: M. Tamborini, seconded by C. Hitchcock. Unanimously approved by roll call.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue a Negative Determination with the following conditions:

- 1) The applicant will meet all DPW requirements, including but not limited to placing plywood / metal panels on the beach entrance, prior to moving machinery onto the beach.
- 2) There shall be no refueling on the beach.
- 3) Any damage to the beach entranceway that may occur shall be reimbursed by the applicant.
- 4) The applicant shall notify the Conservation Commission and DPW prior to starting work.

Seconded by M. Tamborini. Unanimously approved by roll call.

3. Other Business

a. Approval of previous meeting minutes

MOTION: M. Tamborini to approve the July 22nd meeting minutes, with corrections as stated by T. Bandrowicz. Seconded by T. Bandrowicz. Approved by roll call with R. Hughes and C. Hitchcock in abstention.

b. Discussion and potential vote on balloon restriction

T. Bandrowicz reviewed the Commission's discussion on recommending a balloon restriction on ConComm managed properties. This was temporarily enacted in July and continued to the September meeting. ConComm was supposed to receive some information from the balloon council, but that has not happened. She recommends making the ban permanent; while there is understanding that the balloon operators in Town do not litter or leave balloon remnants on the ground, they are not the only balloon users. Additionally, as an organization committed to the environment and environmental protection, she believes it is within ConComm's mission to issue a ban like this. The ban would only be for ConComm managed properties, not public land.

Carolina Velasquez, resident and balloon small business owner, spoke in opposition to the ban and noted the balloon council had send materials over. She attested to all of the balloon businesses in Town taking care of and properly disposing of balloons and following protocols to ensure that there is no environmental harm. She also educates her customers on proper balloon disposal.

C. Hitchcock is supportive of the ban on ConComm property as it aligns with the Commission's goals. She is hoping the ban is an opportunity to educate the Town and ensure that, on other public or private property, balloons are used and handled safely.

Chair Ruskin laid out three options for the Committee to consider: 1) vote to re-enact the ban as is; 2) continue the conversation to October; or 3) continue the ban through February and then bring the conversation back with the additional materials and stakeholders in hand.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to continue the ban until February 2022, and to continue discussion pending information from the balloon council. Seconded by M. Tamborini, unanimously approved by roll call.

c. Discussion of potential future school review and consultant

T. Bandrowicz noted that the ConComm has used third party reviewers in the past, and would recommend that the commission consider doing that for the new school, pending the October vote. The Commission members agree. Ms. O'Connell will start doing research on potential consultants in October.

d. Discussion and potential vote on knotweed permit program

The Commission has already approved this program to move forward. T. Bandrowicz presented final edits. The information will go up on the website.

e. T. Ruskin resignation

After years of service on the Conservation Commission, Chair Ruskin has decided that tonight is his last meeting and it is time to resign. His residency will now be in Florida, however we will be in Swampscott during summers and hopes to see everyone! The entire Commission will miss him terribly and wishes him the best.

Meeting adjourned: 8:15 p.m.