

On 5/2/2019, on a motion by Commissioner Durkin, seconded by Commissioner Mulhearn, the Commission voted unanimously, 5-0, to approve these minutes as presented.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

April 4, 2019

Members Present: Rick Bishop (Chairman), Tom Durkin, Philip Johnston, Paul Huggins, Cris Luttazi, and Patricia Mulhearn

Member(s) Absent: Ellie Lawrence

YARMOUTH TOWN CLERK

Staff: Kelly Grant – Conservation Administrator

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Start Time: 6.30pm

Notice of Intent:

SE83-2191, Lisa Warren, **18 Crab Creek Lane**, Yarmouth Port, maintain historic path for water access, vista pruning, invasive species management along Crab Creek. Mr. Matt Creighton of BSC Group represented the applicant and presented the proposed work. Property owners Lisa and Pierce Warren were also present. They are looking to retain a six foot wide path down to the water. A mitigation area is proposed for access through the marsh area. Mowing of the lawn area is proposed under the minor exemption. The mowing of the salt marsh is also proposed as a minor exempt activity for salt hay harvesting. The mowing would occur twice a year to control the phragmites and retain the view. An existing kayak platform is proposed to remain. The property was cleared prior to the regulations and the images indicate that at the time the area was upland lawn. It was not regularly flooded. It now appears to be transitioning to wetland as the water level has increased following a culvert replacement project at Crab Creek.

Conservation Administrator suggested worksheets are needed for the wetland delineation and soil samples would help to determine the BVW line. Commissioner Huggins asked for clarification on the historic access path. Mr. Creighton responded that it dates back to at least 1971. They propose to manage the phragmites population through mowing as an alternative to the use of glyphosate. The salt marsh is thriving due to the phragmites control. Commissioner Huggins expressed concern with the impacts to native species of repeated mowing. He also questioned the mowing of the salt marsh hay as an exempt activity. Mr. Creighton responded that it would be mowed twice a year like a regular lawn.

Commissioner Durkin asked if it would be practical to elevate the path over the marsh. Mr. Creighton agreed that that would be feasible, but it is not proposed at this time. The mowing is designed to restricted access.

Commissioner Luttazi asked about the historic path. Mr. Creighton confirmed that the path is being delineated at the area of highest elevation. Commissioner Luttazi commented that the dumping of landscaping debris near the platform should not continue. She suggested a walkway to the water would be more appropriate due to the inundation of soils. Mr. Creighton commented that water access would become more difficult with a raised structure. She also commented that salt hay harvesting is not the same as mowing and that there are alternatives to mowing the salt marsh to control phragmites. Creighton responded that salt hay harvesting is exempt under the Wetlands Protection Act. They would like to be able to mow to keep out phragmites and wood vegetation. Commissioner Luttazi clarifying that there are alternative methods of glyphosate application that do not affect other vegetation, such as the cut and swipe method. Mr. Creighton responded that phragmites treatment is not usually stem-by-stem but by a roller that cuts the stalks and applies the herbicide. The property owner commented that it will