

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
FEB. 1, 2023 5:00PM

Welcome and Call to Order

Roll Call and welcome to new members. Present at this meeting:

Everett Leach
Jennifer Walker
Wendy Levine
George Cundiff
George Blum (new member)
Anne Gallo (new member)
Carole Aaron (Select Board Liaison)

Pledge of Allegiance

Old Business

1. Minutes from Dec. 1 meeting were approved unanimously.
2. Many thanks to the Great Works Land Trust for attending our Jan. meeting with a wonderful presentation to the Board. They verified that they own the land and the Town of Ogunquit owns the easement. Any work done on the property must follow all OGT ordinances. They are working on structuring viable ADA compliant trails. And they have agreed to try to position trails that are suitably distant from abutters of the land.
3. Suzanne Williams from HeRO (Healthy Rivers Ogunquit) was approved to attend our next meeting on March 1, 2023 to share her green crab research conducted last summer.
4. Everett confirmed that we would be receiving the same budget we received last year from the Town. He questioned who would be paying for water testing as that was not included in the budget last year. He will ask Matt to be copied on all water testing results.
5. The issue of removing the asbestos pilings near the Footbridge Beach was raised again. Our CEO informed us that it is best to leave it undisturbed until/unless there appears to be any disintegration around them. Chip remarked that he watches this area carefully and agrees with the CEO. He will continue to monitor the situation.
6. Bourne Lane building discussions have been tabled by the Planning Board,

New Business

1. Discussion of the Ogunquit Playhouse's responsibility to reseed and/or landscape the area cleared for the tent which was used during the COVID epidemic. The land is now bare of any vegetation and runoff leads to the river below. The main parking lot is also not barren with the same issue. Everett will speak to Tyler and Matt to determine how to proceed. Perhaps FB Environmental can weigh in.
2. Obeds Lane sidewalk
Wendy Levine began the discussion by citing the following Town Ordinance 147-5
Removal of natural resources, including any act to dig or remove any sand, soil, rock, stones, trees, shrubs or plants, timber or other wood or materials, or any excavation by tool, equipment, blasting or other means or agency, except where authorized by the TM.

Wendy went on to say that as a direct abutter and as a member of the Conservation Commission she was unpleasantly surprised when this work was ordered without any advance warning or conversation to the abutters or CONCOM. While it appears to have been legal it is quite possible that the decision to proceed with the destruction of the granite and the removal of beautiful healthy trees was premature. There was no traffic study completed, no plan for drainage, no thought of what the finished product will be or what is even possible.

Public Comment

1. Susan Levenson spoke as a resident of Obeds Lane for over 60 years who believes that a sidewalk is completely unnecessary and will likely cause more problems than it solves.
2. Leslie and Hunt Henrie, direct abutters at the corner of Bess Bill and Obeds, see no need or reason for a sidewalk nor can they imagine how it could be built given the slope of the hill.
3. Rebecca Fox from Marginal Ave called in to express her displeasure of the process used to order the work without careful planning. She also recommended that we propose an Ordinance change which would prevent this from happening again.
4. Wendy read a letter written by Bobbi Treen who was unable to attend the meeting,

Earth Day April 22, 2023

Jennifer Walker asked the Commission to consider some special event(s) for Earth Day. Mentioned were a beach cleanup and perhaps an information booth. She will follow up to see if the Town has any plans for the day.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Broms Levine, Secretary