

## Minutes for the 26 January, 2022 Alexandria Conservation Commission Meeting

Call meeting to order at 18:35 by Chair Jennifer Tuthill

Members Present: Jennifer Tuthill, Merry Ruggirello, Rosie Homer, and Steve Whitman

Excused: Tom Guilmette, George Whittaker, Ernie Lamos

Absent: None \*Ron Maclean has resigned from the Commission effective 3 January 2022. The Commission wishes to thank Ron for his service.

BOS Representative: Bob Piehler

Guests: None

- ❖ Approve minutes from the 29 December 2021 mtg. **Motion to accept minutes was made by Rosie and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Merry. Minutes were accepted as presented.**
- ❖ Financials: 2021 Operating Budget. **As of 12/2/2021 our operating budget had a balance of \$1,178.89. An operating budget of \$1,600 has been requested for 2022.**
- ❖ Permits: **None**

### Old Business:

1. Status of Preservation plan for Barrett Park. The ACC was tasked with developing a plan for the area known as Barrett Park and presenting it to the Select Board for their consideration and endorsement. It was agreed that the preservation plan for Barrett Park will be incorporated into the larger overall plan for the entire bog area. The kiosk has been relocated to the Town Forest as its location at Barrett Park was encroaching on the turtle nesting area, which is a restricted area. A planning session with Dan Moore was held on 11/13 at which time Dan spoke with ACC members regarding formulating an overall plan for both the Park area and the Bog in general. Dan's comments were very helpful, and he agreed to return for additional meetings. **A general informational session and update for our residents was held Wednesday, 1/19 – attendance was small, but enthusiastic. Handouts for the meeting were excellent and provided a great deal of information in support of the turtle preservation area. Handouts for the meeting were made by Jenny and a motion was made by Merry and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rosie to reimburse Jenny for her expenses (approximately \$110 – receipt not available at mtg.). The motion passed unanimously. The turtle nesting area does not encompass the entire 20 acres, and the ACC is taking that into consideration as we consider our options. There was a lengthy discussion about how the 20 acres should be viewed- treated in its entirety with the turtle sanctuary as a section within the area, or if the sanctuary should be treated as a separate entity. It was decided that the entire 20 acres should be treated as a single property under the management of the Conservation Commission, with the Turtle Preserve being treated as an area within the property. Further it was agreed that ONLY the Turtle Preserve area would be developed at the present time. A motion to write a letter to the BOS requesting that the Conservation Commission be appointed to manage the entire 20 acre town owned parcel of property (lot #52, tax map #414) on behalf of the town of Alexandria, with the understanding that any plans for the area be endorsed by the BOS prior to implementation, was made by Steve and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rosie. The motion passed 3 in favor, 2 opposed. Jenny will draft a letter.**

Signage restricting the turtle nesting area during specific periods during the year was authorized at the December 29<sup>th</sup> meeting; however, there was no motion to authorize purchase of the sign(s). Therefore, a motion was made by Jenny and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob to authorize the purchase of the sign(s) with the agreed upon wording approved at the December meeting. The motion passed 4 in favor, 1 opposed. Signs have been ordered.

2. Reminder that April is the month in which we vote in officers to serve 1-year terms for 2022. The current officers have served in various positions for several years now, and it's time for others to take up the baton and run with it. If interested, please let one of the officers know. **Carried forward to February meeting**
3. Annual Report on ACC activities in 2021. **The report has been completed.**
4. Status of the mapping of the Town Forest to date. The map is not yet complete as details need to be added; however, the location of the trails is accurate and should keep folks from getting lost should they wish to hike the trails. **Mapping has been completed and will be available at the Municipal Building and the trail head at the Town Forest (as soon as weather permits installation of a proper container to hold the maps is in place). Our thanks to Rosie for taking on this project on her own.**
5. Status of the 3 sites where the ACC has suggested intervention regarding possible violations of various wetlands restrictions. The DES has said that they will make in-person visits to the properties. **Carried forward to February meeting**

### **New Business**

1. Discussions on a management plan for Barrett Park/Turtle Sanctuary, the Bog in general, and the Town Forest. It has been agreed that Barrett Park should be our first concern as there is an immediate need to protect endangered species, and therefore, our initial efforts will be directed toward a resolution for that issue; however, taking care not to create issues detrimental to long-term objectives. **See #1 Old Business above**
2. The 8.8 acers at the south end of Bog Rd. owned by the town (lot #55, tax map #418) will be presented to town residents for consideration as a town forest on a warrant article (#15) in March 2022. Currently, there are no plans for the property other than to designate it as a Town Forest under the management of the Conservation Commission. **Information only; no discussion needed**
3. **Jenny has opened a Zoom account to assist the Commission in conducting educational updates/sessions for the public, to allow residents the ability to join meetings remotely, and in the hope that it will allow Commission members to attend meetings remotely when not in the area. The account was set-up in Jenny's name; however, as its primary use will be for Commission related business, a motion was made by Rosie and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bob to reimburse Jenny for the cost of the account (\$124). The motion was passed unanimously.**
4. **Jenny pointed out the write-up in the Newfound Life newspaper about the Commission's photo contest and advised us that the owner/publisher had asked to be notified of future Commission activities for possible inclusion in future articles.**

**All other new business to be considered by the Commission at this meeting.**

There was no other ACC business brought to the attention of the Commission, the meeting was adjourned by Jennifer Tuthill at 19:55.