

**Ashfield Conservation Commission
January 25, 2017**

Members Present: Lester Garvin, Chair (LG) Phil Lussier (PL) Anne Capra (AC) Brian Clark (BC)	Members Absent: Janet Clark (JC)
Others Present: Tim Craig, Americorp Tom Brule, Pantermehl Land Clearing	

1. LG called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM.
2. Reviewed minutes of 12/14/16. PL moved to accept the minutes as edited; AC seconded; approved unanimous. There was no quorum for a meeting on 1/11/17.
3. LG submitted a proposed FY18 budget, total \$1,450. PL moved to approve as submitted; BC seconded; unanimous.
4. Request from the Town Clerk for an Annual Report. LG requested AC prepare a report from review of minutes for 2016.
5. Forest Cutting Plans Reviewed – 1) Robert Markey and Julie Orfirer, 444 Bellus Road; 2) Ken and Barb Miller, 193 Cumington Road; 3) Hull Forestlands, Sears Road; 4) Abbot Cutler and Sara Holbrook, 47 Bailey Road.
6. LG distributed Commission mail for review.
7. 8:00pm LG opened the hearing for the Ashfield Park Commission, trail step renovations at Belding Memorial Park. Tim Craig, Americorp coordinator was in attendance to represent the project and the Recreational Trails Grant application submitted by the Park Commission to fund the project. Tim noted there will be a one week training for their trail corp and will use the Belding Park site as the training session. PL asked if anyone knew anything about whether or not pressure treated wood was hazardous to waterways. Tom Brule stated that copper is the chemical used pressure treating process, and he was not aware of any information about its toxicity. PL moved to close the meeting; BC seconded; unanimous. Negative DOA will be sent to Judy Haupt.
8. Tom Brule, representing MA Land League, Mass Forest Alliance – Presented a proposed 30 acre cut on Old Stage Road (10 acres in Ashfield, 20 acres in Hawley) for wildlife habitat improvement project. Tom stated that under C. 132, up to a 50% basal area cut can be performed without an RDA. He would like to submit an RDA for an 80-90% cut in the resource area. Early successional habitat rejuvenation cut for woodcock habitat restoration. Under Chapter 131, need to submit an RDA. Has worked with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game who have used this permitting approach on other sites. Alder wood and other woody debris will be put in the track, or swamp mats will be used. LG stated that the Commission would accept an RDA for the proposed project.

Tom asked how the Commission felt about having the State Forester issue approvals for work within wetland jurisdictional areas. PL stated that he thought she would probably be more knowledgeable about the details of the proposed work and would be responsible for onsite supervision, which would likely result in satisfactory protection of the resource area.

Approved 2/8/17

9. AC Open Space Committee seeking letter of support from Conservation Commission for a \$1000 match from the Town to leverage a \$5,000 DLTA grant to complete the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The funding is through FRCOG for their technical assistance on the plan. Approved unanimously. AC will draft a letter and submit to LG for printing on town letterhead and sign.
10. PL Recommended that the Commission endorse the letter to Governor Baker, drafted by MACC, to ensure adequate study and review of future proposed pipeline projects. PL Motion to endorse the letter. PL read the draft letter. Request to end interstate gas pipelines. AC seconded motion; unanimous.
11. BC No online permits for review.
12. PL moved to adjourn, BC seconded, unanimous. 8:30pm