

**Ashfield Conservation Commission
March 25, 2015**

Members Present: Lester Garvin, Chair (LG) Dave Fessenden (DF) Janet Clark (JC)	Members Absent: Phil Lussier (PL) Brian Clark (BC)
Others Present: Anne Madocks, Scribe	

1. LG called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
2. Reviewed the minutes from 3/11/15. DF moved to accept minutes as written; JC seconded; unanimous.
3. JC – Nina Lauri lives at 315 Main Street. She has credentials in wetlands and policy. She is interested in becoming a Conservation Commission member. She is currently a weaver. We could invite her to attend a meeting. DF She could possibly become an associate member if there are no available seats on the Commission.

JC – Some other information to share from the MACC meeting and other sources:
Save Fish Don't Flush Brochure – Called the Police Department and found that there has been a pharmaceuticals take back day in the past. Called the Franklin Waste Department and found that the program now run by the District Attorney's Office. Ashfield doesn't have a program because we are too small to justify. There is a drop off location at the Buckland Police Department and in Conway and Williamsburg. The program will send some outreach materials that could be used to inform residents about this program. Also accept some medicated lotions.

JC - Drafted a letter to the editor to request information from land owners requesting information about natural resources on their property to identify places along the proposed Kinder Morgan pipeline route through Ashfield. Information gathered from the public would be used to help inform permitting the project under the WPA.

DF Commissions practical oversight is really just to wetlands. As a community, we have geologic and historic resources that may be worth inventorying. People may be concerned about such a level of inventory and not want to bring visitors and others on their land. Perhaps just ask people to write about the special places on their property. JC – Would be great from a historic inventory but we would have to sift through that info to find the resources that we can legally protect. Local bylaws have been implemented in other towns that expanded Conservation Commission jurisdictions to uplands. AM – An electronic form/survey could be created for people to provide information through.

DF Bear Swamp inventory was performed years ago, documenting everything that crawls, leaps or grows in the wetland. Would be great to redo now.

JC Next steps would be to circulate to other members for review. Take back up at next meeting.

4. Smith Branch Road Order of Conditions – LG Hearing went well and plans seemed very appropriate for site. Confirmed the total land under water disturbed is 2,651. For the time of year, listed July 1 to September 30th of any given year. The OOC was circulated for signature.
5. LG received a call from Mr. Pepyne on Route 112, abutting Ashfield Lake. He wants to remove vegetation along the bank including 40-50 trees. JC Vista pruning is fought by Commissions in other towns, particularly on the coast. Some support for restorative pruning is also good. LG will tell him he needs to contact a wetland scientist and file an RDA. Property owner had sought building permit to demolish a portion of his house. Project will likely require a ZBA meeting because it is only 6' from Route 112.
6. JC Has other ideas for letters to the newspaper: be a friend to pollinators; climate change preparedness; what it means to be a green community and green energy; and, forest cutting best management practices and forest health. LG He has enrolled his property in Forestry for the Birds – Audubon and MA DCR Forest Stewardship cost share for forester to survey. English sparrows are an invasive bird that Audubon recommends trapping.
7. JC moved to adjourn at 8:35 pm; DF seconded; unanimous.