

Lakeville Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes 7/10/19
With the Middleboro Conservation Commission
Middleboro Town Hall
10 Nickerson St. Middleboro

Members present: Chairman Robert Bouchard, Joseph Chamberlain, Wilton Gray, Richard Hagerman, John LeBlanc, Mark Knox, and Josh Faherty.

NOI – Nemasket River Project - Elyse Tripp from Outback Engineering was present for the discussion. The project involves the area between the Old Bridge St. bridge and Vaughan St. bridge. The goal of this project is to remove the Variable Leaved Water Milfoil that has begun to take over about mid-way between the Old Bridge St. bridge and the Vaughan St. bridge, according to a study done last summer. It is proposed that a 4' channel be created in the center of the river to allow the herring to get through. A barge-mounted Eco-Harvester will be used to remove the milfoil at the roots; it will then be taken to an offload site on the Freitas property. It will be placed in an upland area close to the channel due to the Northern Red Bellied Cooter, which will give access to the river for any left or missed in the harvesting. A modified silt fence with gaps facing the channel will be used to accommodate the Red Bellied Cooter. Ms. Tripp said it will be unlikely that anything will be left in the milfoil since there will be checks throughout the process to make sure there are none left in the harvest. This process can only be done within the first two weeks of August due to the Red Bellied Cooter hatchlings. There is enough funding for three days of Eco-Harvesting so the plan is to harvest as much as they can. Evaluation of this project will be to see if the channel is used and if the milfoil has grown back significantly by next year, if the plan will need to be re-evaluated next year or not. They are asking for a Scientific Collection Permit and would like approval from both Commissions. Ron Burgess from the Middleboro-Lakeville Herring Fishery Commission thanked both Commissions for their participation. Lakeville Conservation Commission Member Mark Knox had a few questions regarding the process. He assumed that there would be some breakage in the harvesting and would there be some type of stop gap or netting used to keep any further outbreaks from happening downstream. Ms. Tripp said that there is very little fragmentation with the Eco-Harvester but something that would not interfere with the process could be considered. Member Knox asked about re-growth and if the money were available if this would be an on-going Order of Conditions and we can continue to do this. Ms. Tripp said this will definitely have to be on-going because it is impossible to get rid of milfoil in an area once it has been established. Member Joe Chamberlain asked about the timing. Ms. Tripp said when they started the planning of this project; they didn't realize how much of it would take place in Natural Heritage. The intent was to file a lot earlier. At this point, if it can't be done this summer, it will be ready to go for next summer. Abutters have been notified and approve of the plan. There was a discussion regarding the Orders of Conditions that will need to be done by both communities and the special endangered species permit that will be required for the project. A short video of the Eco-Harvester was shown and there was a discussion regarding concerns of contaminants and herring getting caught in the Eco-Harvester.

Middleboro Selectman Allin Frawley thought that if the Eco-Harvester works as well as everyone hopes, it may be worth looking into purchasing one. The cities of Taunton and New Bedford should be asked for money to clean up the river. It would be more economical to purchase the machine and to be able to use it on a regular basis. Chairman Bouchard asked what percentage of the total harvest would be other weeds. Elyse Tripp said in the quadrants that were tested roughly 70% was milfoil. Chairman Bouchard also asked what other type of equipment would be needed. Ms. Tripp said that a front loader was donated for the project that could move the milfoil away from the shore after it is off loaded.

Middleboro Conservation Chair Jackie Jones wanted to address the Fisheries and Wildlife letter that was received on July 9th. She asked if everyone was comfortable with the conditions proposed and if anyone thought there should be additions made. Ms. Jones read the conditions into the record.

Lakeville Conservation:

Upon a motion made by Member Knox, seconded by Member LeBlanc, it was:

Voted: to approve the Notice of Intent for an ecological restoration limited project on the upper Nemasket River between the Old Bridge St and Vaughan St. bridges and issue an Order of Conditions for eco-harvesting pending the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Permit along with the conditions noted in the meeting provided by the Division of Fisheries, Wildlife and the Division of Marine Fisheries. Also, the engineer must provide a report within 30 days of completion of the project.
Unanimous approval.

Middleboro Conservation:

A vote was taken by the Middleboro Conservation Commission.

Adjournment –

Lakeville Conservation:

Upon a motion to adjourn by Member Knox, seconded by Member LeBlanc, it was:

Voted: to close the hearing.

Unanimous approval

Middleboro Conservation:

A vote was taken by the Middleboro Conservation Commission.