

Medfield Conservation Commission
(Joint Meeting with Planning Board and Historical Commission)
PUBLIC MEETING via Zoom

Minutes of April 5, 2021

Members Present: Robert Aigler (chair), Mary McCarthy, Michael Perloff, Robert Kennedy, Kristin Poler
Members Absent: George Darrell, Deborah Bero

At approximately 7:33pm, Chair Robert Aigler called the Conservation Commission meeting to order. Planning Board chair Teresa James read the following notice:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Planning Board, Historical Commission, and Conservation Commission is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice. This meeting is being recorded.

Town Planner Sarah Raposa gave a presentation on proposed scenic ways and answered participant questions.

At 7:52 PM, Liz & Alan Blair asked: "Mustn't we go to the town to add or remove a tree in a public way now? How does making a public way a scenic way change that?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 7:54 PM, Victoria Lia, who lives on 55 Elm Street asked: "I have had Eversource come on to my property to cut down some of our Pine trees without permission. The reasoning was that they wanted to clear the foliage around the electrical wires. Would they now have to get permission from the planning board to do such work if our street becomes a scenic way?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 7:58 PM, Greg Lorusso wrote: "Hi, this is Greg Lorusso and I live on Plain Street. So just to clarify this does not affect or hinder any work on trees or rock walls 'on' my property." Ms. Raposa responded

David Temple asked who to reach out to about removing nuisance trees. Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:03 PM, Shawn Farrell, who lives on 53 Millbrook Road wrote: "What is the setback (in feet) from the edge of the roadway that determines if a tree is considered to be 'in the public way'? Is it measured in terms of the base of the tree or the top area?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:06 PM Liz & Alan Blair asked: "If a road is made a scenic way does that preclude changes such as adding sidewalks, streetlights, re-alignment of the way?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:06 PM Rob and Joan Marquart, who live on Nebo Street asked: "What is the purpose of designating a road this way?" Ms. Raposa responded.

Mary McCarthy asked if there is any jurisdiction over private property when it comes to trees on Scenic Ways. Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:08 PM, Liz & Alan Blair asked: "What does 'Recommendation for National Register District' mean? Who recommended it?" Ms. Raposa, David Temple, Christine McCue Potts responded.

At 8:10 PM, Laura Eselius wrote: "This is Laura Eselius, 105 Elm - this sounds like a good idea. Just curious why it's been so long since the last time we considered proposing additional scenic roads - what prompted this at this time?" Ms. Raposa and Christine McCue Potts responded.

At 8:13 PM, Tracy Foley commented: "It appears Pine Street and North Street have preserved much of their character by having a scenic designation. I live on Elm street and think it would be great to preserve stone walls, bridges and waterways." Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:20 PM, Sarah Herd, who lives on Nebo Street commented: "I think scenic roads should have posted 25 mph speed limits to enjoy all of the beauty instead of going 60 past my house!" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:21 PM, Laura Eselius wrote: "Laura Eselius, again - also curious if the scenic road designation might enable extra measures to help address emerging environmental concerns (e.g., how trees along Hartford in the wetland area are no longer thriving as they have in the past)." Ms. Raposa deferred to members of the Conservation Commission and Mary McCarthy and Robert Kennedy responded.

At 8:27 PM, an anonymous attendee asked: "How will being designated a scenic road affect our ability to tie into public utilities such as gas and sewer?" Ms. Raposa responded. Sarah Lemke added to the answer.

At 8:43 PM, Greg Lorusso asked: "If this is approved, when does it take effect?" Ms. Raposa responded.

At 8:43 PM, Shawn Farrell commented: "Fine with designation as Scenic Way for Millbrook Road. However, I'm concerned about a yes vote if this includes designation of the road as National Register District status (as stated in the flyer) which could be a precursor to Local Historic District status, which is obviously much more restrictive." Ms. Raposa responded.

The Boards and Commissions discussed the proposal.

At approximately 8:30 pm, Michael Perloff made a motion for the Conservation Commission to support the article to make Elm Street, Plain Street, Farm Street, Nebo Street, and Millbrook Road scenic ways and to adjourn the Conservation Commission meeting. Seconded by Mary McCarthy. Roll Call: Michael Perloff = yes; Mary McCarthy = yes; Kirsten Poler = yes; Robert Aigler = yes; Bobby Kennedy = yes. The Vote = 5-0.