

ARROWSIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

February 21, 2023

Present: Karen Robbins, Priscilla Tucker, Clark Cooper, Carla Weeks, Jessie Nankin McMahon, Jenna Howard

The meeting, held in person, was called to order by Karen at 5:30 PM.

1. Minutes: Minutes from January were approved. The notes on the alewife report will be summarized.

2. New Member: Carla Weeks is approved for membership and this is her first meeting.

3. Climate Resilience Group: The group has drafted a mission statement and vision. A draft survey for residents will be shared in support of information gathering for the climate action plan which will be presented at the 2024 town meeting. Consultants have shared GIS mapping showing climate modeling and have been asked to consider well/hydrology mapping. The group is listing potential grants that could support climate resilience. Karen asks Jenna and Jesse to share urgency for understanding our aquifer use, sea level rise, and drought. Karen suggests the GOPIF website may have info on the Westport Island mapping project.

4. Alewives: The Alewife working group proposes a ceremonial harvest of half of the fish on a Saturday in May, where residents will be invited to see the educational opportunity and take home a few fish to smoke or garden. In total, Arrowsic can harvest up to six bushels (about 720 fish) within the 9am-12pm morning session. This will take place the Saturday before Mother's Day. The plan will be half will go into the pond and half will go into the basket. Clarke moves confirmation of the working group proposal, Jenna seconds. Unanimous vote from the Commission.

5 Signs: We need a new dusk to dawn sign. "Do not park in front of gate" is considered. Carrot signs will provide an estimate. Carla could paint a sign if that feels "like a less-punchable" sign. Still haven't heard back from Walter on parking issues. We'd need to get the bill for this July 2.

6. Annual report and budget: We've already overspent the 2022-23 budget. The Commission asked for \$500 last year in the budget but only got \$400. We will revisit this next time when Phine is back. Jesse suggests asking for \$600 next year.

7. Water Quality: Phine will share water test charges at next meeting.

8. Annual report: We also need to update our section in the Annual report that gets published in packet: Phine will do draft including a paragraph contributed on Alewife working group and resiliency group. Members will edit it.

9. Roadside clean up: We will discuss this annual event at our next meeting.

7. Water Access Committee: The Committee has asked if we can review their draft rubric and give them feedback on it. Currently the idea is to have 5 criteria which can rank on a scale 0-5. Clarke notes the rubric will work best if you can compare two properties. Members wonder if the rubric was being applied to a single property, could we have a baseline score or threshold that makes it viable. The WAC considers pre-weighting the criteria below which the ACC suggests should have equal weight. Priscilla seconds weighing them equally since they all matter. All agree.

Members ask if there is a clear way to rank the potential for developing infrastructure. As a group, there is agreement that the categories should have equal weight. The Commission notes the project is an issue of equity and becoming the kind of community we want to be, one with public access.

Legal/Regulatory Standing (6 weight)

0 – If it's not available, not permissible

5 – available in a timely fashion

Impact to Neighbors/Abutters (5 Weight)

Would be nice to have neighbors and the neighborhood included.

Currently the idea is that a site could get a 0 if one abutter has concerns, but the project gets a 5 if every abutter or most in the neighborhood is good with it.

The rubric should measure: Can the concerns of neighbors be considered and addressed? Neighborhood feedback will be important, but shouldn't hold veto power.

Water Access Quality (4 Weight)

0 landlocked

5 all tides, all boats

Road Access and Infrastructure (Weight 3)

0 no access by road,

5 paid public access with good parking: dock, float—permissible. Could you get a permit for a dock or seasonal float?

Cost (Weight of 2)

0 costs of development, exceed all funding sources,

5 gifted to town without encumbrances.

We know what is in the coffer—is it substantially on budget or over budget?

8. Nature Notes: Steller's Sea Eagle was here in Arrowsic this month. Karen says is a possum dead in the road (asks 'are we a suburb?') Priscilla says possums have been expanding their range; and it's not because of human trash—an isotopic analysis, nitrogen and carbon, corn c3, corn c4—shows they are not eating corn! Snowpack is one factor, climate change, habitat impacts to overwintering, and land use change associated with the expansion of possums. With more of the country being used for agricultural land—corridors, habitat disturbance, edge habitat. Priscilla saw a parade of gray squirrels trotting across the backyard—first female, all males. She notes females will mate with multiple males. It is almost

squirrel mating season. Jesse heard barred owl and blue jays. Carla saw an owl the other week. Clarke noticed that when the ice was solid in Phippsburg, Center Pond had two trucks and Sewall Pond had 10. Karn notes Rt. 209 had culverts with warm running water.

Meeting adjourned after 7:00 pm. March 21 is our next meeting. Priscilla will join by Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenna Howard