

TOWN OF SOMERS
Conservation Commission
600 Main Street
P.O. Box 308

REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2019
7:00 PM TOWN HALL
MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER --- Meeting called to order by Karl Walton at 7:07 P.M.
Commissioners in attendance were Drew Kukucka, Daniel Fraro, Greg Genlot, and alternate Tod Keeney (not seated). Also in attendance were Wetland Agent Joanna Shapiro and Recording Secretary Tara Comrie.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. **Discussion/Possible Decision: Application #727:** 160 & 190 Battle Street (Lots 22 and 23 Gillette's Crossing). Construction of two homes in Upland Review Area. Richard Leno.

Mr. Leno has revised the plans for the two properties since the last meeting. His buyers want the tighter lot (#160) and plan to build a smaller home on it than on the previously submitted plans. The house would be farther from wetlands than he previously requested it to be. The larger home for Mr. Leno will be put on #190 instead.

The plan includes wetlands signage approximately every 100 ft and arborvitae between them, bordering the stream. Agent Shapiro says that the required distance for the wetland boundary markers is every 50 feet along a fairly straight line, and provided the written standards. Mr. Leno says he will place as many signs as are required, and Greg Genlot explained this will be a condition of approval.

Retaining walls were included in the new plans to reduce the extent of grading, yet Mr. Leno explained that with the smaller house footprint, his engineer believes that the retaining walls shown on the plan may be unnecessary for #160, but that he would likely construct walls on #190. Agent Shapiro explained that this could be refined with the building permit application, and that as long as the limit of disturbance is unchanged, the use of walls is not critical. Mr. Leno included locations of future sheds on the plans to demonstrate suitable locations, to avoid a homeowner placing a shed too close to the wetlands in the future. The Commission believes this is a good idea. Agent Shapiro is happy with the changes – she states that the vegetated buffer is a nice addition.

Greg Genlot made a motion to approve the application, based on plans revised on May 26 2019, with a condition that the wetland boundary be permanently marked.

Dan Fraro seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

2. **Discussion/Possible Decision: Application #728:** 240 Durkee (Lot 7 Durkee Fields). Construction of new home (previously approved WP #664) in Upland Review Area. Richard Leno.

Mr. Leno had previously requested to add another two feet to the house toward the wetland. Agent Shapiro has reviewed the plan and did not feel as though it made a substantial difference in wetland impact. The area where the house would be extended is very level and would not cause an added erosion concern. The new plan presented by Mr Leno shows everything on the north side moved two feet back, including the driveway. The plan also includes space for a shed for future homeowner, to limit the risk of future encroachment on the wetland by an owner.

Mr. Leno says if the builder can find room to put the driveway off of Durkee Rd instead of Four Bridges Road (where it is on the current plan), that would be an option that puts the driveway further from the wetlands. Mr. Leno suggests that a different septic system placement could possibly make room for the changes to the driveway. Karl Walton says that the Commission doesn't have any issue with the way the plan currently is presented. The Commission discussed whether wetland boundary markers are necessary, as the land is currently mowed for hay.

Greg Genlot made a motion to approve, and waived the typical requirement of permanent wetland boundary markers.

Dan Fraro seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Application #729:** 130 Hampden Road. Removal of invasive Phragmites from pond. Taylor Atkinson.

Mr .Atkinson is requesting a permit to bring an excavator onto his property to pull phragmites out around his pond. Mr. Atkinson wants to remove the roots with the excavator. He states that the roots are shallow but dense, which prevents hand pulling. The commission discusses the challenge of removing invasive plant species and keeping them from returning.

Mr. Atkinson proposes a plan that includes closing an existing dam during construction to keep sediment from reaching the stream while the phragmites is being removed. He has done research and has spoken informally with an environmental engineer to develop his plan using best practices. Agent Shapiro states that it may be a challenge to control the invasive plant without herbicides, but limiting herbicides may be preferable environmentally.

Greg Genlot recommends that Agent Shapiro should check on his erosion control methods once he gets started. Karl Walton suggests hay bales during excavation to that end. Mr. Atkinson says he will plant grass in place of the phragmites once they have been removed.

2. **Modification of Application #716:** 31 South Road/Lake Drive. Construct detention basin and drainage infrastructure (Basin #2 as approved in original permit #579).

The owner came in last year for a permit to construct three remaining units in the upland review area within Shady Lakes Estates, as the prior permit had expired, yet the stormwater infrastructure within the upland review area had not been included in the new permit.

Agent Shapiro presented the modified plans and explained that the road was going to continue further back originally, but in the new plan it does not. The proposed drainage basin is still the same as the original design, but with longer piping to carry stormwater to the basin. While the stormwater infrastructure was approved in the original permit, that permit (#579) had expired, and the additional work to install the stormwater basin in the upland review area of Shady Lake was not included on the valid permit (#716), so the applicant is requesting to modify the current permit to include the original stormwater plan. Karl Walton states that the basin will meter the water into the lake.

Agent Shapiro read a letter from owner, Dan Avery, explaining this information in his absence. Agent Shapiro explained that because it's a modification to an existing permit, it can be approved in one meeting if the Commission is in favor.

Greg Genlot made a motion to approve.

Daniel Fraro seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

V. STAFF REPORT

Wetland Agent Shapiro distributed and discussed the Wetland Agent's Report.

Greg Genlot made a motion to accept wetland agent's Report.

Karl Walton Seconded. All in Favor. Motion passed.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

Agent Shapiro presented correspondence from DOT explaining their plan to replace a metal arched culvert carrying Gillette's Brook under Turnpike Rd with a 30' span. They will widen the culvert and the road in the Spring of 2020.

Agent Shapiro presented a bill from the Journal Inquirer for \$55.09.

Karl Walton made the motion to pay the bill. Greg Genlot seconded.

VII. MINUTES APPROVAL: MAY 1, 2019

Daniel Fraro made the motion to approve the minutes of May 1, 2019.

Drew seconded. All in favor. Minutes were approved.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Daniel Fraro made the motion to Adjourn.

Greg Genlot seconded. All in Favor. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:07 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tara Comrie, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING