

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

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

I. CALL TO ORDER --- Meeting called to order by Chairperson Joan Formeister at 7:00 P.M. Commissioners in attendance were, Candace Aleks, Daniel Fraro, Karl Walton, Drew Kukucka, and alternate Lewis Keeney (seated for Greg Genlot). Also in attendance were Recording Secretary Tara Comrie and Wetland Agent Joanna Shapiro.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. **Application #730:** 183 Mountain Road. Stream crossing and construction of driveway in Upland Review Area, associated with construction of new house, as previously approved (WP #534, which has expired). Amy Eastman.

Agent Shapiro presented the plans to construct the driveway and stream crossing last month. These plans were previously approved in 2006. The applicant is seeking approval for the same plans now, as the previous approval has expired. The plans are presented by Agent Shapiro, demonstrating the areas of proposed grading, and the location of the crossing through the intermittent watercourse. Photos are provided of the dry habitat and upland enhancement areas with a proposed list of plants to use in those areas.

Agent Shapiro states that she went to look at the property to evaluate the existing conditions and to observe any apparent changes on the property, paying particular attention to the proposed planting areas that were brought up at the last meeting. She observed that the areas proposed for replanting are very ledgy, with existing mature trees and ferns. She suggests there should be no removal of the plants that are there, but addition of new shrubs between existing vegetation and ledge. This will give a buffer to the wetland after the driveway is constructed.

The town engineer also reviewed the drainage calculations as requested by the commission. The town engineer submitted a report today. The applicant has not had a chance to respond. The stormwater calculations were reviewed, and the engineer expresses concern about size of the culvert. In the report he recommends increasing the size of the culvert from 12" to 15" to prevent flooding and ponding, allowing for a 5 year design flow. He also recommends rip rap to be placed adjacent to the inlet and outlet flared ends to prevent erosion. The plan with an increased culvert size should not impact the footprint of the work.

Drew Kukucka asks if 5 year design flow is a standard. Agent Shapiro says that it is not a requirement by law, but that the 12" would not even carry flow from a 2yr

storm and could also easily get clogged. As a result, the driveway could be washed out or potentially fail to meet fire or EMS requirements. Agent Shapiro explained that the Commission could decide whether to require new engineered drawings, or to act on the existing plans, with conditions.

Lewis Keeney asked about the cost difference between installing the 12" and 15" culvert. Agent Shapiro states that it is negligible.

Attorney John Parks is present to speak on behalf of the applicant. Patrice Carson is also in attendance. Attorney Parks states that the plan was previously approved with the only condition in 2006 being a preconstruction meeting. He states that there is no substantial change in the condition of the property since 2006, but that the applicant wouldn't have a problem following the engineer's recommendation. He asks to use the original plan rather than redoing the plans to make the change from the 12" to 15" culvert.

Joan Formeister asks if anyone thinks it's necessary to see new plans. By consensus, the Commission agreed that the existing plans with conditions.

Agent Shapiro states that the sideslopes of the driveway are proposed as vegetated. She suggests permanent turf reinforcement mats to keep the vegetation from washing out. She states that wetland delineation markers have become standard on lots with new development close to wetland areas, and must be made of permanent, durable material. Agent Shapiro presents written standards to Attorney Parks for the markers.

Ms. Carson states that supplementing plants in the areas discussed will limit disturbance, and suggested that the final planting be subject to the wetland agent's approval.

Tom Clark, the applicant's neighbor on 175 Mountain Road, states that he is concerned about how the plan may affect his property. He asks about the wetland markers and the potential impact to his property. It is stated by Joan Formeister that there would probably only need to be one marker at most on his property. Attorney Parks suggests marking only on applicant's property. The wetland line on the edge of the easement is shown to Mr. Clark on the plans by Joan Formeister.

A motion to approve the application #730 is made by Daniel Fraro, with five conditions. The conditions are that the engineer's recommendations to increase the pipe size from 12" to 15" and to add rip-rap at the inlet and outlet must be followed, that permanent wetland markers be installed on the property, that the buffer plantings be approved by the wetland agent, that a pre-construction meeting with the Wetland Agent must be held, and that permanent turf reinforcement matting must be used to stabilize the side slopes of the driveway.

Candace Aleks seconded. All in favor. The motion passed.

2. **Application #731:** 420 Springfield Road. Installation of a flood control device to mitigate beaver damage. Richard Bailey.

Tabled/continued to next meeting.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Discussion:** Revision of Wetland Application form.

Joan Formeister states that an ad hoc committee should be formed to make the wetland application form more detailed and more consistent with other towns. Agent Shapiro passed out the current Somers form along with Ellington, Tolland, Coventry, and Bolton application forms for comparison.

Joan states that she is willing to work on this, and Drew Kukucka states that he is willing to work on it as well. They suggest that Todd Whitford's review and input would be helpful as well.

Karl Walton asks what kind of additional information will be included. Agent Shapiro states that it may be helpful to have a form for jurisdictional rulings, to capture necessary information for making a determination, as an example. Drew Kukucka says it will provide more detail prior to the meeting, to help commission members to familiarize themselves with applications in advance of the meetings. It could additionally include checklists and a state reporting form such as those included on other towns' forms. She says that Coventry has a separate form for minimal impact permits (ie sheds at least 25 ft from wetland) that could be adopted. There currently is no fee associated with our minimal impact permits, but applicants are required to publish the legal notice.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Jennifer Griger asks the commission whether a new permit must follow the same plans when there is an expired permit. Joan Formeister states that the commission still reviews the application, and there is never a guarantee that a plan will be approved again after its expiration, that a new approval is not automatic. A new approval must take into account up-to-date regulations and aspects of the plan must be reviewed prior to approval.

V. STAFF REPORT

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

Karl Walton made a motion to accept Wetland Agent's Report.

Daniel Fraro Seconded. All in Favor. Motion passed.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

Agent Shapiro presented the DOT final design plans for the improvements to the culvert crossing of Gillette brook over Turnpike Rd, and notification from the Town of Enfield with plans for road reconstruction in the Buckhorn Brook area near the Somers town line.

Agent Shapiro presented two bills from the Journal Inquirer for legal notices on June 5 for \$72.40 and for July 3 for \$51.94

Karl Walton made a motion to pay the bills. Daniel Fraro seconded.

VII. MINUTES APPROVAL: JULY 3, 2019

Daniel Fraro made the motion to accept the minutes of July 3, 2019.

Candace Aleks seconded. All in favor. Minutes were approved.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Candace Aleks made the motion to Adjourn.

Daniel Fraro seconded. All in Favor. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tara Comrie, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING