

TOWN OF SOMERS
Conservation Commission
600 Main Street

REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2023
7:00 PM TOWN HALL
MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Joan Formeister at 7:03 P.M. Commissioners in attendance were Dan Fraro, Sydney Flowers, Lise Wood, Candace Aleks, and new member Shane Manning (Zoning Commission rep). Joanna Shapiro, Town of Somers Wetlands Agent, was also present. Chairman Joan Formeister seated Lise Wood for Drew Kukucka.

II. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Discussion/Possible Decision Application #789:** 15 Sokol Road. Clearing within Upland Review Area, associated with the construction of a new house. Glenn Hastie.

Joanna Shapiro heard from the two consultants, Mike Mocko and Mike Smith, neither were able to be here tonight. The owners cleared the land to the stream, but none of the plans included building in the wetland or upland review area. They will not do any more clearing near the wetland and will allow the vegetation to regrow. May need to include a couple of permanent markers to indicate where the wetland is for future reference.

Candace Aleks made a motion to approve application #789 (15 Sokol Road) clearing within the upland review area, associated with the construction of a new house with the exception that no more clearing be done in the upland review area/wetland, the vegetation is allowed to regrow in that area, and a permanent marker is placed to indicate where the delineation starts (Joanna Shapiro will inform consultants) based on the following:

- The Commission finds that the Applicant has submitted all necessary application materials pursuant to Section 211-7 of the Wetlands Regulations, including but not limited to Section 211-7(E)(5), “Alternatives considered and rejected.”
- The Commission did not find the proposed activities “significant.”
- The Commission finds that the criteria set forth in Section 211-10B have been met by the Applicant.

Lise Wood seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

- b. Discussion/Possible Decision Application #790:** 349 Mountain Road. Hydro-raking to control aquatic vegetation. SOLitude Lake Management.

Tabling discussion upon SOLitude Lake Management’s request. The applicant needs more time to prepare. No one was present at the meeting to discuss this. Joan Formeister provided a synopsis of the last meeting to Sydney Flowers and Shane Manning, who were absent at the April 2023 meeting. When this topic was presented at that meeting, a person was in attendance who was not in favor of hydro-raking the pond. The Commission decided more information would need to be presented for the Commission to decide on the application.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Application #791:** 46 Harvest Hill Drive. Construction of an in-ground swimming pool in the Upland Review Area. Amber Wilhelm, Vernon Poolman.

Keith Rivers, the property owner, was in attendance. No one from Vernon Poolman was there. A sketch of the plan was emailed to Joanna Shapiro regarding the proposed grading, stockpile, silt fence, pool site, etc. will be placed. Joanna Shapiro informed Keith Rivers that we couldn't approve it tonight but could review it and answer any questions. Joanna Shapiro will visit the site soon. Mr. Rivers indicated that no trees would need to be removed, and the pool water would not need to be lowered, so there would not be any regular discharging of the pool water. Joanna Shapiro stated that the pool location would be 78' from the wetland, but grading and site work would extend closer. Joanna Shapiro informed Mr. Rivers to come prepared for the next meeting with more information about the slope material being used, the patio area, any planting, clearing, etc. Commission agreed that nothing looked concerning and that we could most likely approve at the next meeting if there are no significant changes to the current plan and more information is provided regarding the current plan. Joanna Shapiro informed Mr. Rivers that she would likely stop by to review the site next week.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

No audience in attendance.

V. STAFF REPORT

- a. 62 Franklin Woods Drive – crumbling foundation replacement, exempt from wetland permitting, but discussed erosion controls and will inspect.
- b. 52 Therese Drive, a few years ago installed above ground pool, and now want to install a deck, will likely approve administratively as a minimal impact permit.
- c. 343 Hall Hill Road minimum impact permit issued for a chicken coop.
- d. 349/359 Mountain Road adjacent properties, same owner, wants to put in timber trellis to lead up to one of the buildings, less than 100' from the small pond; will visit the site soon.
- e. 659 Hall Hill Road pool being proposed, a large portion of the pond on the property, back and forth with the company to get plans, most likely will come forward to Commission with an application.
- f. 120 Watchaug Road, plans to put in the new hanger near the landing strip, the plan submitted, tracking sediment across the road should be addressed; Joanna Shapiro asked them to put in a construction entrance and erosion control measures.
- g. Joanna Shapiro contacted the owner of the land where new culverts were installed on Watchaug Road; the landowner reported nothing was going on; Joanna Shapiro will look for more info (new mailbox was observed).
- h. Joan Formeister asked about the Commission's budget and if we have money earmarked for a town project. Boy Scouts had not yet come forward with a proposed project.

Lise Wood made a motion to accept the staff report. Dan Fraro seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lise Wood made a motion to add Discussion of Use of Conservation Funds to the agenda. Candace Aleks seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

VI. USE OF CONSERVATION FUNDS

Joan Formeister explained that Dr. Martin, the scientist doing water sample testing of the Scantic River, has been using much of her funds to pay for the testing. She would appreciate getting funding from the town to continue her testing, and ideally to add two more testing sites in Somers. The First Selectman has been in favor of funding this work, and \$1020 of Open Space funds will be made available to cover the costs of testing 4 sites season-long. Joan Formeister suggested using the Commission's Conservation funds to pay for testing 2 additional sites to narrow down where the pollution is coming from. Joanna Shapiro will check to find out what money we currently have in the Conservation budget.

Lise Wood made a motion to approve use of up to \$300 for Dr. Martin to add two additional water testing sites in Somers if Joanna Shapiro finds out we have the funds available. Candance Aleks seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

None

VIII. MINUTES APPROVAL: April 5, 2023

Lise Wood motioned to approve the minutes of April 05, 2023, as written. Dan Fraro seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Candace Aleks made a motion to adjourn the May 03, 2023, meeting. Lise Wood seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Commissioner Sydney Flowers, Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING