

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
December 16, 2015**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Byron Quinn, Cyndy Kozara, Al Alessi, Lea Kachadorian
MEMBERS ABSENT: Lynn Peterson, Bethany Powers, One Vacancy
OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Maggi, Jan Maggi, Michael Brands

I. OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Quinn opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

II. MINUTES

The minutes of November 18, 2015 were approved as submitted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. T-4623-15 Paul & Jan Maggi

Application is for Conditional Use and Wetland Review approval to replace existing 1771 sq. ft. garage with 3400 sq. ft. garage and to change driveway within Conservation Overlay Zone. The property is located at 938 South Road and is zoned Residential Five Acre / Wetland.

Mr. Maggi presented the application.

The CC reviewed a site plan, renderings and orthophoto map of the proposed use. The application was continued at the November 18th meeting to allow the applicant time to reduce impervious surfaces and to create more separation from the wetland.

Mr. Maggi submitted four new items: a list of changes, a site plan, an elevation of proposed garage and a floor plan of proposed garage.

All six CC members attended a site visit with the applicant and the Town Planner prior to the meeting.

The length of the new garage design is reduced by 4'. The building is moved 4' north away from the wetland compared to the original submittal. The footprint is reduced from 1800 sf to 1672 sf, an approximately 7% reduction.

The driveway is curved slightly towards the north to increase the distance from the wetland from 3' to 10'. The curve also adds length to the driveway helping to reduce the overall grade. The current driveway has a 14% grade, the owner prefers 10%. The curved portion of the driveway closest to the wetland would be inclined towards the north to shed storm water away from the wetland.

The parking area at the top of the driveway in front of the proposed garage has been reduced by 450'. This was accomplished by eliminating the portion originally placed due south of proposed garage.

The parking lot area has been reduced 4' in elevation to bring it equal with the elevation of the front lawn leading to the front door of the home. The garage would be built into the hillside, the rear elevation would be approximately 8' feet lower than the current elevation. Two trees would be removed: a +30 year old maple within the proposed foot print and an older pine directly south of proposed structure.

The owners wish to match the stone on the proposed garage with that of the home.

The old barn would be removed.

Ms. Kozara asked how rain water from the barn roof would be handled as the proposed roof is approximately 2.5 times larger than the existing roof. The area of the roof increase yet there is less ground surface for natural absorption purposes.

Mr. Maggi noted perimeter drains would be used on the rear elevation and roof gutters would be used on the front to gather roof water to pipe it away towards the wetland. He envisioned an underground perforated pipe that would exit directly into the wetland.

Mr. Alessi noted gutters are not typically used in Vermont due to snow load and icing issues.

Mr. Maggi stated the house does have gutters and he's never noticed any issues.

The main issue of the new design is that it creates much more impervious area and significantly reduces the pervious areas. The design creates more stormwater runoff and less area for it to be absorbed. In a normal situation, the 100' foot wetland buffer is left undisturbed which in turn allows adequate area for storm water absorption within the natural vegetation of the buffer. However, this is a previously developed site with grandfathered structures and asphalted areas that are placed well within the 100' buffer area.

Mr. Maggi stated the stream along the south boundary is constantly running as water comes out the overflow pipe of the pond.

Mr. Maggi has building experience in Connecticut and New Hampshire and prefers to have all storm water from the barn and asphalted areas run directly into the wetland.

The Town Planner suggested placement of rain gardens along the south side of the barn.

This would create a waiting area and filtration for storm water overflow before it enters the nearby wetland. There are many different kinds of rain gardens available. Rain gardens are generally constructed with a narrow profile and are somewhat deep. Thus they work well in constricted areas. The exact amount of contained water depends on the amount of impervious surface times the quantity of rainfall.

Mr. Alessi stated a rain garden has been constructed at the base of the Village snow dump in the East End of the Village. This would be a good example to look into as it has well established vegetation. Vegetation is also important for filtering and water retention purposes as well as aesthetics.

Ms. Kozara stated a google search of rain gardens would be beneficial. The technology is also known as LID (Low Impact Development).

Mr. Maggi felt a bed of stones placed where the outlet pipe ends would break up water flow before it hits the wetland.

The previous discussion was about the proposed garage roof storm water. Of larger concern is the storm water flow from the asphalted areas. An 11' wide driveway and a 40' x 60' parking lot are proposed.

Mr. Maggi stated there is no culvert at the bottom of the driveway where it connects with Route 106.

This could become an issue if storm water is directed along the north edge of the driveway. The combined driveway and parking lot overflow could cause an impact at the bottom of the driveway.

It was suggested that the driveway edge be lined with a bed of small stones to both filter and slow the flow of stormwater.

Mr. Maggi noted the intent is to have a multi-directional sheet flow from the 40' x 60' asphalted parking area. The site is fairly steep, so all surface water would eventually run down the hill.

The Town planner mentioned it is highly probable that salt would be used during the winter months. An asphalt surface has a higher tendency to ice up when compared to other potential surfaces. With the driveway being located close to the wetland area this is a concern.

The CC suggested a hard pack surface be used. The rougher surface would not sheet flow as would an asphalt surface. Salt application during the winter is not required for hard pack. The surface has more natural grip than asphalt especially during winter months.

Mr. Maggi does not trust the hard pack material, feeling it is not sufficiently durable. Ms. Maggi does not want a muddy driveway.

Chair Quinn read an email from Lynn Peterson who was unable to attend tonight's meeting. In opposing the current proposal, Mr. Peterson noted the CC's charge is to protect the wetlands and the current plan does not go far enough to protect the wetlands.

The Town Planner asked how many times a year would the recreational trailer be used.

Mr. Maggi responded three to four times a year during the warmer months.

The Town Planner suggested placing the trailer bay on the south end of the garage. With the minimal use noted, the area directly in front of the bay could be converted to a lawn over gravel concept. This would significantly reduce the amount of asphalt and would create additional pervious surface for enhanced natural drainage.

The lawn over gravel concept is utilized on an overflow parking lot at the Billings Farm and Museum. The overflow lot is used at times of peak use, mainly foliage season and other special events. The surface has been in place for more than ten years without degradation. Six to eight inches of gravel is placed with an inch or two of soil on top which is then planted with grass seed. Allow the grass time to mature and develop a strong root system. As the use is intermittent at best, the grass surface would maintain while the gravel understructure serves to support the vehicle weight.

Mr. Maggi noted the Town Planner's suggestion would require a new design. He likes the current look of the proposed garage.

Another suggestion is to create a hammer head cul-de-sac or "T" at the top of the driveway. This could reduce the amount of asphalt needed.

After a lengthy discussion, the CC recommended that the site plan be redesigned to reduce the amount of impervious surface and that a drainage system be designed that adequately addresses storm water runoff.

The application was continued to the next CC meeting which is scheduled for January 20, 2016.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Dugan Wetland Delineation

The Town Planner showed the CC a partial delineation of the Dugan wetlands for their Gabert Road property. Last month, an application to build a pond in the wetland buffer was reviewed. At the time the developer asked if they could build within the 100' wetland buffer. Their forester raised the issue that the wetlands as shown on the Town's Critical Areas map may not be correct. The CC suggested that the area be delineated by a professional to map the true location of the wetland.

The Dugans hired Gilman and Briggs, recognized for their wetland expertise, to look at the area. The experts focused on the area proposed for the new house location. Gilman and Briggs went to the site and mapped the wetland area to be approximately a 100' north of that found on the Town's Critical Areas map.

The Town Planner has requested a signed letter and map from Gilman and Briggs. This would make the delineation official. The CC agreed that once the official delineation is confirmed there is no need to review the project if built more than a 100' beyond the wetland boundary.

V. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2016.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Submitted by,

Michael Brands, AICP
Town Planner