

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
DRAFT MINUTES  
June 15, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Byron Quinn, Al Alessi, Lynn Peterson, Lea Kachadorian  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lina Hristova, Cyndy Kozara, Bethany Powers  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Craig Jewitt, Phil Swanson, Mary MacVey, Michael Brands

**I. OPENING OF MEETING**

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

**II. MINUTES**

The minutes of May 18, 2016 were approved as submitted.

**III. APPLICATIONS**

**A. T-4666-16 Village of Woodstock**

The application is for Conditional Use Approval to create a snow dump in wetland buffer. The property is located at Maxham Meadow Way and is zoned Community / Conservation District.

Mr. Swanson, Town/Village Manager, and Mr. Jewitt, engineer, presented the application.

The Conservation Commission reviewed numerous site plans and the March 22, 2016 State Wetland permit. Also reviewed was the multi-paged application to the State.

A site visit was conducted prior to the meeting. The property boundary was walked. The wetland area was identified. The areas of proposed use and the location of the driveway were noted.

The Village proposes to relocate its snow dump site from the current location along the river to the proposed site on Maxham Meadow Way. The snow pile comes to within 20' of the river at its current location. The proposed snow dump would be approximately 1000' from the river.

The Village has a purchase-and-sale agreement to buy 2.06 acres from the Woodstock

Resort Corporation. In addition, an easement area of 200' long ,+/- 70' wide is included for driveway access off of Maxham Meadow Way.

The wetland was delineated by Zapata Courage, State District Wetlands Ecologist. The wetland is approximately centered on 2.06 acre site. The State declared the wetland to be a Class II wetland due to the number of contiguous wetlands. The Town has the wetland areas mapped as Class III wetlands, identified by Arrowwood Consultants in 2002.

The State has a 50' buffer area from wetland. The Town's wetland buffer is a 100' area.

The wetland is a forested seep wetland (predominantly a hill side toe seep). The ground is spongy but rarely holds water. Due to the topographic contours, water would drain to the west. This is an agricultural field, currently planted with corn.

The snow would be dumped in three different locations as needed.

The first location is an area 100' south of the existing gate to the WRC fields. There is no limit as to how high the snow can be piled in this area. The site is located more than 50' from the designated wetland yet within the 100' buffer area. This site should be adequate for a normal year's worth of snow and would be filled before the other two sites are utilized.

At the point on Maxham Meadow Way where the trucks would unload their snow, there is a ten foot drop over a steep bank. The area of snow deposit would be 100' long, 60' wide on its narrowest side and 120' at the widest point.

The second area would be at the "T" turnaround on the north end of the proposed driveway. Snow in this area would not be piled higher than three feet. This site is located more than 50' but less than 100' from the wetland.

The third area would be to fill in the driveway from north to south starting at the "T". Snow in this area would not be piled higher than three feet. Portions of this site would be within the 50' buffer. It would be year of above-normal snow fall for this area to be used.

A 3' tall silt fence would be placed along the west and south sides of the wetland to prevent erosion from entering the wetland. The fence would be placed 10' outside of the wetland before snowfall and removed once the snow has melted. The applicant hopes to place a series of 4" x 4" posts permanently to make it easier to place the fabric fence every year.

All snow would melt naturally. No accelerates would be used.

The only trees to be removed from the property would be those located directly south of the gate for a length of +/- 200'. The trees in this area are predominantly box elder.

The entire east side of the property is lined with mature trees and shrubs. The wetland

has a combination of trees, shrubs and grasses. An old barn foundation is located in the center of the wetland. The barn had been removed in the 1960s.

Nine trees would be planted at the northwest end of the parcel. These would be a mix of maple and pine. They are meant to provide screening as this is the most open side of the parcel.

Maxham Meadow Way would be paved from Route 4 to the snow dump entrance. The road would not be enlarged. Most truck traffic would be during the early morning hours. Up to eight dump trucks are utilized per snow removal event.

The 18' wide driveway into the snow dump area would be hardbacked. The entrance off of Maxham Meadow Way would require a small amount of fill. There would be two culverts placed along the driveway. Approximately 180' of the driveway would be within the 50' buffer. An additional 240' of driveway would be located within the 100' buffer.

There would be a monitoring well dug five feet below the water table. The site will be monitored for a three year period. The closest residence is located 800' east of the site with water provided by Woodstock Aqueduct. The closest well is located 1600' to the northeast along Route 4 East.

Numerous soil samples were taken on-site to aid the design process. The buffer area has a strong sand and gravel component, measuring at least ten feet deep.

At the end of each season, the area would be cleaned up and maintenance performed where necessary. The site would not be used until the next snow season.

The current snow dump site has had numerous soil and residue tests performed over the years. A list of the residue materials was viewed by the CC. The list serves as a base line for monitoring. Site monitoring is also one of the conditions of sale, as the seller owns the abutting agricultural fields .

Mr. Jewitt stated that once approved this would be the only designed snow dump in the State of Vermont.

The CC reviewed Section 403 B.2. Wetlands, Water Quality & Aquatic Habitat Protection Area with the applicant.

The applicant has no other practical location on their property except for the areas proposed. All work would be done outside of the delineated wetland.

Work proposed within the buffer areas would prohibit stormwater, sediment or other forms of erosion from entering the wetland and would not create an undue impact on fish or wildlife.

There would be no work done within the wetland area.

**After further discussion, Mr. Peterson with a second by Ms. Kachadorian moved to approve the application as presented. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.**

**B. T-4671-16 Julie Levin**

The application is for Conditional Use Approval to excavate 7600 square feet of land after the fact and to remedy the violation. The property is located at 470 Noah Wood Road and is zoned Residential Five Acre / Conservation District.

The applicant was not present.

The Town Planner showed the CC recent photographs and the engineer's site plan of the property.

The owner had excavation work done on the south side of the Noah Wood Road. Material, stone and soil, was transported to the owner's home site. The owner had the soil placed on the top of an existing lawn to within five feet of the stream bank. This is a violation of the 50' riparian buffer, which is measured from the top of the bank.

The current application is to seek a remedy to the work already accomplished. The owner's intent is to smooth over the soil, add a 3-4" of topsoil, grass seed and mulch to recreate the lawn.

The CC questioned the steepness of the yard and whether adding material to the yard would negatively impact the stream. The lowest point of excavation is 20' below the highest point which is 100' away. This appears to be very steep.

The hearing was continued to the July 20, 2016 meeting.

The CC discussed the excavation work proposed for the south side of Noah Wood Road. Apparently the owner wishes to remove trees and a stone wall on the curve. A hearing is being scheduled by the Select Board. After discussion, the CC expressed concern with the removal of mature trees along the road side and the potential removal of the historic stone wall. They asked that the Town Planner to send a memo to the Select Board noting these concerns.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Town Plan Update**

The Town Planner reviewed the Flood Resiliency Chapter with the CC. A copy had been distributed at the last CC meeting. At the Planning Commission public hearing on June 9, 2016, a small number of minor edits were approved to correct grammar and for clarification purposes. The Town Select Board and the Village Board of Trustees have scheduled joint hearings to be held at 7:00 pm on July 12 & 19, 2016.

The Town Planner mentioned the State recently passed a new law that will require a

section in town plans to discuss forest fragmentation and its impact on wildlife habitat. The mandate requires any plan adopted after July 1, 2018 to include this information.

**B. Four Corners Habitat Area**

Mr. Peterson noted at a meeting with Vermont Coverts, a wildlife habitat group, he mentioned the Four Corners Habitat Area proposal. He was surprised that the group appeared reluctant to take an advocacy position on the issue. He proposed that Coverts speak with the Mecawee Club in Bridgewater to move forward with the intent to provide a wildlife corridor. The club recently held a fish demonstration day meant to attract new members and should be interested in the corridor proposal.

At the same meeting, Pat Bartlett, forester, mentioned there is a new fungus attacking the ash trees in the Northeast, the yellow ash fungus. This, in addition to the worries of the ash borer infestation, show cause for concern.

**V. OTHER BUSINESS - None**

**VI. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2016.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Submitted by:

Michael Brands, AICP  
Town Planner