

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 20, 2018**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Byron Quinn, Al Alessi, Lynn Peterson
MEMBERS ABSENT: Lea Kachadorian, Cyndy Kozara, Bo Gibbs, Bethany Powers
OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Pierce, Michael Brands

I. OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Quinn opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

II. MINUTES

The May 16, 2018 minutes were approved as submitted.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. V-3377-18 Sustainable Woodstock/Village of Woodstock

The application is for Site Plan Review Approval to place an irrigation pump house and control. The property is located at Maxham Meadow Way and zoned Community.

Mr. Pierce, representing Sustainable Woodstock, presented the application.

The CC reviewed numerous maps and renderings of the proposed pump house.

Sustainable Woodstock is developing a public park on the old snow dump property located on the river in the East End. To enhance and promote vegetative growth on the reclaimed land, an irrigation system is required. Hundreds of plants, trees and shrubs have been planted over the past year. The plants are necessary to retain and build up existing soil. Trees and shrubs have been placed along the edge of the river to retain the river bank.

Mr. Pierce described the proposed irrigation system. Three rows of irrigation pipe would be placed underground and parallel to the river in the flat area. A 24 volt electric pump will be set up in a small 3' x 3' wooden pump house at the base of the hill on the west end of the property. It would be connected to the electric boxes built for the electric car chargers placed at the top of the hill. A two inch line would run from the pump underground to the riverbank and then above ground over rock into the river.

The pump house would be placed just outside of the floodplain but within the 100' riparian buffer.

The State approved that water would be allowed to be taken from the river.

The pump would operate early in the morning at dawn, which is the best time to water plants.

The overall intent is to improve vegetation, which fits well with the riparian buffer goals.

After discussion, the CC agreed the requested use would be compatible with the riparian buffer regulations.

Chair Quinn recommended that drip lines be used instead of irrigation sprinklers as the drip line flows water directly to the plant with little waste thus decreasing overall water use and energy.

B. Sequestered Carbon via Forestry

Mr. Peterson gave an update on the Sequestered Carbon talk held this past weekend at the Billing Marsh National Park. Vermont is way behind other states in supporting carbon sequestration. Vermont as a small northeast state has a problem with increased parcelization, whereby large tracks of land (especially forests) are being subdivided. This makes it difficult to retain forest in a large enough mass to perform well as a carbon storage facility.

In California there are two markets for sequestered carbon. One is a compliance market that is set by State regulations on larger businesses. The fees that are collected are sown back into forest and forest related purposes. A second market is a voluntary one whereby individuals purchase carbon storage options as the right thing to do. This money is also geared towards retention of forested areas.

Although Vermont is behind other states, \$7,000,000 was made from carbon sequestration within the state. The key is to educate forest owners of this opportunity. A State regulation similar to California's would help the effort. The benefits of large forests is well documented, from restricting erosion, improving water quality and controlling water runoff.

Mr. Peterson would love to find large forest owners in the Upper Valley area.

The Town Planner suggested a review of the Lister's office as they have records of all current use landowners. The grand list can be used to find large tracts as well. Vermont Atlas provides maps and an abundant source of State information that could be used to find large landowners. The State Forester should be contacted to gage the State's take on the issue.

C. Riparian Updates

The Town Planner gave an update on numerous riparian issues.

The two prominent cases from last year were the Pearson and the Farmhouse Pottery removal of vegetation from within the 100' riparian buffer. In the case of Farmhouse Pottery, the vegetation was replanted last fall and is growing very well this spring. The Pearsons have not yet planted the vegetation, the permit indicates the replanting was due this spring.

Two applications have been filed and will be reviewed at the July 18 CC meeting. The first is filed by the Billing Farm and Museum to expand two parking lots located on the north side of Old River Road. The Gulf Stream alongside by parking lots. The owners wish to remove trees and other vegetation. The second application is on Hartland Hill Road, the owner wishes to place a small shed next to the road. The entire property is located within the wetland and stream riparian buffers. If members have time before the July 18 CC meeting, they should drive by both sites to get a better understanding of the proposed request.

An owner on Route 106 has removed a number of dead trees and other vegetation along the Kedron Brook. A letter has been sent and all work has stopped. Owner wishes to have access to the brook. Discussion with the owner is underway, with future application likely.

B. Village Zoning Update

Due to the fact that the Planning Commission was unable to discuss the Village Zoning rewrite at their last meeting, there is no update.

V. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for July 18, 2018.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Michael Brands, AICP
Town Planner