

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes
January 15, 2020
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Alessi, Cyndy Kozara, Howard Krum, Lynn Peterson, Bethany Powers
MEMBERS ABSENT: Byron Quinn, Bo Gibbs
OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Frizzell, Peter Vollers, Jeremy Delinsky, Jack Rossi, George Wohlgemuth, Patricia Campbell, Michael Caduto, Michael Brands

I. OPENING OF MEETING

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

II. MINUTES

The minutes of November 20, 2019 were approved as submitted.

III. APPLICATIONS

A. T-4987-19 Paul & Dionne Palandjian

The application is for Conditional Use approval to perform grading and planting in a buffer zone. The property is located at 1959 Cox District Road and zoned Residential Five Acre / Conservation.

Mr. Frizzell, contractor, and Mr. Vollers, attorney, presented the application.

The CC reviewed photographs, a site plan and a map of the stream area.

The applicant is requesting a slight regrading of the stream bank just east of the Cox District Road bridge. The area would measure 45' long and 25' from water's edge.

Soil would be added to smooth over the rough bank.

Numerous wetland plants would be added, mainly dogwood.

The area is currently mowed by weed wacker and has numerous river stones exposed.

The excavation would stop just short of a stormwater pipe that serves the parking area and buildings further north. The CC agreed the proposed work would improve the

riparian buffer by enhancing the river side vegetation. It would also significantly reduce the continual erosion visible in this area.

After discussion, Mr. Peterson motioned with a second by Ms. Kozara to recommend approval of the application as presented. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

B. V-3512-19 Jeremy & Sherrie Delinsky

The application is for Conditional Use approval to construct 15' x 30' swimming pool, field stone wall, patio, & install native plantings within the buffer zone. The property is located at 15 Hathorn Hill Road Ext. and zoned Residential Low Density / Conservation.

Mr. Delinsky, Mr. Rossi, landscape architect and Mr. Wohlgemuth, landscaper, presented the application.

The CC reviewed numerous renderings, photographs, a site plan and a map of the wetland area.

At the last informal meeting in November, two options were presented. The CC preferred the option with the pool outside of the 50' wetland buffer. The applicant has had numerous informal meetings in 2019 with the CC in an effort to correctly site the pool.

This is the formal application.

State wetland representative, Rebecca Chalmers, has visited the site and confirmed the planned activity. It was noted the application is not covered by State wetland regulations as the pool would be built outside of the 50' buffer area.

During the informal meetings, the proposed in-ground swimming pool size was reduced to 15' x 30'. A stone patio would be placed between home and pool, and along the west (away from wetland) side of the pool.

There would be a series of dry laid stone retaining walls stepped into the hillside. All would be less than 3' tall.

The CC reviewed a list of proposed wetland plants. The plants would be added from the edge of the pool to the pond to enhance current wetland vegetation.

A number of trees would be removed to provide access for equipment and construction. They are marked with "x" on the site map.

An additional request, not part of application is to remove 12 trees that shade the pool but not the pond. The list includes 5 hemlock, 3 maples, 3 birch, and 1 ash.

Three of the trees are located within the 50' wetland buffer, the rest are in the 100' buffer.

Construction of the pool will require a good deal of blasting due to presence of ledge.

Numerous shrubs would be planted to replace the removed trees. The intent is to plant shrubs with a limited height to reduce potential shading of the pool.

Photographs on the owner's laptop show that a number of the subject trees have been heavily pruned to increase views of the pond without killing the trees.

Neighbor Patricia Campbell of 13 Hathorn Hill Extension stated support for the pool project. She lives on the south side of the pond. She asked that the narrow road be kept clear of vehicles during construction.

Ms. Kozara noted concerns with the removal of the larger trees.

Mr. Wohlgemuth stated many of the proposed shrubs would grow to be 12' high.

Mr. Rossi noted over 500 plants are being added to the wetland areas.

The CC agreed the additional wetland plantings would be a significant improvement to the buffer area.

After discussion, Ms. Powers motioned with a second by Ms. Kozara to recommend approval as presented. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.

C. T-4990-19 Matt Stover

The application is for Conditional Use approval to construct driveway, building envelope & create amphibian corridor in buffer zone. The property is located at 0 Carleton Hill Road and zoned Residential Five Acre / Conservation.

Mr. Stover presented the application.

The CC reviewed numerous site plans and a map of the wetland area.

Ms. Powers asked to abstain from the vote as she is a neighbor.

Mr. Stover showed a PowerPoint presentation of the wetland areas and the proposed home site and driveway.

State Wetland official, Rebecca Chalmers visited the site. A wetland application is pending with decision expected shortly. Only the driveway proposal is within the State's 50' buffer area.

An amphibian corridor review is required as there are additional wetlands and vernal pool areas within 1500' of the main wetland.

A septic site for a 4 bedroom home was approved by the State.

The wetlands were delineated by Krickit McKuster.

The State regulates all development within the 50' buffer. The Town requires a 100' buffer.

The driveway entrance was reviewed and approved by the Town Highway superintendent. The point of access off of Carlton Road was chosen as it has the best line of sight. The driveway would cross the narrowest portion of the wetland located along the road.

Two amphibian corridors were shown. One runs along the road and one is located south east of the driveway. Two wetlands form a "V" with the point entering the reservoir. A narrow portion of the middle of the "V" is outside of the 100' buffer area.

The brook along the road is small. Only 20 acres drain into the brook. Occasionally in the summer, the brook runs dry.

The pond is a +100 year old man made reservoir created to serve the Village of Woodstock with potable water. Historic photos of the dam construction were shown.

Mr. Stover wishes to place a home anywhere within the 100' buffer but outside of the 50' state buffer. The site plan included two potential sites.

An option to construct a bridge over the wetland was considered but dropped due to high cost of construction.

A fill option including a large 60' long 43" wide culvert for water passage was designed. The option would require a large amount of soil to span the gap which measures 90' long, 6' high and 25' wide.

The Town Planner noted that two absent members, Ms. Gibbs and Mr. Quinn, had talked to him concerning the project.

Mr. Quinn, who had walked the site, felt a bridge would have significantly less impact on the wetland than the proposed fill option, as only the support posts would be in the ground.

Ms. Gibbs suggested waiting for the State wetland permit before making any local decision.

The Town Planner stated the site is unique and merits a site visit to better understand the proposal. There are numerous wetlands and vernal pools in the vicinity.

After additional discussion, the CC agreed a site visit was merited and voted to continue the application to the February meeting. The Town Planner was asked to schedule a Friday noon hour site visit before the next meeting.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Kedron Brook Fish Project

Mr. Caduto has met with the Woodstock Resort Corporation personnel. The Kedron Brook flows through the middle of the inn's golf course. The inn was very favorable to the proposal to enhance the fish flow via removal of a dam located near the Sports Center on the south end of the course. A concept is to place tall boards along the brook to facilitate fish movement by increasing the depth of the water. The boards would be removed seasonally each Fall to avoid the freeze.

An alternate plan would be to add stones in the brook to create a stepped situation for fish to navigate the grade change created by the dam removal.

Another interesting concept is to create a sub-level man made cistern. This would be placed below the brook bed to allow additional water supply for fish survival during low water periods.

Just north of the Central Street bridge, a short dam near the Primrose Shop could be easily rebuilt with the addition of stones to create a series of steps to enhance fish navigation.

Mr. Caduto added a discussion of a potential stormwater control project on the west edge of the East End Park. The ANR State engineers strongly support a stormwater control project in this location. The area is inundated with storm water coming off of Mt. Peg that flows directly into the Ottauquechee River. The project could eliminate 15 tons of sediment and numerous negative nutrients from entering the river. A meeting with the Town Manager and ANR engineers is scheduled this Friday.

B. Carbon Sequestration

Mr. Caduto noted the Farm and Wilderness Center has made a commitment to manage their 4500 acre forest for carbon storage. A foundation is interested in helping found the project. The center abuts the Coolidge Forest areas, which could add State Forestry interests as well.

C. Plastic Bag Ban

Sustainable Woodstock is assembling an information sheet to be sent to all businesses. The State law mandating reusable bags becomes effective July 1st. A plan is underway to have reusable bags available in all stores that need them. Mr. Caduto is working with local woodworkers to create a viable stand to store the bags. One could take a bag and replace it at a later date or at a different location.

Mr. Caduto spoke with Pete Ramsfell at the Mac's Market Rutland headquarters. The store is prepared to do whatever the law requires.

The Town of Brattleboro via a local law has been using the recycled bags on racks system for the past year. The experience has been positive.

Chair Alessi offered the use a CC meeting as a kickoff event for the recycled bags. Mr. Caduto could do the publicity. The April 15th meeting would be best.

An additional element, that of composting food waste, was discussed. Ham Gillett of the Upper Valley Solid Waste District would be a good person to talk to. He could be invited to the April meeting as well.

D. River Loop Trail

Mr. Caduto gave an update on the River Loop Trail. The Economic Development Committee strongly supports the trail. The group has the strong support of the Woodstock Resort Corporation which owns most of the trail property. The trail will require a riparian review as it is meant to follow along and to have points of access to the river.

V. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2020.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Michael Brands, AICP
Town Planner