

**WOODSTOCK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL
31 THE GREEN
May 20, 2020**

APPROVED MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Alessi, Byron Quinn, Cyndy Kozara, Bethany Powers, Bo Gibbs
MEMBERS ABSENT: Howard Krum, Lynn Peterson
OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Kerbin, Dwight Doton, Neal Leitner, Randy Paxton**

I. OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Alessi called the meeting open at 7:00 p.m.

II. MINUTES

The approval of the minutes from the February 19, 2020 meeting as continued to the next meeting to allow time for members to review the minutes.

III. APPLICATIONS

A. T-4990-19 Matt Stover

The hearing was continued from the February 19, 2020 meeting since the prior meeting primarily focused on the driveway. The application is for Conditional Use approval to construct a driveway, building envelope & create amphibian corridor in buffer zone. The property is located at 0 Carleton Hill Road and zoned Residential Five Acre / Conservation. Dwight Doton presented the application. Al Alessi noted that the property has changed hands recently. Town planner Neal Leitner shared the revised plans that were submitted. The revised plans have a new house envelope in a location further north from the edge of the driveway to take advantage of the view of the reservoir. The previously submitted plans were compared to the newest set of plans. A discussion ensued about the location of the house and the fact that it still encroaches on the 100' wetland buffer. Dwight Doton mentioned that the new house location has been staked out and described where the deck and house would be located. He also described the septic location and noted that it is outside of the wetland buffer. Al Alessi asked if there would be a walkway from the driveway to the house that would remain outside of it. Dwight confirmed there would be a walkway to the house from the end of the driveway. He described where the reservoir and wetlands are in relation to the house envelope. Bo Gibbs inquired about a wetland marker on the site plan. Dwight responded that the W indicated the 50 foot setback line from the wetlands. Bo Gibbs clarified that the blue outline is the proposed driveway. Cyndy Kozara stated that she's concerned about the new location of the home.

Dwight explained that the new location does not really encroach on wetland buffers anymore than the previous location. The town planner explained that either location encroaches on the 100' wetland setback. Al Alessi and Cyndy Kozara thought that a new site visit may be necessary to analyze the new location. Al Alessi asked if there is any

structural reason for siting the house in the new location. Dwight Doton responded that the site lends itself to the proposed location better than the previous. Al Alessi confirmed that there is nothing structural preventing the house from being sited in the previous location. Dwight responded that there could be ledge in the previous location that would require blasting. Al Alessi said that the Conservation Commission should revisit the site. Dwight restated that the driveway and proposed house site are all staked out for them to see. Bo Gibbs asked why the application is under Stover, not Standish, the new owner. Dwight said that if it continued to the next meeting then it can be re-applied for under Standish. Al Alessi agreed that it should be under Standish. Bo Gibbs asked Al Alessi if they can have a special meeting at the site if they can get a quorum to vote on the application, since it has been continued so many times. Al Alessi said he's not closed to the idea of having a special meeting but was not aware of whether it was legal. The town planner stated that it was legal, the special meeting just has to be legally noticed. Dwight Doton asked if the meeting item could be continued to the site. Al Alessi said that practice is from the 1970s and 1980s, so was not sure if that is possible. He also noted that three people are not in attendance, so three people on the board could not attend a continued item. He thought it was best then to continue it to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Cyndy Kozara asked the town planner when it would be possible for the Commission to meet in person again. The town planner stated that it may be possible later in the summer since it is possible to social distance in the town hall conference room. Cyndy Kozara mentioned that perhaps the meeting should be continued to the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Commission discussed scheduling to visit the site in person. Dwight Doton stated he can meet anybody at the site if they want. After discussing scheduling conflicts, the Commission decided to try to visit as soon as possible, either together, in pairs or individually. Al Alessi said after everyone viewed the property, they could discuss further.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Carbon Storage Update: Mr. Alessi said Lynn Peterson usually covers the update and since he's not in attendance, it will be continued.

B. Plastic Bag Ban: The town planner stated that he spoke with Michael Caduto from Sustainable Woodstock about the plastic bag update. Michael wished to convey to the Commission that plans have been put on hold due to the Coronavirus and public health concerns over reusable bags.

A. River Loop Trail

Mr. Weschler, former EDC member presented a review of the proposed 3-mile walking path along the Ottauquechee River. A map of the project was presented via Zoom. The trail starts and ends at the East End Park where users could park their vehicles. The map has riparian areas, wetlands, vernal pools, flood hazard areas and trail location. The trail covers a large area consisting of multiple parcels in both the Town and Village. There is a total of six landowners involved: Town of Woodstock, Village of Woodstock, Woodstock Resort Corporation, Sunset Farms Condominium Association, and JBW partnership. The design of the path was funded by a State Planning Grant. The construction of the path would be paid for by the Economic Development Commission. The fields are now used for hay harvest only. Before, corn and soybeans had been the main crops. Al Alessi described his walk on the proposed trail with Rebecca Chalmers from the Agency of Natural Resources the day before as she surveyed the wetlands along the proposed trail. He summarized her findings, in which she CC found that the potential impacts to both the riparian 100' buffer

and the wetland and vernal pool areas would be minimal even with the two proposed boardwalk style crossings over two small sections of wetland. He mentioned that her only concern was about a small wetland next to the rail trail, which would be utilized as well. The rail trail is about 5 feet above the wetland and shouldn't be an issue. A discussion ensued about where the wetlands are, what type of wetlands were identified and how the trail will be maintained. Tom Weschler stated the trail will be a mowed 4'-5' wide path, and no actual trail material will be used, which reduces the environmental impact. He reiterated that the path of the proposed trail was laid out to avoid wetlands. The trail along the river is totally within the 100' riparian buffer. He said the State responded that they would not need an Act 250 permit for the Riverwalk trail. A discussion of the aesthetics, trail path, old barn near the trail and the rail bed, the Commission agreed that the proposed trail would have minimal impact if any. Al Alessi asked the Commission if any of the members would like to make a motion to approve the Riverwalk Trail.

Bo Gibbs moved to accept the application as submitted and approve the application.
Byron Quin seconded the motion.

Motion passed 5-0

V. NEXT MEETING The next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2020.

VI. ADJOURNMENT Byron Quinn motioned to adjourn; it was seconded. Meeting adjourned 8:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Neal Leitner
Town Planner*