

WOODSTOCK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, June 17, 2020
7:00PM
MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL
DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Alessi, Byron Quinn, Cyndy Kozara, Bethany Powers, Bo Gibbs, Howard Krum, Lynn Peterson

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: Dorothy Standish, Neal Leitner, David Warren, Michael Malik

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Alessi called the remote meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 20, 2020 approved with one minor change; word edit under Section IV Old Business; from “she” to “he”.

III. CONTINUED APPLICATION(S)

- A. T-5008-20;** Dorothy Standish, owner; 0 Carlton Hill Road; Parcel #08.01.02.; Zone: R5/Conservation; To Construct New Home in Buffer and Remove 35 Trees to allow view to water.
- B.** The hearing was continued from the May 20, 2020 meeting. The application is for Conditional Use approval to construct new home in buffer and remove 35 trees to Allow View to Water.

Dwight Doton presented the application. 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 application was amended to include the cutting of 35 trees from the house envelope down the slope to the reservoir for a view of the water. The previously submitted plans were compared to the newest set of plans. A discussion ensued about the amendment to remove 35 trees on the steep slope from the proposed house site to the reservoir. Al Alessi was concerned about erosion. Other members agreed that the removal of trees on the slope would be detrimental to the condition of the property and potentially the condition of the reservoir should

erosion occur. Applicant Dorothy Standish stated that they would install erosion control measures to prevent erosion. Cyndy Kozara stated that she is also concerned about the impact of the tree removal. The members discussed treating the application separately, addressing the amendment first, and then the house location. Dorothy Standish stated that she would be fine with removing the amendment from the application.

Cyndy Kozara motioned to deny the amendment to remove 35 trees within buffer to allow view to reservoir as proposed. Lynn Peterson seconded the motion.

Motion passed 7-0.

Discussion moved to the proposed house location. Cyndy Kozara asked why the house has enlarged so much from the original approval. Commission members stated that the property was sold and changed hands. Property owner and applicant Dorothy Standish pointed out that the property has an approved 4-bedroom septic, and she only plans to build a 3-bedroom house. Commission members explained to the applicant that the septic approval is separate from a house approval. A discussion about the proposed house location ensued. Cyndy Kozara reinforced how unique the property is and how the trees help protect the reservoir. She stated that she would like the Commission to be alerted if tree removal on site becomes detrimental to the health of the site and the reservoir.

Chair Al Alessi asked the Commission for a motion on the house location.

Bo Gibbs motioned to approve the house site as proposed. Lynn Peterson seconded the motion. Cyndy Kozara moved to amend the motion to move the house site further back away from the reservoir from the proposed house site closer towards the original house site. Howard Krum seconded the amended motion. Bethany Powers stated she must abstain from the vote since she is a neighbor.

Amended Motion passed 4-2.

The chair asked for a motion to approve the original house site location made by the Stover application, which is located further back from the reservoir.

Motion passed 4-2.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

V.

- A. T-5032-20;** Audsley Property Holdings, LLC, owner; Shawn Audsley, applicant; 18 Mill Road; Parcel #31.02.36.; Zone: BS/LI; To Construct Addition within Buffer & Add 2 Apartments.

David Warren, applicant's agent, described the proposed addition to the barn as part of a barn renovation project. Part of the proposed barn addition would extend

into the 50-foot buffer from Vondell Brook by approximately 20 feet. The existing southwest corner of the existing barn currently extends 14-feet into the 50-foot buffer. The addition would add an additional 6-feet of buffer intrusion, reducing the buffer from the existing 36 feet to 30 feet. A discussion was held regarding the possibility of placing the addition elsewhere on the property that would not intrude into the buffer area. David Warren explained that it is not possible since the opposite side of the barn abuts the driveway, which is narrow and close to the property line. The shed addition would be used primarily for garage space. The trucks currently park in the gravel hard-pack parking lot, where the addition would extend into. Access to the garage bays from the parking lot is necessary. A point was made that the addition does not increase impervious surface since 100% of the addition would extend into existing gravel hard-pack surface.

The commission discussed the condition of Vondell Brook. Town Planner Neal Leitner displayed photos of the brook on the property. It meanders through the parking lot and the storage lot for Dead River Oil. Members recalled it overflowing during Hurricane Irene. The lack of vegetation was noted, other than a grassy berm, the brook is devoid of riparian landscaping. David Warren mentioned that he and the applicant, Shaun Audsley are open to the idea of planting some native riparian plantings along the brook on the property. The commission discussed the idea and thought that would be very beneficial. They also discussed a greater plan concept for Vondell Brook that could include volunteers planting riparian landscaped along the brook to improve the health of the brook altogether. The discussion moved back to the property and the request for the encroachment into the buffer, including the riparian planting to offset the encroachment. The commission concluded that the proposed addition would not be very detrimental especially if riparian plantings were installed along the brook.

A motion was made to approve the application as submitted with the condition that a native plant landscape plan along the riparian buffer to be submitted for Vondell Brook on the property. The motion was seconded.

Motion passed 6-1.

- B. T-5033-20;** Michael Malik, owner/applicant; 2394 Fletcher Hill Road; Parcel #32.03.25.; Zone: R5/FH; To Remove & Replace House in Flood Hazard Area.

Applicant and property owner Michael Malik introduced his proposed project.

The project is to replace the existing house which was built in the 1970's with a new house on the existing footprint. The new house would not exceed the existing footprint, it is in the floodway of the Ottaquechee River, so expansion beyond the existing footprint is not permitted per State flood regulations and per Town Zoning Regulations. The new house on the existing footprint would be raised two feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

The house is located approximately 80 feet from the top of bank. Anecdotally, the house did not flood during Hurricane Irene. Regardless, the house is in the floodway, so it must remain within the existing footprint. Michael Malik mentioned that Town Planner Neal Leitner visited the site and measured the footprint to ensure that it matched up with the footprint represented on the plans. Additionally, multiple accessory structures were removed when Michael Malik purchased the property. Those structures totaled approximately 700 square feet in area, effectively removing that from the floodplain.

Bo Gibbs visited the site and commended the applicant for the clean-up that has occurred on the property. Al Alessi called for a motion.

A motion to approve the application as submitted was made and seconded.

Motion passed 7-0.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Carbon Storage Update

Lynn Peterson updated the commission on carbon sequestration projects in Vermont during 2020. He discussed carbon sequestration properties in Shrewsbury and the Northeast Kingdom. The commission discussed public education projects that they might be able to assist with in order to get the word out about carbon sequestration.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.