

WOODSTOCK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 18, 2020
7:00PM
ZOOM MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bethany Powers

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Hervey, Brad Ruderman, Tim Stout, Nancy Sevchenko

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** 7:00 P.M.
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** October 21, 2020 minutes approved.
- III. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **T-5100-20;** John M. Connors Jr., owner; Craig Hervey, applicant; 1862 Long Hill Road; Parcel #11.02.06.; Zone: R5; To Construct Swimming Pool & Construction Road in Ridgeline & Wetlands Buffers.

Applicant's agent Craig Hervey and Brad Ruderman introduced the project to the board. The applicant proposes to build an 18' x 42' in-ground pool with a 10' x 14' ancillary pool house. The project will require the construction of a new 950' service road for construction purposes. After the construction is complete, the road will be seeded over and returned to a natural state.

A portion of the service road is 28' beyond the established State of Vermont wetland setback, but it will encroach on the Town of Woodstock's 100' wetland buffer by 22' for 120 linear feet. This road is proposed to be 10' wide and will be excavated at a depth of 12". Native soil will be replaced with permeable material. Upon project completion, the full length of the road will be returned to grass and original ground cover. The application requests a 22' variance from the town's 100' wetland buffer.

The pool and pool house fall partially along the lower edge of the 500' ridgeline zoning overlay boundary. The pool will be an in-ground pool, so at grade. The 10' x 14' pool house will be approximately 16' tall at the peak of the roof, and will not be visible from Long Hill Road, or any other road at any point. The applicant requests a *Finding of No Impact*, as per section 406(D)5 in the Town of Woodstock Zoning Regulations.

The board viewed the presentation presented to them and began with questions pertaining to the wetland buffer.

Al Alessi asked why the road must encroach into the buffer at all, when it appears that there is room for it to be installed outside of the 100' wetland buffer.

Craig Hervey responded that the road is proposed in that location since it cannot encroach into septic and leach field area, which is located just outside of the 100 foot buffer. Furthermore, an informal mowing path currently exists in the same location as the proposed road. No trees would be removed, and disturbance would be very minimal as the location provides natural grading, so additional grading would not be required. The applicant does not want to disturb much soil or do any grading, since the end-goal is to vegetate the road after construction so that it would not be evident after the pool is finished.

The town planner mentioned that he conducted a site view and walked the entire length of the proposed road, as well as walking other potential areas that would be outside of the 100' wetland buffer. He mentioned that the wetland is significantly lower by approximately 30 feet or so. So, while the 100 foot buffer would be encroached upon by 22 feet, the wetland itself does not appear to be impacted since it is so much lower than where the road would be. He also noted that the property is very remote, and the proposed pool and pool house are not visible from the road. The proposed pool and pool house are set back behind the existing house, and located towards the back of the property.

The board discussed the ridgeline zoning overlay. Bo Gibbs asked if the pool house would be seen even without leaves on the trees.

Craig Hervey responded that it is not visible. He said he could place a bright red 16' tall step ladder at the site of the pool house if they wanted to do a site visit. The maximum height would be 16', so if the board couldn't see the red ladder from any point along Long Hill Road, then the proposed pool house wouldn't be visible either.

Howard Krum asked if screening is an option.

Craig Hervey responded that the proposed pool and pool house are already on the edge of the woods and would be partially screened by the existing natural vegetation and trees. Hearing no further testimony, the board closed testimony.

The board deliberated and discussed the intent of the ridgeline zoning district, along with the intent of the wetland buffer requirement. After a brief discussion they generally agreed that the proposed application would not have an impact on either the wetland or the ridgeline.

Howard Krum mentioned that a condition limiting the height of the proposed poolhouse could be included. The board discussed it but decided that since it is just a 10' X 14' pool house, a condition was not necessary. A motion was made to approve the application as presented.

Motion passed 6-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted, Neal Leitner