

**HADLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

March 11, 2014

*Approved at the 4/08/14 meeting*

PRESENT: Paul Alexanderson, Chair; Paulette Kuzdeba, Vice-Chair; Gordon Smith; Steve Szymkowicz; Edwin Matuzsko; Associate Member Matthew Burak and Janice Stone, Conservation Staff.

**1. 7:00 PM Notice of Intent #170-228.** Filed by University of Massachusetts Center for Agriculture for construction of a 2.4 MW solar energy generating facility on a portion of the UMass Farm off *North Maple Street*. The Commission continued the hearing on request of the applicant's consultant, New England Environmental, to the next meeting April 8<sup>th</sup>.

**2. 7:02 PM Discussion** on use of salt on roads this winter by DPW. Because of the predicted bad weather the next night, the DPW Director Mr. Girouard was not present. He had spoken to Janice before the meeting. He provided Janice with a copy of a PowerPoint presentation that a contractor for the Mass DOT had presented to the DPW about the advantages of using salt over sand, and the MSDS sheets for the salt used. Copies were distributed to the Commissioners. He also responded in an email to some questions the Commissioners had last meeting about the truck calibration and where the salt-restricted areas are in town. Presently there is only a restriction on salt use on roads within the 400-foot Zone of the two town wells.

**3. 7:05 PM Notice of Intent #170-230** filed by Mass DOT, to install sidewalks, associated ramps, crosswalks and traffic signal modifications on *Russell Street*, from South Maple Street to the Amherst town line. Brian Sullivan, an engineer with Bayside Engineering, was present to explain the project and answer questions on behalf of the applicant. He explained that Route 9 has not been widened since the 1970s, and that the plan had included space for sidewalks. This sidewalk project is proposed for five communities including Amherst and Hadley. The proposal is for a sidewalk on the south side of Rt 9 from the corner of South Maple St (Hampshire Mall) to the Amherst town line. The north side sidewalks will go from the front of Pizza Hut at the corner of Campus Plaza Rd to the Amherst town line. It will not extend to the Pizza Hut driveway or into the Stop & Shop parking lot. There will be a crosswalk at the corner of South Maple, crossing Rt 9 to the Verizon corner. The Commission asked how the plans would impact the wetlands close to the road, especially on the south side, between the Hampshire Mall and the Marriott Hotel. Mr. Sullivan stated that there would be no direct impact to wetlands, but work will be within 12 inches of the wetland boundary in some tight areas. Janice asked how the proposed 5-foot wide sidewalk would fit in the narrow area between the wetlands and the curb between Appleby's and the Marriott Hotel. Mr. Sullivan stated that this is one of the very tight areas, and they will be reducing the sidewalk to 3-foot wide when necessary to stay out of wetlands. They are not planning on moving any hydrants or utility poles, so the path will have to bend around them as needed. They also are trying to keep the guardrail against the road, moving it closer to the road in some places. The sidewalk will be flush with the curb and guardrail. They will excavate down 10.5 inches in order to install 8 inches of gravel and 2.5 inches coarse and topcoat. They will use erosion and sediment control where needed, and will file a SWPPP

with EPA. Mr. John Waskiewicz asked questions from a DPW perspective about the type of curb (granite for wheelchair access areas), and whether any of this work would adversely affect the old utility lines under the area alongside the road designated for sidewalks. Mr. Sullivan stated that the forced main sewer easement is shown on the plan, and they are not touching it. Mr. Waskiewicz asked how the sidewalks would be maintained, with the narrow widths for the hydrants and poles. Response was that it might be difficult, and it would be up to the town to maintain it.

Paulette asked why this was being filed as a “limited project” if there was going to be no direct wetland impact. Mr. Sullivan explained that this was a transportation project. A question was raised as to whether there was wetland impact in the 1970s, since that would still count towards the total wetland impact for the project. Janice told Mr. Sullivan that she had spoken to DEP staff, and they agreed that installing a paved sidewalk over a dirt and grass footpath is not considered “redevelopment” and the footpath would not be considered “previously developed” (as stated in the Notice of Intent). Paulette asked about the DOT’s maintenance plan, stating that the Commission requires an Operation and Maintenance Plan for all developments, and this was no exception. If the sidewalks are expected to be used in winter, who will plow them, and who will sweep them at other times as needed? The NOI has the DOT maintenance matrix, but it does not include sidewalks. The DOT expects the towns to maintain the sidewalks after they are installed. Mr. Sullivan explained that the sidewalks will be pitched towards the roadways so that drainage would be away from the wetlands. The Commission is concerned about sand, salt, and debris from Rt 9 will be pushed with the snow plowing of the road onto the sidewalks, and then pushed off the sidewalks into the wetlands in areas where the wetlands are very close. Mr. Waskiewicz gave the example of difficult sidewalk maintenance with the sidewalk installed along the north side of Rt 9 from West St to the bridge. It is a concrete sidewalk interrupted by mailboxes and telephone poles, and there is no way to plow it. The town does not want to see that repeated. Mr. Waskiewicz asked if the DOT project could be coordinated with the Hadley DPW so that when the area is torn up, the old underground utility pipes could be replaced. The rest of Rt 9 infrastructure has been upgraded, except for the part from Howard Johnson’s to Appleby’s, and should be done. The DPW hopes to do the work this Fall. Mr. Sullivan stated that the federal money for the sidewalks will disappear if not signed by this Fall.

Edwin stated that the Commission is concerned about the potential impacts to the wetlands with this project, and that the DPW concerns are valid. The DOT should work with the DPW to coordinate the work on replacement of the pipes.

Robert Natario, an engineer for DOT but not on this project, stated that the DOT has been in touch with the town through the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. State highways in this area are no longer sanded, and there is less salt treatment than in the past. He stated there was outreach and correspondence in the earlier design stages with the town.

A member of the audience asked how the DOT would be handling the ingress/egress for commercial driveways that have an ADA curb cut and path. Mr. Sullivan stated that there would be no narrowing of the driveways, and that they are reconstructing the sidewalks not the driveways. A member of the audience wanted confirmation that the driveways to businesses would still be open during the construction period, which was estimated at two years.

Steve asked why the state could not use the bike path behind the buildings for access, rather than putting in sidewalks along Rt 9. Paulette asked if there were going to be any tactile strips to warn about the sidewalks at business intersections and curb cuts. Mr. Sullivan stated they would be used only for roadways, for instance at Campus Plaza Road and Westgate Center Drive.

Regarding construction impacts, they would be using silt socks in the catch basins in areas under construction. The Commission asked if there would be someone designated responsible for inspecting and maintaining the erosion control, checking them after a heavy rain etc? Mr. Natario stated that usually the contractor or engineer employed by DOT would be responsible on site for the erosion and sediment control. The Commission suggested that there should be someone independent overseeing it. The Commission was concerned that the contractor may not be local, and not likely to come out and inspect after each quarter inch rainfall, as required by the SWPPP. Commission stated they needed the inspections of the erosion control regularly while work is close to wetlands (which is common in this project area). The Commission will want to know who is responsible, and have reports sent to the Conservation office. There should be a compost tube between the wetland and sidewalk work, especially on the slopes. Janice asked when the wetlands had been flagged, because she only saw one wetland flag when she walked from Appleby's to the Marriott. The Commission asked Mr. Sullivan to have the wetland boundaries reflagged, and the limits of work for the sidewalk staked or otherwise marked for a Conservation Commission site visit. The Commission and Mr. Sullivan agreed to a site visit at 4 PM on Tuesday April 1<sup>st</sup>, meeting at the Staples parking lot towards Rt 9. Mr. Sullivan agreed to have the marking done, and will let Janice know when it is done so she can tell the Commissioners that cannot make the site visit. Edwin made the motion to continue the hearing to April 8<sup>th</sup>. Gordon seconded, and all approved.

**4. 8:30 PM Notice of Intent #170-229, continued.** Filed by University of Massachusetts Design & Construction Management for completion of landfill closure activities at *Lot 12 of the Umass Campus, off Forestry Way*. Alan Benevides from Woodard & Curran present as well as Sara Northrup and Theresa Wolejko from UMass. Mr. Benevides distributed revised copies of the plan, and explained the changes to the Commission. They added boulders to the west and north side of the parking lot limit, to keep the cars out of the buffer zone and wetland areas. The boulders will be similar to what was used on the Central Heating Plant (CHP) plan, a minimum of three feet. The Commission agreed to the boulders instead of the bollards. Telephone poles are also acceptable as bollards. They need to be placed close enough to prevent cars from parking in-between them. They will use a native seed mix for the disturbed soils in the buffer zone and Riverfront Areas, and also included the planting of 127 native shrubs (speckled alder, spicebush and gray dogwood) in these disturbed areas as well. The plan shows the snow storage areas, and any excess snow will be trucked off site to the Tilson Farm coal storage area. A plan now shows the existing degraded areas in Riverfront, and the limits of new work. They also provided an Operations & Maintenance Plan and template that UMass will follow as part of their larger O&M on campus. Records will be kept at the CHP. They have to submit O&M inspection information to the EPA annually for the CHP, as part of the MS\$ permit. They could send the annual report to Conservation as well. As a landfill closure, it will be a different kind of permitting ad Construction General Permit. They will be pulling water samples from the outfall before it goes into the detention basins. Matt asked what kind of contaminants they are monitoring the water for. It is for heavy metals, nitrates, phosphorus, BOD, TSS and pH. The tests have all come back fine, so now they only have to do clarity and sediment testing. Gordon made the motion to approve the Notice of Intent and plans as amended and issue the Order of Conditions with standard and special conditions, including rolling in the incomplete or unverified Special Conditions from the CHP Order # 170-190. Paulette seconded, all voted in favor. Edwin made the motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Paulette. All voted in

favor, and signed the Order of Conditions. Commission discussed possible projects for UMass environmental students, such as a clean up of Tan Brook, monitoring the water quality of the Mill River, studying North Hadley Pond. UMass representatives suggested contacting John Tobias in the Environmental Science Department.

**5. 8:55 PM Other Topics.** The Commission discussed with Building Inspector Tim Neyhart the “**Request for a Finding**” from the Zoning Board of Appeals by the Pizza Hut applicants because they cannot meet the 20% Open Green Space requirement for the lot. The Open Space cannot include wetland, and much of the lot is wetland. He told the Commission the Planning Board did not have a problem with this request, but it needs to go to the ZBA, and they would like a letter from the Conservation Commission stating that they approve of the project and that the project is an improvement over existing conditions (or at least not detrimental). Commission discussed, and agreed Janice should write a letter to that effect. **Minutes** from February. Edwin made a motion to accept the February 2014 minutes as written. Gordon seconded, and all voted in favor.

**6. 9:05 PM ADJOURNMENT.** Edwin made the motion to adjourn. Gordon seconded, all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by

*Janice Stone*

Materials used in review and deliberation of agenda items will be found in corresponding project folder in Conservation Commission office.