

Approved: April 7, 2015
NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
March 3, 2015, 4:00 PM

Members Present: Darcy Horgan, Jim Rini, Nancy Gulley, Brian Mack, Bill Marshall, Lynn McCarthy, Sharon Houston, Bill Stewart, Beth Hume

Members Not Present: Curt Gillespie

Also present: Paul Bonacci, ARQ Architects, Lucy Schlaffer, ARQ architects, Dana Lynch, Civil Works, Inc., Terrence Parker, Terraform Landscape, Allen Folsom, Riverside & Pickering Marine

Chair Stewart called the March 3, 2015 meeting of the New Castle Conservation Commission to order at 4:15 pm.

Approve February minutes

DES Notifications

File #2012-01896, Tax Map/Lot #11/12, Nancy Hall. Letter dated 2/09/15 from DES Wetlands Bureau --“reviewed and approved the Petitioner’s request for Grant in Right for fill placed in public waters forming 2,368 sq.ft.of land contiguous to Petitioner’s frontage along Little Harbor, Piscataqua River, New Castle.”

Chair Stewart noted that a proper right of way will be created by a swap of land and a stone wall will be built.

Work Session \ Applications:

- Cutting of trees on Town land opposite Ocean Road between the UNH lab area and the Town parking area.

Chair Stewart noted that Chris Peterson said that there is brush in the area that they would like to cut and remove.

Jim Rini suggested a site walk and the members agreed. This item will be deferred until a site walk can be scheduled.

- 49 Riverview Road – Chamberlin Residence: Application to demolish existing structure and rebuild in the same footprint. Addition of garage structure outside the 100’ buffer with no plumbing but with electrical service.

Chair Stewart noted the two separate applications that are under review for 49 Riverview Road. (1) The house demolition and the rebuilding of the house and the addition of a

garage outside the 100 foot setback. He reminded the members that there was a work session in February for this property. He noted that a site walk was not a good option with the current snow fall so the members agreed to look at google earth and review the property in that manner; and (2) a dock application: remove and rebuilt in the current footprint. Chair Stewart instructed the members that for the dock application the Commission would be primarily commenting to DES on the situation.

Paul Bonacci and Lucy Schlaffer from ARQ architects presented enlarged plans and photos of the site. They noted that the property is located at the end of Riverview Road and is a ranch style house. Mr. Bonacci said that the Historic District Commission has approved the design of a Cape Style house on the existing foundation. He said that the proposal is to remove the wood decks, dog kennel, pergola and small shed as well as a portion of the house. Mr. Bonacci said the original proposal was to use the existing foundation; the building inspector and builder had some concerns about this so it was decided to remove the foundation and replace it in the same footprint. He stated that currently there is 26% impervious surface and the proposed project would have 21% impervious surface (a decrease by 5%). Mr. Bonacci said the decrease will be possible by installing permeable paving for the walkways and the two driveway areas. He said they also plan to keep all the existing major trees, though some rhododendrons will be moved to a different location on the lot. Mr. Bonacci said that all the new native vegetation and landscaping will be done and noted that there is a landscaping plan. He said storm water will be managed by reducing the impervious surface, adding a gravel drip edge around all parts of the house including the terrace which will have scuppers (terrace is impervious surface) and be sloped to the scuppers which lead to the twelve inch drip edge, the garage will also have a drip edge.

The members discussed the stone wall with Terrence Parker of Terraform Landscaping. He said they will build a safety wall from the top of the grade along the edge of the existing sharp slope. Mr. Parker said it will be a safety cap on an existing rocky stone slope that will consist of large ornate boulders sitting on top of the existing stony slope and will follow the contours of the break in the grade. He said currently there is a wire fence that is overgrown with vegetation. Mr. Parker said that a barrier is needed because the grade is so steep. He said there will be approximately 300 square feet area where the rock will be placed.

The members discussed the buffer of native plantings. It was noted that there will be a width of approximately six feet to fifteen feet of plantings.

Mr. Bonacci said that they wish to minimize the amount of construction and to stay outside the fifty foot setback. He said they will use an excavator that will be able to demolish the material into the foundation rather than save the foundation wall; which will help to contain the demolition material and it will then be moved out. Mr. Bonacci said the excavation for the new foundation will be done in a similar matter. He said the staging area will be limited to one area outside of the 50 foot setback. Mr. Bonacci said that the footings will most likely be removed but they will attempt to limit the amount of equipment in the area and a poured reinforced foundation will then be constructed.

He said that the house will be on the Town sewer line.

Mr. Parker said that the boulders will be placed with a piece of equipment on tracks to minimize impact. He noted that the roof line will be higher than the existing construction but it will still be a single story building. Mr. Parker said that his clients want to create as minimal an impact as possible. He noted that the house will have solar panels and a lot of insulation in the slab and the foundation.

Chair Stewart said he is concerned about the slope and asked what will be done to minimize the erosion during the construction.

The members discussed how the invasive species will be dealt with.

Mr. Parker said that there will be selective herbicide painting and cutting and the invasive species will be replaced with dog woods and others that will root through a dormant stem. He said they will be raising the grade a foot around the house to make a more accessible entry to the house on the south side.

Chair Stewart asked if there will be excavation performed for the installation of the water and sewer utilities.

Mr. Parker said there will be some done between the house and garage for the underground electrical system; but the existing sewer connection will be reused.

The members discussed where the drip edge drains to. Dana Lynch of Civil Works, Inc. noted that the drip edge will take the runoff from the roof and allow it to percolate into the soils and ultimately end up in the foundation drain which flows out to the river. He said the drip edge will hold a substantial amount of rain fall due to the crushed stone. Mr. Lynch said the idea is to get as much of rain fall to flow into the drip edge, permeable pavers and other porous pavers so the site can become transparent to the rainfall. Mr. Lynch noted that the drip edge will incorporate an edging material to keep grass and mulch from gathering in it. He said the only maintenance needed is to annually inspect it to ensure there are no weeds gathering in the drip edge.

Bill Stewart MOVED that the Conservation Commission approve the application for 49 Riverview Road to demolish the existing structure and rebuild in the same footprint with the addition of a garage structure outside the 100' buffer with no plumbing but with electrical services according to plans dated as follow: Shoreland impact existing site plan - January 29, Grading plan - February 6, Landscape plan - February 9, Civil works plan - February 1 and a survey dated October 31 2014; along with a narrative dated February 11, 2015 detailing soil management, construction management and storm management; this was SECONDED by Nancy Gulley and APPROVED unanimously.

- 49 Riverview Road – Dock application (remove and rebuild). Reducing footprint of current dock structure.

Allen Folsom of Riverside & Pickering Marine presented this application. He noted that there is an existing pier, ramp and float that they propose to replace with a smaller pier, gangway and float. Mr. Folsom said that currently the pier is 400 square feet and they are proposing to replace it with a 90 square foot pier (a reduction of 330 square feet). He noted that the existing pier is 36 feet long and they are proposing to replace it with a 15 foot pier. Mr. Folsom reported that the pilings are in good shape but the frame work and the decking needs to be replaced. He noted that decreasing the size will make it more conforming.

Mr. Folsom reported that the gangway will be aluminum, the float and pier will be of timber (southern yellow pine).

Bill Stewart MOVED to recommend approval of the application for 49 River Road to remove and rebuild the dock (reducing the foot print) as described on plans dated 1/13/15; this was SECONDED by Beth Hume and APPROVED unanimously.

- 190 Wentworth Road – Construction of a new patio and retaining wall inside the buffer area for Lavenger Creek

Terrence Parker of Terraform Lanscape presented the application for 190 Wentworth Road. He said he participated in a workshop with the Commission last month regarding the development of a plan to build a terrace at 190 Wentworth Road. Mr. Parker displayed photos of the area and the proposed work to be done and displayed a site survey and noted that the elevated area by the breezeway is where they would like to build a terrace with a wall to support the terrace. Mr. Parker said an area of lawn will be removed and replaced with native plantings. He said the area where they would like to construct the patio currently has multiple septic tanks located under it so the area is already impervious. Mr. Parker said during the workshop the members suggested removing as much turf as possible and replanting with native plantings, have the terrace drain into a rain garden at the top of the wall and at the side and have the wall be dry laid in a crushed stone base (to help infiltration of water) with a limited mow area; and have the steep area up to native bedrock be planted with native plants (all slope areas will have native plantings). Mr. Parker said they have reduced the impact and created zones to help restore native plantings and the flat area will be lawn.

The members discussed problems with having a no mow area that is not designated. It was decided that the “no mow” area should be delineated by placing boulders or stones (high enough to obstruct mowing) every ten feet to delineate the “no mow” area.

Darcy Horgan asked if there will be a wall constructed in the front of the building.

Mr. Parker said a six foot fence; ornamental for privacy will be constructed and will have plantings on the inside with the lawn.

Mr. Parker stated that the terrace will be constructed of bluestone over top the septic tanks with a rain garden to take the water from the bluestones. He noted that the terrace will be 303 square feet with rain gardens on three sides.

Mr. Parker said there will be six or seven steps from the terrace.

The members said they would like to see the site.

Jim Rini said the site is within the fifty foot setback but is an improvement over what is located there.

Ms. Horgan said a 300 square foot sitting area is not big (perhaps 12 x 21).

Mr. Parker said they realized that any work on the area needed to reduce impacts and minimize the use of fertilizers.

Mr. Horgan noted that the terrace area is impermeable due to the septic tanks; so the project will not change the filtration on that area; plus there will be a rain garden added to uptake the water. She said that portions of the existing lawn will be removed and replaced with native vegetation and a “no mow” area. Ms. Horgan asked if the rain gardens will need maintenance.

Mr. Parker noted that the rain garden should function well as long as it does not fill in with sediment. He noted that the garden will be two and half to three and half feet deep with crushed stone.

Ms. Horgan said the proposed project is an improvement and the Commission is trying hard to protect Lavenger Creek.

Beth Hume MOVED to approve the plans dated February 13, 2015 for construction of a new patio and retaining wall inside the buffer area for Lavenger Creek at 190 Wentworth Road; with the addition of placing 18 inch round stones every 10 feet to delineate the “no mow” zone area from the wetland; this was SECONDED by Nancy Gulley and APPROVED unanimously.

Old Business

- Lavenger Creek Conservation Plan

Tracy Degnan reported that one of the two grant proposals submitted in the fall has been funded. She said the proposal to Integrated Pest Management for \$4995 has been funded. Ms. Degnan reported that Jill Farrell of PREP discussed sponsoring the Lavenger Creek Plan and a plan to educate residents. Ms. Degnan also noted that the Natural Resources Outreach Coalition, which receives funding from the South East Watershed Alliance, is offering funding for green initiatives.

Chair Stewart noted that New Castle is a member of the South East Water Shed Alliance and he is the appointed member for New Castle.

Ms. Degnan said it is a potential source of funding.

Ms. Degnan reported that the grant received has a portion that involves outreach to abutters and a solarization experiment for phragmites. She displayed a map and noted that 1/3 of an acre has been cut and the land owner also performed another cut on it. Ms. Degnan said the solar experiment will consist of three ten by ten meter plots with a solar cover to see if it will burn the phragmites and not allow it to grow. She said this will occur for a couple of months, data will be gathered and then the phragmites will be spot treated. Ms. Degnan noted that an education plan for residents around Lavenger Creek needs to be created and carried out. She said she has a draft brochure to be presented to the residents regarding Lavenger Creek and nitrogen reduction. Ms. Degnan asked Ms. Hume to read the draft and provide comments.

Ms. Hume noted that the brochure may be appropriate to distribute at Town Meeting. She suggested having Dave Murray take aerial photos of Lavenger Creek.

Lynn McCarthy suggested submitting a version of the brochure to The Islander.

Ms. Degnan suggested offering organic fertilizer at green waste days.

Chair Stewart said that the Town could negotiate discounts with landscape companies for organic fertilizer.

Chair Stewart said the Commission has a list of landscapers who have signed up to not use fertilizer on the Island. He suggested submitting the list to The Islander.

Ms. Degnan summarized that the IPM grant requirements are to perform and outreach and education plan, cut the phragmites as displayed on the aerial photo (190 Wentworth Road), set up solar plots in areas cut last year, collect data and perform herbicide treatment. She said they should submit an application for a special permit to use Aqua Master at the Great Island Common, River Road, Lavenger Creek, the old dump on Pitt Lane and portion of Bull Toad Pond.

- Islander article / Island Items

Lynn McCarthy will work with Ms. Degnan's brochure to put it into a form that is suitable to submit to the Islander.

- Proposed Green Waste rules

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

- Response to Norman Flagg letter

The members discussed the letter written by Mr. Flagg expressing his concern regarding over development of the Island. Ms. Hume will draft a letter in response for the Chair to review.

New Business

- Ordinance change based on Lavenger Creek Conservation Plan

Chair Stewart reported that comments were made regarding grandfathering, which the conservation plan does not allow. He said that the cutting aspect of trees in the buffer zone was also questioned. Chair Stewart noted that this portion could be more stringent, but what reaction would there be from home owners. Chair Stewart has noted the comments and will look at the Lavenger Creek Plan and potentially make adjustments so it can be used as an ordinance in the future or just use it as is as a conservation plan. He noted that they will be able to get more data and maps from the Lavenger Creek plan which may be helpful for an ordinance change.

Announcements

Sat., April 11, 8:00 am to 3:45pm – Weare, NH
Saving Special Places Annual Land Conservation Conference

The March 2015 meeting of the New Castle Conservation Commission adjourned at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sue Lucius, Secretary to the New Castle Conservation Commission