

Conservation Commission Public Meeting Minutes, May 25, 2016

Present: Allison Knab, Pat Elwell, Bob Keating, Tim Copeland, Donna Jensen, Bill McCarthy, Brad Jones, Bill Kenny, Joe Lovejoy.

Also, Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Town Planner, Tavis Austin, residents Kathleen Breslin, Bill Beddingfield, Peter Wiggin of Wiggin Landscapes, Luke Hurley of Gove Environmental, John Hobden of Lindt & Sprungli, USA

Public Session

The public session was called to order at 7:05pm.

Mailbox, April 13 meeting minutes

Elwell moved and Copeland seconded a motion to accept the April 13 meeting minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Mailbox, RPC

The Rockingham Planning Commission is holding its annual meeting June 8.

Mailbox, Clean Water

The UNH Carsey School of Public Policy provided to the Commission a clean water report dated April 27, 2016.

70 College Road

Knab and Copeland conducted a site walk at the home of resident Bill Beddingfield. Beddingfield is planning to construct a patio at his home at the site of a removed swimming pool, an area that lies within short distance to the Squamscott River and thus falls under the provisions of the Shoreland Protection Act. Beddingfield purchased the property in 1995. The swimming pool was never permitted by the previous owner.

The homeowner provided the Commission with the proposed design of a patio located in the rear of his home approximately 85 feet from the median high tide mark of the Squamscott River. The patio would be installed with pervious pavers to reduce stormwater impact and Wiggin would construct the patio without the use of heavy equipment. Kenny asked if the patio would have a significant impact on the river. Wiggin thought it would not. The design included a fire pit. There was some discussion whether a fire pit was a structure; the current planning documents do not specify. Elwell noted that the Commission had recently raised questions about a fire pit at the Willow Pond community conservation easement land.

Copeland moved and Lovejoy seconded a motion to sign the minimum impact NHDES wetland permit application, providing an expedited review by NHDES. The motion passed with all present excepting Jensen, who voted in opposition, stating she believed a full NHDES review of the application would be helpful.

Lindt & Sprungli, Expanded Parking Lot and Entrance Area

The Commission conducted a site walk at the Lindt Sprungli campus in the area of a proposed parking lot and entrance way expansion project. The manufacturing facility requires expansion to comply with federal requirements for security of large truck deliveries, as well as a need for more employee parking. The project will destroy wetlands and impact wetland buffers in a large area of property. Luke Hurley presented the project plans and explained that the expanded parking lot would provide improvements

in stormwater management of the lot. Currently on the parking lot, stormwater sheet flows into the immediately adjacent wetlands. An 18-inch pipe will be added to connect wetlands on either side of the expanded parking lot. The company anticipates a NHDES wetland impact mitigation payment will be required by the agency upon project approval.

After discussion amongst commissioners, Elwell moved and McCarthy seconded an amended motion that 1. the Commission approve the NHDES application for the project, waiving the 30-day waiting period, and 2. Knab write a letter concerning the project to be shared with NHDES, the Stratham Zoning Board of Adjustments, and the Stratham Planning board stating:

- The Commission recognizes that the proposed changes to the expanded parking lot will represent an improvement to current circumstances where there is no stormwater management nor stormwater treatment
- The Commission recommends that NHDES ask for a Natural Resources Inventory be completed at the 140-acre campus, given that there are considerable wetlands around the property and known rare communities in an adjacent property.
- The Commission would like a specific plan for snow storage and removal on the affected site.
- Commission strongly appeals to NHDES to place mitigation funds in the Stratham Land Use Conservation Fund rather than in the state Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund.

The motion passed.

Municipal Updates, Wetland Regulations

Austin, Deschaine, and Knab have spoken to a number of individuals including Steve Miller from Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge regarding Stratham regulations and wetland setbacks. A consortium of entities are completing an analysis of New Hampshire wetland regulations.

Municipal Updates, Stratham Memorial School Butterfly Garden

Lovejoy moved and Elwell seconded a motion to spent no more than \$100 to purchase a gift for the school committee facilitating the new garden. Knab spoke to Ms Gaudette of the school, who mentioned a dump wagon would be needed for the project. A compost bin might also be a good gift, and Kenny noted there were still a few compost bins available for sale.

Municipal Updates, Stratham Hill Park Bike Trail Expansion

McCarthy explained that Joel Hanford and Seth Hickey are planning on expanding bike trails in the park, specifically creating a new trail off of the Lovell Road Trail. As planned, a permit would probably be needed due to wetland buffer impacts. Deschaine said due to minimal impacts it would be permit by notification.

Jensen inquired whether it was needed-in recent years there has been aggressive trail expansion at the park and forest. She wondered if trail expansion was planned as a part of the Stratham Hill Park and Forest Management Plan. Knab noted that the board developing the management plan, where she had served, did not recommend creation of any trails near the Atlantic White Cedar Swamp rare community and would prefer that trails avoid that vicinity of the park. She would like to know more about the proposed new trails in the context of the management plan for the park.

Municipal Updates, Util Maintenance and Management

Util is contacting residents on Heights Road who are adjacent to the utility easement located there. This fall the company will be performing tree cutting and maintenance of the utility easement area. Deschaine stated that Unutil had hired ACRT to manage permissions from property residents so that

cutting could occur. Ms Breslin noted the contracting company staff's unpleasant and aggressive style. The cutting is scheduled for September.

The Commission had not been contacted by Unitil to discuss cutting methods; Deschaine will contact the company.

Municipal Updates, NHDES

Wiggin noted that the NHDES was undergoing a reorganization. Peter Wiggin's wife Ms. Dory Wiggin is employed by the agency and is involved in writing updates to wetland regulations. Commissioners noted it would be helpful to talk to Ms Wiggin to hear her insights to the need for improved wetland regulations.

Municipal Updates, Wiggin Way/Winterberry Home Owners Association

The Wiggin Way/Winterberry residential community has 3 shared wells. One of the wells was not providing the necessary yield and has been closed. Water tests have shown arsenic at levels above the safety threshold for drinking water from the remaining 2 wells. The community is assessing treatment systems and may need to obtain auxiliary water from a hydrant.

Municipal Updates, Compost Bins

Kenny noted 10 bins are still available for sale. Elwell volunteered to send an email blast to subscribers.

Municipal Updates, Clean Up Day Costs

McCarthy provided a receipt for \$70.94 to purchase coffee for the annual clean up day volunteers. Copeland moved and Keating seconded a motion to reimburse McCarthy of the cost. The motion passed unanimously.

Keating moved and Copeland seconded a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 8, 2016, 7:00pm at the Stratham Municipal Center.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Jensen, Secretary