

Draft Minutes

Conservation Commission

9/12/17

1. Call to Order

a. Introduction of Members Present

Present are Kristen Murphy, Carlos Guindon, Chairman Bill Campbell, Andrew Koff, Todd Piskovitz, and David O'Hearn. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Office Building.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Action Items

a. Minimum Impact Expedited Permit Request for Exeter River Mobile Home Park Cooperative to fill 1,637 SF of wetlands resulting from excavation activity for a grandfathered gravel pit. Tax Map 95/Lot 64 (Chris Albert, Jones and Beach).

Chris Albert, the project manager for Jones and Beach engineers, completed 600,000 dollars' worth of water and sewer improvements in the mobile home park. The old pit where they stockpiled all surplus material, they are proposing to flatten it out which will give future contractors a staging area. They will go to DES and re-grade everything. He gave the commission photographs of the site.

Chairman Campbell asked if the existing road was pictured. Mr. Albert showed on the board where exactly the photos were taken. He said that there was about 5,000 yards of surplus fill, and that it was a good spot to clean up the old pit. Chairman Campbell asked if you could use the yard if you were a couple streets over, Mr. Albert replied yes. Mr. Guindon asked what the function would be once it was filled. Mr. Albert said that all the overburdened clay would be level off and stabilized for future use, and there will be grass covering it.

Chairman Campbell asked about the wetland showed off the lot. He asked where the water would go. Mr. Albert said that rain would go off into four directions, and that there would not be a change in runoff. In addition, the treeline is 4 or 5 feet higher so it would blend back into the treeline. They would not be changing the hydrology of the site. Chairman Campbell asked if the wetland filled with all the spring rain this year. Mr. Albert replied that it did. He said the water will go someplace when filled but not by much, and the goal is to protect the treeline. Chairman Campbell had concerns over where the water would go, but Mr. Albert explained that the hydrology would not be changing and that the areas would be seeded with grass.

Mr. Koff asked if the cooperative of the park would maintain and mow the area. Mr. Albert said they could make sure of that. Mr. Koff asked if there had been any soil testing done of the site. Mr. Albert replied no, but that the site consists of general New England clay.

MOTION: Mr. O'Hearn moved to approve the permit for the Exeter River Mobile Home Park to fill the area. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

b. Review Amended Agricultural Plan for the Bunker/Barker Conservation Easement on Beech Hill Road (Laura Barker)

Ms. Murphy stated that Laura Barker had presented an application, which she had then consolidated into a modified agricultural use application and had included some photos. Town Planner Dave Sharples had requested legal counsel for the storage materials on the site, which is included in the commission's packet. The commission went on the site walk on 9/12/17. Chairman Campbell said that he was concerned with the storage areas. In the easement, it says that you can have things that are directly related to agriculture, but there is no provision for permanent or semi-permanent storage. The purpose of the easement is to keep the land undeveloped and to not interfere with the conservation values of the land.

Mr. O'Hearn said it was his first time on the site, and was impressed. He commented that the farm was well-maintained, and that all farms had storage areas. He did not believe it was an eyesore. Mr. Guindon agreed, but had a concern that the storage area would expand out and the things within it would not be used regularly. He wanted to maintain open space and the opportunity for it to be shared, as well as preventing chemicals from leaching into the wetlands nearby.

Chairman Campbell continued with his concern about the easement storage, and said that he thought some of the things in storage should be moved. Mr. Koff asked if it would be possible to have a storage area in the exclusion area. He pointed out that that, however, would be more visible to the road. Chairman Campbell disagreed because the road is well covered by trees, so it may not be visible. Ms. Barker said she could bring the items to the road, and agreed that she did not want the storage area to sprawl. She said all the items stored are agricultural supplies.

Chairman Campbell said he wanted to keep the land undeveloped, scenic, and open-spaced. He was worried that the items would not be used frequently, and pointed to a letter from Ms. Murphy from July 26th about the easement terms with conditions for use. Ms. Murphy said that she wanted to confine the storage to an identified area. Mr. Koff said that it seems to overall comply with the easement, being that it is well-maintained. Perhaps it is more of a boundary issue than an intent issue. Chairman Campbell said that the easement was drawn up by a previous owner. Mr. Piskovitz agreed that it should not be expanding, but said that the equipment could be moved into the exclusion zone where it may be visible from the road. He believes that the items are farm related.

Mr. Koff asked if there were other farms with the easements on them. Ms. Murphy said there was one other easement for the Chamberlain property. Mr. Koff said that the issue seemed site-specific, and that he would like to support local farms. Chairman Campbell said he was worried about precedent, but maybe they could designate the areas as storage areas. Ms. Murphy said that what is stored should be agriculturally related. Mr. O'Hearn pointed out that they own the entire property, so no boundary issues would come into play.

There was a discussion about the chemicals stored on the farm. The commission did not want the chemicals to negatively impact the surrounding wetlands. Ms. Barker said that she felt the board had her jumping through hoops, and wanted to know how they defined a chemical. Chairman Campbell said that perhaps they don't fit into the agricultural easement. Mr. Piskovitz was concerned with the proper storage items negatively impacting conservation. It was agreed that the key was that these items must be stored properly.

MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to approve the statement and summary of activities for this plan, and to direct Ms. Murphy to send a letter expressing the commission's concerns. Mr. O'Hearn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

c. Raynes Farm Replacement Sign (Kathy Norton)

Mr. Campbell started by saying that the sign at Raynes Farm that currently exists is very faded. Kathy Norton came to the commission and said that they had done some trimming around the sign and will continue to do so to increase visibility from the road. They are willing to pay for a new sign, and want to recycle the post. It could be ready for November. She showed the commission different options for the sign. It was generally agreed upon that the first design was the best.

Mr. O'Hearn suggested colors that stand out. The commission discussed the color, and talked about maybe bordering the letters with a darker color to provide contrast. They would like durability and visibility. Ms. Norton offered to send them a couple of different color designs, one including red and black.

d. Dredge and Fill application for 3,210 SF of wetland impact at 3-5 Continental Drive for the construction of a 30k SF commercial building and associated infrastructure. Tax Map 47/Lot 1-3 and 1-4. (Brendan Quigley, GES Inc.)

Patrick Crimmins, of Tighe and Bond, spoke about this project. He described a 30,000-square foot building and showed the board a map of the site. Chairman Campbell clarified that the site was behind the Jaguar dealership in Exeter. Mr. Crimmins continued that the building will include 2 spaces, of which one will be owner-occupied. He talked about the wetland and rain garden designs, and said that the purpose of the project is to try to minimize wetland and buffer impacts. The total fill amount is 7,500 square feet.

Brendan Quigley of Gove Environmental Services said that the property is currently logged. The entire site is 22 acres, the project is using 7 acres. He spoke about the standard depressions on the site for the impact areas. There was some discussion on the status of the stream, and he showed the proposed crossing on the map and where the water will drain. Mr. Crimmins said that the stormwater would be contained within the paved area, where they will put catch basins at the bottom of the driveway that will lead to the rain gardens. Mr. Quigley said that there is no problem with natural heritage on the site.

Mr. Guindon asked about the impact of the forest harvest. Mr. Quigley said that removing the material and adding pipes may not be the natural condition, but it will restore waterflow. Chairman Campbell asked how far back there would be an un-landscaped space. Mr. Quigley said that in a few years, the whole area will be completely covered because the vegetation comes back quickly. Chairman Campbell asked when they delineated the wetlands. Mr. Quigley answered that they were flagged and surveyed in the spring. Chairman Campbell pointed out an area on the map and asked if the owners would consider donating it as part of conservation land. He also asked if they needed to merge the two lots, to which it was answered that they would merge them.

Mr. Koff had a question about the design process on how to minimize the stormwater management areas. Mr. Quigley said that they tried to locate it in an area with no wetlands, and that the rain garden is out of the buffer. Mr. Koff asked about the circular pattern on the map. There was a discussion about

boulders on the site. He also asked about the possibility of narrowing one area for stormwater management. Mr. Quigley said that this area was outside of the 40-foot buffer, and he pointed out the parking and building setbacks on the map.

MOTION: Mr. O’Hearn moved to accept the application without objections. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- 4. Committee Reports
 - a. Property Management

This was not covered during this meeting.

- b. Trails
 - i. Oaklands Trail Project

Ms. Murphy said that Bob Kelly had come before the board a few months ago with potential trail projects, and talked about a specific boardwalk that had deteriorated and that they want to relocate the trail. They would like to find a time for a site walk to view the area. The board talked about the best time to do so. Mr. O’Hearn asked if they had removed the old bridge. It was answered that it was still being worked on.

- c. Outreach
 - i. Raynes Pumpkin Toss planning

Chairman Campbell started by saying that Ms. Raub felt that she could not take on the pumpkin toss this year. He said they would need another volunteer to organize it, or they would have to postpone the toss for a year. Mr. Koff asked about Ben Anderson, but it was answered that he was not as strongly involved this year. The board decided to postpone it by a year.

- ii. NHACC Partnership Project

Ms. Murphy talked about this, which had been discussed at a prior meeting. A teacher from the cooperative middle school had reached out and is interested in doing a project. Deerborn Brook runs close to the middle school, so maybe it would be a good project to map buffers and natural systems, and do water quality monitoring. The general consensus was that the commission was interested in the project.

- 5. Approval of Minutes: August 8th Meeting

Mr. Campbell pointed out that on the bottom of page 1, where it says, “prices of the camper”, it should say “price of the registration of the camper for Camp Barry”.

MOTION: Mr. Guindon moved to approve the minutes as amended, Mr. Koff seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- 6. Other Business

The board briefly went over the financial report. Mr. Koff said that the commission still had about 7,000 dollars to spend on the budget. Not a lot had changed since the last time the commission had seen it. Mr. Piskovitz asked if there was money allocated for the pumpkin toss, the answer was no.

MOTION: Mr. Piskovitz moved to accept the report, Mr. Guindon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

7. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (10/10/17), Submission Deadline (8/31/17)

MOTION: Mr. Guindon moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm, Mr. O’Hearn seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by recording secretary Samantha Cave