

Exeter Conservation Commission
October 13, 2020
Virtual Meeting
Approved Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight's meeting were by roll call, Chair Andrew Koff, Vice-Chair Trevor Mattera, Sally Ward, Clerk, Dave Short, Treasurer, Bill Campbell, Carlos Guindon, Ginny Raub, Donald Clement, (Alternate), Alyson Eberhardt, Nick Campion (Alternate), Kristen Osterwood (Alternate), and Kristen Murphy, Natural Resource Planner.

Members present indicated there was no one else present in the room with them during this meeting.

Absent: Lindsey White (Alternate), Julie Gilman (Select Board Liaison), Daryl Browne, Select Board Alternate Liaison

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

Mr. Koff read the meeting preamble indicated that an emergency exists and the provisions of RSA 91-A:2 III (b) are being invoked. As federal, state and local officials have determined gatherings of ten or more people pose a substantial risk to the community and the meeting imperative to the continued operation of Town and government and services which are vital to public, health, safety and confidence. This meeting will be conducted without a quorum physically present in the same location and welcome members of the public accessing the meeting remotely.

2. Public Comment (7:00 PM)

Rebecca Moore expressed her appreciation for considering their comments on a previous case and requested copies of the recommendation to the Planning Board and plans to restore cut trees. Mr. Koff indicated a letter could be submitted to the Commission and to Doug Eastman.

Action Items

1. Request for removal of tree on Raynes Farm property

Ben Anderson indicated the DOT determined a tree needed to be removed on the border of roads. The Town Tree Warden agreed. The tree would be removed at Mr. Anderson's expense. The request was brought before the Stewardship Committee who had no objections.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned, after reviewing this request, to approve removal of the tree. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

2. Shoreland Conditional Use Permit application for PEA for repairs to Hill Bridge, enhancing scour resistance, repair riverbank erosion and minor landscaping at the ends of the bridge
Tax Map 71-119 and 83-1

Mr. Koff indicated the application is for a Shoreland CUP and recommendation for support for their State Wetland and Shoreland applications.

Mark Leighton indicated the bridge is over 100 years old and needs maintenance and erosion control.

James Turner of Stephens Associates Consulting Engineers, LLC. proposed structural repairs, erosion repair and scour resistance. There is not much riprap left. The project has been reviewed by Fish & Game and the Heritage Bureau. Construction will be done next summer. Footpaths will be stabilized with stone dust pavement. There is a planting plan to replant the bank when finished. The coffer dam will be used for the filtration system.

Ms. Eberhardt indicated the alternate access direction proposed by Mr. Leighton is a good idea. The delineation while appropriate is dated two years ago.

Mr. Clement noted they appeared before the Squamscott River Advisory Committee recently and there will be equipment in the riverbed during work.

Mr. Koff reviewed the CUP criteria: use can't negatively affect water quality, stabilization and erosion control, no disposal of waste on site, no discharge, no detriment to wildlife habitat. Fish & Game and the Heritage Bureau found no impacts.

Mr. Koff noted there was no new use and no increase impervious. They are repairing and stabilizing. The use is consistent with the intent of the Shoreland article.

MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned, after reviewing this application, that there is no objection to approval, including recommendation on signage and alternate access as proposed. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Mr. Guindon, after reviewing this application, motioned to have no objection to the State Wetland Expedited Application. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement - aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned, after reviewing this application, to have no objection to the State Shoreland Permit for the application as proposed. Mr. Guindon seconded the motion. A roll call vote

was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

3. Conceptual discussion for the construction of an additional parking/car storage lot for the McFarland Ford Dealership on 110 Holland Way
Tax Map 51-17

Jim Gove presented a conceptual discussion for an additional 1.78 acre parking/car storage lot for the McFarland Ford Dealership on the 22-acre parcel on Holland Way which is currently not owned by McFarland Ford. The property is encumbered by a prime wetland buffer. There would be direct impacts of 1,151 SF to the Town buffer for access and 222 SF of impact to the small isolated area to the right . The existing Conservation easement could be expanded to include all but the parking area. McFarland Ford is lacking the amount of parking Ford would like them to have in proximity to the dealership. The proposed lot is closer to the road so there is less value to wildlife.

Mr. Campbell noted he was not sure they would be doing the right thing by giving relief to buffers for prime wetlands all the time.

Mr. Koff questioned what the expanded easement would be getting, is it even buildable. Mr. Gove noted the owner has done no clear cutting or trails. Mr. Koff posted the Town GIS map. Ms. Eberhardt posted the NH Coastal Viewer map. Mr. Clement noted applicants should provide locus maps so the viewers can see where the parcel is. Mr. Murphy noted the drainage should be confirmed and recommended bringing information to the next meeting about the porous being feasible.

Mr. Guindon asked if it drains into the Town water supply and Mr. Gove noted it gets there eventually. Mr. Clement asked if it drained across the street toward the Hannaford lot – yes, the entry is below the Exeter Reservoir. Mr. Clement noted it goes to Wheelwright then Squamscott but is not toward Dearborn Brook.

Mr. Clement asked how many spaces for parking and Wayne Morrill responded there would be 136 spaces for new vehicles and commercial grade vehicles. Mr. Koff noted it was a large impervious area for new vehicles and pointed out the 50' structural setback and ROW. Mr. Gove noted Mr. Sharples recommended within 10' and they will look into the potential for pervious pavement. Ms. Eckhardt recommended considering a tradeoff between the number of spaces and increasing the buffer.

Mr. Mattera noted it is a very active road and significant area. There is not much value to wildlife, but it serves to benefit pollutant attenuation. Mr. Mattera noted he had a hard time with this one being under siege from all areas. It would be a hard sell with the buffer.

Mr. Clement asked what actual benefits would pervious surfaces give to attenuation and Mr. Gove noted layers under the pervious surface remove nitrogen and phosphorus. Salt would have to be dealt with separately. It is a private lot with minimal pedestrians and maintenance of porous pavement would not be an issue. People do not like pervious because of the associated maintenance.

Mr. Morrill noted they have options that may be able to condense parking and if they go with porous drainage would not be needed.

Mr. Gove stated he was hesitant to say they could get it out of the 120' structural setback but could condense parking with some impacts and wondered if it would be worthwhile to implement these and come back next month.

Ms. Ward recommended coming back next month if concerns can be addressed.

4. Conceptual discussion in association with a Conditional Use Permit for clean-up and construction of a residential multi-family unit within the prime wetland buffer and structural setback at 32 Charter Street Tax Map 82-36

Ms. Murphy indicated the applicant wishes to present the project for feedback in consideration of submitting a wetland Conditional Use Permit for construction of a multi-family unit within the prime wetland buffer and structural setback.

Mr. Koff indicated there was a site walk today.

Jim Gove of Gove Environmental Services indicated there is a lot of debris and there is impact to the buffer and prime wetland. Looking for Commission to work with us and not hold the 125' setback. Mr. Clement noted a lot of illegal dumping has gone on in that lot.

Christian Smith of Beals Associates indicated there would be 12 townhouse style units and the area would be cleaned up and the buffer reduced to 50 feet. There would be drive-under garages with 18-foot wide access.

Mr. Clement noted there was a lot of illegal dumping on that lot and wonders why it has been able to continue. Mr. Clement asked where the access is and Mr. Gove noted Charter Street. Ms. Ward noted she understood it was a previous owner that did all the dumping. Mr. Clement noted it should have been enforced better. Mr. Gove noted it is well hidden away. Mr. Smith posted photos of the debris which was significant.

Ms. Ward asked the impact of development on the restored wetland and Mr. Smith noted it would make some runoff but would not exceed current runoff and would mitigate any increases.

Mr. Guindon noted there was a good diversity of invasives but not as bad as he thought.

Ms. Raub asked if the owner would have to clean it up before transferring title and Mr. Smith noted he believes the new developer will take care of it.

Mr. Koff noted it feels like a lot of houses on a small lot and asked if a yield plan was submitted or if a different layout could be used. Mr. Smith noted there would be an 18' wide access and would have drive under garages. The zone is R-5 which allows for greater density.

Mr. Clement noted the Planning Board would look at the green/recreation space versus the number of units and is concerned it may do some harm with that many structures and has concerns with further degradation to the Little River area. If the Town had to clean it up it would be very expensive.

Ms. Raub asked if there would potentially be 48 people living on just an acre with no green space. Mr. Smith noted it was early in the process.

Mr. Mattera noted it is a redevelopment with work in a buffer zone which is already compromised and may restore function. It could be somewhat mitigated with pervious surface.

Ms. Ward noted housing is limited in Exeter and likes the idea of providing housing without impacting new areas. Ms. Eberhardt agreed.

Mr. Koff noted it seems like a 50' buffer would be an improvement and would like to do better on the site plan.

5. Expense Requests

Ms. Murphy noted the Commission needs to identify any end of season requests ASAP to present to the Budget Committee as the Commission currently has low expenditures.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to authorize up to \$300 in expenditures for tools. Mr. Koff seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Ms. Ward motioned to authorize up to \$100 for Rayne's Farm Kiosk replacement. Ms. Raub seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Ms. Ward motioned to authorize up to \$200 for wood supplies for trail repair. Mr. Short seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned to authorize up to \$300 for outreach events and the transfer of funds for repair of siding. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – recused, Clement – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – aye, Raub – aye, Short – aye. Motion passed 7-0-0.

6. Committee Reports

a. Property Management

Ms. Murphy provided the Commission with an update list on activity at Raynes Farm, Irvine, Morrisette, White Perry, McDonnell, DPW-LCHIP, Rte. 27/101 Game Cameras, Oaklands, Linden Commons (joint trail care day), and Industrial Drive kiosk installation

b. Trails

Mr. Koff noted next month there will be a discussion on electric bike use on trails.

Ms. Murphy noted Pollinator Pathways has had decent success and will reach out to residences and business.

c. Outreach Events

Ms. Ward indicated the Sky Watch event at Raynes Farm was cancelled.

Mr. Koff noted the Climate Forum last week was impressive.

Mr. Campion indicated there were a couple of walks with two great groups and good weather.

Ms. Murphy noted an educational program was coming up on the 17th with Ben & Sarah Anderson on wildlife. There could be a winter solstice event at Raynes Farm.

Ms. Murphy noted they are looking for volunteers for Hazardous Waste Day at the DPW.

7. Approval of Minutes: September 8, 2020

Edits were recommended.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to accept the September 8, 2020 minutes as amended. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye, Ward – abstain, Raub – aye, Short – abstain. Motion passed 5-0-2.

8. Correspondence

9. Other Business

10. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled: November 10, 2020.

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to adjourn at 9:50 PM. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary