

Exeter Conservation Commission
February 9, 2021
Virtual Meeting
Draft 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, Alyson Eberhardt, Ginny Raub, (Alternate), Donald Clement, (Alternate), Nick Campion (Alternate), Kristen Osterwood (Alternate), Julie Gilman Select Board Liaison, Conor Madison (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: none.

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)

None.

Mr. Koff called the meeting to order at 7 PM. Dave Short recused himself and Mr. Koff activated Alternate Don Clement.

Action Items

1. Standard Wetland Dredge and Fill application and Conditional Use Permit for the proposed construction of a vehicle storage lot on the property located at 110 Holland Way, Tax Map Parcels #51-14-1 & 51-17, PB Case #21-02 (*Chris Lane-McFarland Ford, Jim Gove-GEI, Erik Poulin/Wayne Morrill-Jones & Beach*)

Erik Poulin presented the plan for a proposed vehicle storage lot and dredge and fill application at McFarland Ford. The previous plan was a larger parking area, now condensed and pulled further from the wetland. Infiltrated stormwater flows out from the site from a culvert. Snow storage areas are 65'

from prime wetland. Have tried to reduce buffer impacts. Have a dredge and fill application for crossing the wetland.

Jim Gove noted the impact would be a minimum. Are required to have a pre-app meeting with DES which took place. The prime wetland was discussed which expanded in size. Mr. Gove believes part was regraded or moved around. The primary function is flood flow alteration. The owner wants to put the western part into deed restriction.

Ms. Ward asked about the property between the proposed restricted area and conservation easement and Mr. Koff noted it was owned by Unitil. Mr. Gove noted the edge of wetland adjustment to the wetland boundary. Ms. Murphy noted the delineated boundary is the new wetland boundary.

Mr. Koff asked if the parcel was just a regular wetland and Mr. Gove stated yes, it still has protection, just not as prime wetland.

Mr. Campbell asked about the 10' of greenspace and whether it was just lawn space or there would be any planting and Mr. Poulin noted they are trying to maintain the tree population which is a mix of pines and hardwoods. The plan is to pluck out the pines and leave the hardwoods. The remaining area would be loamed. Porous pavement will absorb most of the rainfall. Mr. Gove noted they would have a lot of limbs snapping off of the pines so it is more of a safety measure to remove those. Mr. Lane asked about the amount of greenspace from Holland Way to the lot and Mr. Poulin noted there is 50-60 feet of greenspace total.

Ms. Osterwood asked if the owner had any experience with pervious pavement maintenance and Mr. Poulin noted he has dealt with them in the past. A detailed analysis of porous pavement is included with the plan set.

Ms. Eberhardt asked about functions and values and Mr. Gove discussed the groundwater discharge and recharge which is a combination of sand and gravel and the flood flow alteration.

Mr. Koff asked about the stream channel and Mr. Gove noted it was not clear that the stream channel can be found. There is indication of flow on general maps but no defined channel. Mr. Gove noted he walked the whole area and couldn't tell for sure if there are other culverts across the road. Mr. Gove noted he believed it did not matter to the applicant, Mr. Lane, if the property is deed restricted or added to conservation easement. Mr. Gove noted the fish and shellfish habitat doesn't exist. Mr. Gove discussed the sediment retention which deals with trapping sediments and toxicants and the limitation of wildlife habitat due to location. Mr. Gove noted there are no vernal pools around this spot.

Mr. Guindon asked about the connection to Wheelwright Creek and if there is an adequate connection between habitats and Mr. Poulin noted he is trying to match consistent as possible with the existing culvert. Mr. Gove added that the culvert outlet by Hannaford used to be a restoration area but did not think it had been maintained.

Mr. Madison asked about emergent areas (peak land) and Mr. Gove noted it is usually indicated by deep areas and moss, but he did not find it. Mr. Gove explained the prime wetland functions and the assessment which directed toward wetland but not really the buffers.

Ms. Murphy noted the application was originally not going before TRC but now is scheduled for next Thursday.

Mr. Gove noted DES would like a response which can be simple or extensive with conditions.

Ms. Eberhardt noted the climate consideration changes in the design and increases in precipitation. Mr. Gove indicated the design was based around the estimated seasonal water table and believes there is a safety mechanism built in with porous pavement. Mr. Poulin stated the seasonal high water table assessment gives additional separation from that point. Mr. Gove added that the seasonal high water table is not what was seen with test pits for the highest level we would expect and an extra amount for safety.

Mr. Koff asked about the outlet of under drains and Mr. Poulin noted there is a riprap apron at the mouth of each underdrain. The stormflow coming out is very clean. Mr. Gove noted they almost never get discharge out of these pipes with porous pavement.

Mr. Koff noted they would have to keep salt use in mind too. Mr. Poulin noted the plan anticipates the low need for salt at this storage lot and typically less snow build up with porous pavement. Mr. Gove noted they could not use a sand-salt mix.

Mr. Mattera noted sea level rise results in groundwater rise with two-foot increase in sea level rise accounted for an extra foot of water.

Ms. Eberhardt asked the lifespan of the components of the project and Mr. Poulin noted it would get a lot of life with regular maintenance decades of use before repair is needed.

Ms. Award asked what the maintenance plan is, and Mr. Poulin noted typical procedures. Letting sediment build will clog pores. The vacuum schedule is important, two to four times per year. Mr. Gove noted that is an incentive for the owner to do maintenance because porous pavement is expensive to repair/replace.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to send a letter to the State that the Commission has reviewed the application and has no objections as proposed. Mr. Clement seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Koff indicated the wetland CUP would be addressed next and Ms. Murphy would read the questions and he would read the answers, followed by discussion.

Mr. Koff noted the proposed recommendation for salt reduction to the Planning Board. Ms. Murphy added the maintenance of the porous pavers. Mr. Gove noted the 50% salt reduction is in the winter maintenance practices shown on the plan set.

Mr. Lane asked about marking the transition from pavement to porous pavement with signage. Ms. Murphy added the stormwater and maintenance plan. Mr. Poulin noted it could be added to be called out in the plan.

Mr. Koff noted the Commission did not receive a direct wetland application and noted discussion could be adequate.

Ms. Eberhardt noted the functions and values report for Planning Board submittal. Mr. Gove agreed they could do that.

Mr. Koff noted the land use change and concerns with contamination of salt in the groundwater and recommended doing whatever we can to keep the groundwater impact to a minimum.

Mr. Koff addressed the deed restriction or conservation easement and noted the applicant would have to return with if they went with an easement. The restriction could match the language on the adjacent parcel. Ms. Murphy noted an easement would have the additional monitoring responsibility. The applicant is going before the Planning Board on March 11th and the Commission meets two days prior to that.

Mr. Campbell asked about needing permission to walk property with a deed restriction. Mr. Lane noted the deed restriction could grant public access. Mr. Gove read the language of the adjacent parcel.

Mr. Gove noted there would be no temporary impacts. Mr. Poulin noted there would be silt sock and riprap used during construction.

MOTION: Mr. Koff motioned, seconded by Ms. Ward, that the Commission after reviewing the application and recommendation with CUP be approved with the following conditions:

1. The stormwater management plan include maintenance outlined in the plan set regarding the winter maintenance with salt reduction and regular seasonal maintenance;
2. Signage to delineate the transition between pavement and porous pavement;
3. Functions and values assessment wetland document to Planning Board; and
4. Planning Board include in their approval the conservation deed restrictions for the 18.7 acre parcel.

A roll all vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Murphy noted any modifications would require the applicant to come back to the Commission.

2. Annual Work Plan – Tabled

Ms. Murphy recommended each member put their name next to an item they are interested in helping with.

3. Committee Reports

a. Property Management

Ms. Murphy and Ms. Ward installed the game camera at Raynes Farm today. Ms. Murphy asked to be reimbursed \$85 from the Conservation Land Administration Fund for the security box, locking mechanism and SD card.

MOTION: Ms. Ward motioned to reimburse Ms. Murphy for the purchase of the security box, locking mechanism and SD card for installation of the game camera at Raynes Farm from the Conservation Land Administration Fund account. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Ward noted the RFP for structures update at Raynes Farm and the site visit on Friday at 10 AM. At least two contractors will attend.

b. Trails

Ms. Murphy and Mr. Short discussed the request by Fort Rock Riders to start a Gofundme page to purchase a snow dog for winter trail grooming which can also be used to tow items up to 300 lbs. in the summer months across bare ground to move materials in and out.

Mr. Koff asked about the motorized vehicle prohibition in the easement language and Ms. Murphy noted it restricted motorized pleasure vehicles.

The group is looking for acknowledgment and approval to operate on Oaklands and Henderson Swasey trails.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell motioned to approve the use of the machine on trails in Oaklands and Henderson Swasey with review of said use as needed. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

c. Outreach Events

4. Approval of Minutes: January 12th, 2021 Meeting

Ms. Ward and Ms. Raub recommended edits.

MOTION: Ms. Ward motioned to accept the January 12, 2021 minutes as amended. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. The motion passed 7-0-0.

5. Correspondence

a. Exploratory Drilling

Ms. Murphy noted DNCR approval has not been received yet. White and Riverbend will be starting. Smith Page access is being discussed on private lands.

Mr. Campbell asked who would monitor, DES or the Town and Ms. Murphy indicated the Town would monitor.

Mr. Campbell asked about restoration and Ms. Murphy noted the possibility of leaving the well heads and doing work on frozen ground so that restoration won't be required. Ms. Murphy noted trail users would be notified on the Town website and the Commission would post on their Facebook page.

b. Riverwoods Conservation easement

Ms. Murphy noted the Commission approved draft language and there were some changes since then with the meets and bounds description and location of the gas line on the plan. The update was completed and sent to legal and they also recommended removing arbitration language and modifying to read formal discussion, mediator, then court. The meets and bounds are being reviewed. The draft can then go before the Select Board.

6. Other Business

Ms. Murphy reviewed the deliberative session and noted there were no recommendations concerning the Conservation Fund so that will move forward to Town meeting.

Ms. Gilman discussed the proposed composting bin at the Transfer Station which would be emptied weekly. It went to the Sustainability Committee who were in favor.

Mr. Koff discussed the solar array proposed at the land fill behind the Transfer Station. Ms. Gilman noted it was different than the previous with three times more energy output and would be owned outright.

Mr. Koff noted the 40-year lifespan of the solar array and that 25 seems more realistic. Mr. Clement noted that while they begin to lose efficiency after 25 years they still work. The future market demand is an unknown if private parties over saturate the market. Upgrading the system is usually the fix to get energy where it needs to go.

7. Next Meeting: Date Scheduled (3/9/21), Submission Deadline (2/26/21)

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Koff moved to adjourn at 9:31 PM. Ms. Ward seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Koff – aye, Mattera – aye, Ward – aye, Clement – aye, Campbell – aye, Guindon – aye and Eberhardt – aye. With all in favor the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary