

Sturbridge Conservation Commission

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, March 19th, 2019

Approved April 16, 2019

****Meeting will be held at the Sturbridge Center Office Building 301 Main Street, 2nd floor****

6:00 PM Open Meeting – Quorum check

Upcoming meeting dates: May 7th, 2019; May 21st, 2019; June 4th, 2019; June 18th, 2019; July 16th, 2019; August 20th, 2019.

Present: Edward Goodwin (EG), Chair
 Steven Chidester (S), Vice Chair
 David Barnicle (DB)
 Steven Halterman (S)
 Paul Zapun (PZ)

Also Present: Rebecca Gendreau, Conservation Agent (RG); Ashley Piascik, Administrative Assistant (AP); Carol Derby (CD); Marita Tasse (MT); Phillip Moreau (PM); Scott Morrison (SM); Connie Montross (CM); Creighton Peet (CP); Don Taft (DT); Lee Moulton (LM); Margaret Noyes (MN); Joseph Daou (JD); Rich Chaffee (RC); Lynn Eckhert (LE); Louis Fazen (LF); Karri Freeland; Dave Kaitbinski (DK); Kim & Mike Procon (KM & MP); *additional members of South Pond were present (Unfortunately, some additional names were signed illegibly).*

Committee Updates:

CPA: Has not met since last meeting.

Trail Committee: Met last Thursday night, had two guests from Vermont who came down to give a proposal for developing cross-country bike road trails on the Riverlands. The cross-country bike riders were unable to walk the trail because of the snow. They intend to come back in a couple of weeks to walk the trails again, to develop a better understanding of the area. In addition, the Trails Committee Earth Day (basic clean up) will be on the 13th, on the Riverlands from 8am-12pm. Starting at the sheds. All you have to do is wear appropriate footwear and gloves.

Open Space Committee: None.

Lakes Advisory Committee: None.

Approval of minutes: March 5th, 2019.

--Motion (DB): to approve the minutes; 2nd (SH); VOTE: (5-0).

Public Hearings

6:15 **Request for Determination of Applicability;** 135 Shore Road; Construction of a deck over an existing patio to a single-family house; Freeland, K.

Provided legal ad/abutter notification.

Summary: KF representing self. Proposing to put a deck on her house. Deck is estimated to be 26 X 12 feet. This size would be the absolute maximum size of the deck, could go smaller. The proposed work to be done is over an existing patio.

Comments:

- How high would the deck be? Would come from the second level, which is the main house.
- About 70 feet away from the water, meaning it is outside of the 50-foot buffer zone.
- It would be exempt from the WPA.
- The upper deck will be on a footing.
- Four foot lally columns.

-Motion (DB): to close the public hearing; 2nd by (SD); VOTE: (5-0).

-Motion (DB): to approve the Request of Determination with a positive 2b, and a negative number 5; 2nd by (PZ); VOTE: (5-0).

6:30 **Notice of Intent: DEP #300-TBD; Continued from March 5th, 2019.** 268 Big Alum; Demolition of existing house, construction of a new single-family house and associated site work; Represented by Green Hill Engineering for applicant McGrath, M.
Provided legal ad/butter notification.

Summary:

- Still no DEP File number.
- Made some of the changes discussed at last meeting.
- Planting schedule was incorporated. 7 red maples, 4 white oaks, 1 sugar maple. Specific on the plan where they are. There are shrubs in a few separate areas. High bush blueberries and pepperbush, winter berries (3 to 2 foot), nine one gallon mountain laurels (Planting plan can be found at the Conservation office).
- Discussed roof run off.
- Driveway it pitched so it hits the low area. A lot less erosion to keep the driveway paved at a low surface area. If it was a gravel based driveway, could cause a lot of erosion. Swale would go to the lawn area, no erosion sediment at all.
- Discussed possible finding a new location for the well.
- MF would like to see the well remain in the same area, because of the septic system.
- The large tree that was in question by the well, approx. is 100 foot pine. In the future a hazardous tree to the structure or anyone in the yard. Only tree in the 100 foot buffer zone. Approximately 85 feet from the lake.

Comments:

- Replanting plan was asked at the last meeting and received at this meeting.
- Invasive species will be taken out, shrubs going in. Will be an improvement.
- Drainage improvements with the paved driveway, pitch towards small lawn area.
- Asked about drainage improvements. Appears to be a deep slump in the road, however, there was a lot of frozen ice and debris, unable to get a rod down there to see how deep it was. Unknown as of right now.
- Crushed stone was placed below to help with infiltration.
- Operation Maintenance Plan to be written at a later date as the project begins.
- Once every two years, have the maintenance plan conducted. Would add that and attach to certificate with anyone that sells and buys the property. Consistently. Not major, just needed in a document.
- Down the road, working with contractors at the time. The area where the pipe is going to go in has a lot of vegetation. Try to minimize impact at the time.
- A lot of changes have been made, however, waiting for the DEP File number.
- Drainage off of Big Alum Road is going to flow across the driveway and to the lake. DB suggested to propose a possible earth or grass berm.

- SC not happy to be losing a lot of the trees. Idea of moving the well was trying to save the tree.
- Suggested moving the well closer to the street.
- No issues with the plan as outlined, waiting for the DEP File #.
- Berm to front, bigger driveway detail and potentially move the well. Put the well on the plan if it will be moved.
- Requested a continuation for the next meeting.

-VOTE: All in favor for a continuation; VOTE: (5-0).

Old Business

- Proposed South Pond Alum Treatment presentation by ESS

Summary:

- CN from ESS group presented a presentation comparing Alum Treatment at Moswansicut to a similar proposed treatment to be conducted at South Pond in Sturbridge.
- Looking for the Conservation Commission to write a letter to help pursue the process for a 3.19 Grant.
- Took 7-12 days to finish the Moswansicut project.
- Algae bloom causing loss of clarity.
- Wanted to prevent issue from getting worse at Moswansicut, would like to do the same for South Pond.
- With 3.19 Grant, would have to come up with matching funds.
- The more phosphorus you have, the more Alum Treatment you have to apply.
- Would generally be done early Spring, or Fall. Typically, November.
- How much agriculture is being done in the watershed now? 20%
- Tried to work on increasing the gate height. Will not be happening anytime soon.
- RG: What you do for pre, post, and during monitoring? What are you looking at and how? The science of Alum Treatment is well understood. Not a chemical. Not killing things. It takes the nutrient algae eats away so they cannot bloom. Will not go away, just fewer of them blooming and growing.
- RG: Do you know of any lakes that have done pre and post surveys for muscles? It is not a requirement.
- This will not impact aquatic plants at all.
- Looking for approval and letter of support from selectmen.
- Who is doing the monitoring over the next 25 years? ESS is proposing to do water quality monitoring, if QQLA is considering doing that.
- SH: Perfect lake for this project. Very deep/steep. Standard process for treating certain types of problems in the lake.
- SC: appreciate the time put in to the presentation.

The audience has the following questions, comments, concerns:

- MT: Pushing because of the increased algae blooms.
- MN: Shocked when heard ours was as high as it was. They were shocked at the testing lab, the phosphorus content was so high.
- DV: Reacting to a problem that started 85 years ago and continues to progress. Began to realize 35 years ago, how bad the phosphorus increase has been.
- Peter (76 South Shore? Drive): East Brookfield, Brookfield, Sturbridge. The waterbody belongs to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Working to obtain this Grant with the support of the SCC.

- LF: 18 Tantasqua Shore, What will happen to the lake in 15-25 years if nothing is done?
- DM: It will not fix itself. Once it is there, it is there. It will get worse as the years go on.
- Have a Conservation Commission member write an updated letter stating there is a severe algae problem in the lake, caused by phosphorus with the additional information retrieved from tonight's meeting.
- Write a whole new letter from the previous letter SH wrote from last meeting.

-Motion (DB): we approve of a strongly worded letter of support to be sent to the Board of Selectman; 2nd by (SH); VOTE: (5-0).

- 179 Main Street, Update on Parking Lot & Stormwater Plans
 - The Agent provided a quick update for the Commissioners.
 - Plan not ready for this meeting.
 - Provided with email correspondence from Bertin Engineering.
 - No survey done pass the guard rale.
 - More time needed due to snow cover.
- 173 Main Street, Stormwater Management System
 - Stormwater system is not handling the water.
 - Two drains, one from the state, one from the gas station.
 - Gave easement from the state to let water run.
 - Kaitbeski and Bertin Engineering maintained it in 2017.
 - Regarding the barrels, they were removed from the back of the building. Tomorrow the company will come to pick it up.
 - Talk to Bertin, see how it is functioning.
 - Do a site visit, operation maintenance from Bertin to get a better understanding. Look at it when it rains heavily to see.

New Business

- Concept plan for Plimpton Community Forest parking
 - The whole thing is mapped priority habitat.
 - Coming up with a plan, looking for everything that wants to be done there.

Enforcement

- MA DOT; Cedar Lake/MA Pike
 - Enforcement Order Letters were issued. MA DOT could not make it to the meeting.
- MA DOT; Quinebaug River/Rt. 20
 - Enforcement Order Letters were issued. MA DOT could not make it to the meeting.
 - MA DOT believed this Enforcement Order was resolved. However, it has not been resolved yet.
- Hamilton Rod and Gun Club/Rampco; 24 Hamilton Road
 - DT: Met with RG and contractor as well as the contractor's environmental specialist.
 - Good progress has been made. Increasing size of retention area there in the lawn. Would like to expand if possible.
 - Might be something better to do sooner rather than later.
 - Make it parallel to the road.
 - Met with Mary Ann Pinto... discussed run off, sediment, silt.
 - Allow them to increase that area sooner than later? Yes.
 - Time to look at retention than detention basin.
 - Develop a concept plan at this time.
- DEP File #300-1021; RV Management Services; 30 River Road

Summary:

- SM from EcoTec presented the proposed revision plan on behalf of the client.
- Noted that the parking lot was excavated.
- Some additional tree clearing occurred.
- Met with the Agent to discuss mitigation plans and what they can do to make sure the slope is fully stable/well vegetated, make sure the plantings are aligned in that area.
- Also discussed how they can improve wildlife habitat and other areas in the site.
- Suggested where to put larger plants, on the top of slope where it is well vegetated.
- Proposing saplings and shrubs, between the slopes, along with additional planting proposals in disturbed areas.
- Blue area was originally proposed for under planting... continuing to do that.
- Installing existing pipes.
- Two campsites, high quality camp sites were removed.
- Will restore structures.
- Process anticipated was to come in, provide additional plantings, and steps to move forward.

The Commission had the following comments, questions, concerns:

- Can talk about numbers of plants in the future.
- Would have liked to see more mitigation for the 120 trees that were there.
- SC wants a clear understanding of what was done, that was not supposed to be done, and how it will be fixed.
- Trees need to be marked on the plan, for a clear understanding.
- SC viewed an aerial photo of the area, prior to any disturbance... noted that no trees are left.
- EG would like exact plantings to be known, and marked on a plan.
- Would like a week to review the new plan.
- Continuance in two weeks.

Agent Report

- Went over Plimpton concept plan from Trails. There is no parking as of right now; this issue needs to be resolved. Conservation needs to come up with a plan and work with Natural Heritage because the entire area is mapped as priority habitat. Next step is supposed to be for Brandon Goodwin to reach out to Natural Heritage to verify any confusion. The CR says that trail approval needs to be provided by Natural Heritage. EG would like to move forward with the parking lot.

Adjourn

--Motion (SC): to adjourn at 9:06 PM; 2nd (PZ); VOTE: (5-0).