

Sturbridge Conservation Commission
Minutes of
Thursday, April 19, 2018
Center Office Building

Mr. Chidester called the meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 6:00 PM.

Quorum check – confirmed.

Present:

Steven Chidester, vice-chair
David Barnicle
Steve Halterman

Absent:

Edward Goodwin, chair
Paul Zapun

Also Present:

Rebecca Gendreau, Conservation Agent
Rebekah DeCoursey, Planning Department Administrative Assistant
Frank Bicchieri, Bertin Engineering
Anthony & Antoinette Reno, Applicant
Bill Matchett, Inland Docks
Mark Murphy, Abutter
Nancy & Armand Boulanger, Abutter
Arthur Allen, EcoTec
Patrick McLaughlin, MHF Designs
Fernando Santos, Abutter
Mike Beaudry, Builder
Glenn Krevosky, EBT Inc.

Committee Updates:

- CPA: none
- Trails: Saturday April 21 is Earth Day Cleanup. Volunteers will meet at Shattuck Road to work from 8-12. Trails Committee will provide tools, gloves, and water. Pizza will be served for lunch.
- Lakes Advisory Committee: none
- Open Space Committee: none

Request for Certificate of Compliance:

- 48 Beach Ave – a partial certificate for the DPW work that was done on the road frontage. DEP File # 300-810.

Orders of Conditions Signatures

- 300 Clarke Road Extension – small house addition.
- 50 Hall Road – retaining walls at OFS facility.

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- 18 Tantasqua Shore Drive – approved septic replacement.
- 52 South Shore Drive – well water line was adjusted as requested by the Commission to follow the walkway rather than cut through the trees.
- All Orders of Conditions were signed by the Conservation Commission members.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Made by Mr. Barnicle to approve the minutes of April 5th, 2018 as amended.
2nd: Mr. Chidester
Discussion: None
Vote: 3 – 0

Letter Permit – Tree Removal:

Location: 61 Clarke Road. One tree. Exempt from the Wetland Protection Act, only local bylaws apply. Applicants want to install a deck between their pool and garage. The Commission has seen this site before.

Vote: 3 – 0

Discussion: a condition will be made regarding to remove of soil from the site.

Location: 23 Old Hamilton Road Extension. One large Hemlock. Dying Hemlock is over 100' from the resource area. New Owners of the property are planning new gardens in the area, so they did not have specific species picked out yet.

Vote: 3 – 0

Discussion: none

Location: 13 Cove Street. One large decaying Maple. Tree is on Cedar Pond. The tree shows signs of rot and is leaning over the water. They are leaving other healthy trees in the area. One tree located immediately behind this one will provide canopy over lake.

Vote: 3 – 0

Discussion: include a condition to consult the Conservation Department before removal to discuss the removal process at this location.

Location: 202 Lake Road. Two dead Hemlocks. The Commission has seen this property for raze and rebuild. Both trees are dead and located far from the lake. Many trees in immediate area.

Vote: 3 – 0

Discussion: none

Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1013. 336 The Trail. Anthony Reno is proposing a single family home and a dock within the riverfront.

Mr. Frank Bicchieri from Bertin Engineering presented the project on behalf of the applicant. This project is located on Big Alum Pond. The site is 17.5 acres in total. The initial driveway work has already been permitted and constructed, but there is more work to do.

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The Harbormasters (Board of Selectmen) have approved the dock installation. Resources on the site include bank, Riverfront and a bordering vegetated wetland. The property abuts Big Alum Pond and a perennial stream is located off the project site. Both state and local buffer zones apply to this project, as well as the Town Zoning Bylaw of a 500' buffer due to the steepness of the slopes on site and the proximity to water.

The driveway will be a paved crowned driveway 12' in diameter. There will be 2' shoulders of crushed stone. The stone will be 3"-6" in diameter for runoff stabilization, 18" deep. The steepness of the driveway means that there is a potential for a significant amount of erosion. Mr. Bicchieri stated that he did not design a swale for this driveway project because he wanted to give the water an opportunity to infiltrate as much as possible. The sides of the driveway embankment will be stabilized, reseeded, and allowed to revegetate naturally over time.

At the proposed house location, 3.5 acres of land will be cleared; this number includes what will be cleared for the driveway as well. The remainder of the site will be undisturbed. The applicant will use a golf cart to get down the long driveway from the house to the dock. The home will take at least a year to complete. The applicant is striving for an efficient, productive, protective plan that suits the family's needs as well as follows all bylaws and regulations. A silt fence and waddle will provide erosion control on site.

Bill Matchett from Inland Docks spoke about the dock installation. The removable dock will be set (not physically attached) on an existing cement pier. Inland Docks has provided numerous docks for property owners around Sturbridge. The modular style dock will have aluminum footpads that sit on the lake's bottom and plastic wheels. The design makes it very easy to install, store and remove and also means minimal disturbance to the natural resource. The proposed dock will rest on the existing concrete pad, with the remainder of the dock in the water. The decking planks are removable and the frame weighs only approximately 100lbs. Inland Docks provides seasonal installations, and at this property would remove the dock at the end of the season and store it up at the location of the house.

Ms. Gendreau stated that the Commission will be clear in the Orders of Conditions to show that the approval is only for the dock and no other work down at the lake's side. While the applicant mentioned they might want to do additional work down near the lake later on, it is not proposed at this time. The applicant would like to develop a plan in the future and will file for review at that time.

The Committee had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- Will there be check dams installed along the driveway? No, the large sized rocks proposed at the shoulder of the driveway will be large enough to slow the water flow and stay in place.
- The Committee stated they wanted to be clear that no trees will be removed to install the dock. The applicant assured the Committee that they really want to take a minimal approach to keep everyone happy and preserve the area. They will not plan to do any tree, shrub, or branch removal other than what is approved.

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- The 3.5 acres of tree removal for the house seems a little more than is necessary.
- The applicant clarified that the appealing factor of this property was the access to the water. They would like a dock to put their boat on and go out with the kids. They are planning to put in a pool up at the house and although not on paper, have the intent to install numerous landscaped plants and garden beds.

The Public had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- The property will be served by Town sewer.
- Tom Liro of 8 Mount Dan Road asked for clarification of the dock. The platform and dock will be one entity. He also brought up the concern of the 3.5 acres of lawn, in that the Big Alum Lake Association like to keep residents informed in regards to fertilization and the potential pollution it can cause in the lake. The applicant replied that they certainly will take any advice of the Lake Association and be glad to use all best management practices possible to preserve the area.
- Mrs. Reno stated that they family currently lives in The Preserve. Their kids are growing and their yard is not that large. They are looking forward to having a large yard and lawn they can fill with fruit trees and other vegetation such as grass gardens.

Motion: Made by Mr. Halterman to close the Public Hearing.
2nd: Mr. Barnicle
Discussion: None
Vote: 3 – 0

Motion: Made by Mr. Halterman to approve the Notice of Intent DEP File #300-1013 as submitted, subject to the conditions to be provided by the Conservation Agent.
2nd: Mr. Chidester
Discussion: None
Vote: 3 – 0

Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1014. 234-236 Haynes Street – Route 15. Petrogas Group New England Inc. is proposing redevelopment of an existing gas station and restaurant site, including relocation of a culverted perennial stream. Continued from April 5, 2018.

Arther Allen from EcoTec and Patrick McLaughlin from MHF Design presented the project on behalf on the client, Petrogas Group New England Inc. The current conditions include two buildings on two parcels and a septic system on a third parcel. There is also a vacant lot on Mashapaug Road that is part of the project locus.

The natural resources on site include a perennial stream that enters the site via a culvert on the Mashapaug Road side, runs through the site and enters pipework owned by MassDOT. There are also bordering vegetated wetlands and an intermittent stream. The project is currently in discussion with MassDOT in regards to the relocation of the culverted stream and potential stormwater improvements. The buried and most likely failing corrugated pipe that current goes under the site will need to be replaced. It appears that the underground

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pipe has failed at this connection and a sink hole is currently visible. There is also an intermittent stream and a wetland system on the project site.

This meeting is to introduce the project to the Commission and begin discussion. There are still site work plans that need to be finalized regarding the buried stream. The convenience store on site will be demolished. The existing building that formerly held Roy Rogers will be renovated to include a convenience and service store and two fast food establishments. Approvals for permits have been granted by both the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board.

The current septic system needs to be replaced, abandoning the existing system. This design is still underway. The new system will be further away from the resource areas and closer to the road. The applicant will be filing both septic and well permits with the Board of Health. The existing septic system is raised, as will be the proposed system. It will be capped, spread with soil, and reseeded for natural regrowth.

The Committee had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- The Agent has been in discussion with the project team to provide preliminary comments and has been working with the project team to revise the project.
- A major point of attention is the perennial stream that has been previously buried, alternative options need to be explored to meet Stream Crossing Standards. This will be addressed in upcoming version of the plan.
- Alternative options shall be explored to infiltrate stormwater versus directly discharging into the stream.
- The new septic system will be raised slightly higher than the existing. The current leach field is at 18" and the proposed is at 36".
- The distance from the surface to the buried stream is estimated to be 17'-20'.

The Public had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- Mark Murphy of 30 Bentwood Drive spoke regarding the septic system. The septic is close to the condos abutting the project site. There have been problems with smell in the past; hopefully this will be remediated with the new system. The drive-thru lane is facing to the condos, Mr. Murphy was concerned about the lights of cars and building impacting the condos. Finally, Mr. Murphy asked if the access that currently exists and will be used during septic construction will then be fenced off after construction. The concern being customers using it as a place to walk their dogs, etc. The representatives for Petrogas stated that there are currently white pines that create a buffer between properties, but they would certainly examine the sight lines and explore the possibility of understory shrub planting if necessary, as well as a fence to keep the public out of the septic area. The redevelopment project is an overall improvement to the site and the applicant is open to suggestions of how to improve it.
- Fernando Santo of 14 Mashapaug Road spoke regarding the proposed well. As the closest abutter to the well, his concern is that during peak summer days the draw

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from the well for Petrogas will impact his well by lowering the water table. He has spoken to MassDEP employee Susan Connors to express his concern and discussed that after the well is installed he will coordinate a test with his well and the new well. He doesn't anticipate there being a problem, but in the case that there is, he wanted his concern to be on record. He will coordinate with MassDEP to do a pumping test, and he wants to be sure it's an honest and accurate test. The representatives for Petrogas stated that the well is proposed to be a deep well going down to the bedrock, it would be assumed the Ms. Santos' well is to bedrock as well, so the hope and assumption is that there is adequate water to support both wells.

- Michael Caplette of 38 Bentwood Drive, chair of the Condo Association, asked for clarification of the extent of the project bounds (extent of pavement). The drive-thru will include a 16' expansion of the driving lane, but elsewhere in the project the new pavement will be not more than the existing pavement. Mr. Caplette would like to see landscaping to prevent the lights and traffic from the drive-thru from being visible from the condos.

Representatives from Petrogas Gas Group New England asked and receive a one-month continuance on the project and will meet before the Conservation Commission again on May 19th at 6:15.

Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1009. 186 Lake Road. Mark Smith and Barbara Veale-Smith are proposing construction of a screened-in porch over an existing deck within the buffer zone. Continued from April 5, 2018.

Glenn Krevosky from EBT Environmental Consultants Inc. represented the applicant. At the last meeting the Commission had several questions and Mr. Krekvosky started by reviewing those and the changes they have addressed:

In a large area of pea stone, there is an existing honeycomb leach pit. Mr. Krekvosky presented the Commission with a photo of the inside of this pit. He has gone in and assessed the status of this drain. The applicant is proposing to extract debris and clean it out so it will be more effective. They are proposing a Cultec drywell to collect and infiltrate roof runoff from the existing house. The overflow would tie into the existing runoff pipe that drains into the lake. All roof runoff currently is directed into the lake. The runoff from the proposed roof of the porch will be directed into the proposed rain garden.

Mr. Krekvosky presented the Commission with images of several rain gardens he recently visited and used as inspiration for rain gardens he is proposing at the site. This will help mitigate water runoff into the lake; the rain gardens will be proposed in the stepped retaining walls. Herbaceous or woody vegetation can be utilized.

Regarding the erosion at the boat launch area, he is proposing shoreline stabilization using large natural rocks. He believes after observations that the erosion is from wave action rather than runoff. Large rocks will help stabilize this area of the project site and blend in with the natural shoreline. Mr. Krekvosky would like the Commission's approval on this. Pea stones will be removed from the lake.

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Mike Beaudry, builder, spoke on the house addition. The existing upper deck is cantilevered on 2x10's. The screened in area will be added to the existing structure. The railings will remain in place. He will install a rubber roof. The gutters will tie into the lower level and drain into the rain garden. He has discussed the project with Nelson Burlingame, building inspector, and at a preliminary inspection Mr. Burlingame has no issues. No structural drawings have been submitted.

The Conservation Agent noted that there are numerous improvements added to the project including the rain garden, drywell, plantings, field drain maintenance and stabilization of the boat ramp area. The agent does not anticipate that the conversion of the deck into a porch will impact the resource area due to the project revisions. The numerous improvements have been appreciated and noted. The agent asked about the screening in of the lower level patio and plans for that.

The Committee had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- The plan is an improvement on the stormwater system, there is no change to the impervious surface.
- Mr. Halterman stated he was fine with the shoreline stabilization using natural rocks.
- The pea stone gravel will be removed from the shoreline area.
- Mr. Barnicle stated that as a previously disturbed area, using natural large rocks as a way to break the waves is acceptable.
- Mr. Chidester stated that his opinion of the project has greatly increased due to the thought and effort the design and build team put into addressing their original concerns. The proximity of the project to the water is a large concern with this project but he feels the Commission's concerns have been addressed. He also supported using large natural rocks to stabilize the shoreline from wave action.

Motion: Made by Mr. Barnicle to close the public hearing.

2nd: Mr. Halterman

Discussion: None

Vote: 3 – 0

Motion: Made by Mr. Barnicle to approve the Notice of Intent DEP File #300-1009 at 186 Lake Road as submitted, subject to the conditions to be provided by the Conservation Agent.

2nd: Mr. Halterman

Discussion: None

Vote: 3 – 0

Letter Permit – Tree Removal:

Location: Town Barn Field. Applicant is looking to put a shed behind home plate at the softball field as well as a new batting cage. The shed will be on blocks to level it. The batting cage will be 65'x24' with 6-8 posts put into the ground. These sleeves will go 3' into concrete. There will be 4"-6" of stone dust removed off site and replaced. The batting cage

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is “temporary” in nature in that it will be taken down each fall, the posts removed, holes covered, and then put back up in the spring for the season. No trees will be removed. All work is within the fields. Soil will be removed off site. The Recreation Committee has approved the project.

Vote: 3 – 0

Discussion: none

Old Business:

None.

New Business

None.

On a motion made by Mr. Halterman, seconded by Mr. Barnicle, and voted 3 - 0, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.