

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018**  
**Center Office Building**

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

Quorum check – confirmed.

**Present:**

Edward Goodwin, chair  
Steven Chidester, vice-chair  
David Barnicle  
Paul Zapun

**Absent:**

Steve Halterman

**Also Present:**

Rebecca Gendreau, Conservation Agent  
Rebekah DeCoursey, Planning Dept.  
Arthur Allen, EcoTec  
Conrad Decker, Petrogas Group Inc.  
Mark & Barbara Murphy, abutters

Leonard Jalbert, Jalbert Engineering  
John Radner, Applicant  
Patrick McLaughlin, MHF Design  
Andre Cormier, Escape Estates

**Committee Updates:**

- CPA: Meeting Wednesday, May 16. Parks and Recreation will donate roughly 1 million towards new fields. Other great ideas came up as well.
- Trails: met today and are meeting again tonight. Saturday is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month and is Trails Day. Join from 8-12 to help out.
- Lakes Advisory Committee: none.
- Open Space Committee: draft of the plan update is nearing completion.

**Letter Permits**

**Location:** 320 Brookfield Road

Proposed shed at Junior High School has been withdrawn. They found a more suitable location for the shed outside the buffer zone.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** none

**Location:** 310 The Trail

Small porch over existing permitted deck, 75-80' away from the resource area. Minor project with no soil disturbance, there are no anticipated concerns with the project.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** none

**Location:** 41 River Road

Above ground pool proposed within an existing yard approx. 90-100 ft. away from the resource area. Proposed oval pool is 28' x 16'. There will be some removal of soil; it will be reused in some low spots in the lawn around the property. No soil will be removed from the project site.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** none

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018**  
**Center Office Building**

**Location:** 96 Paradise Lane – tree removal

White Oak is 90' away from resource area. White oaks have suffered from gypsy moths and drought over past few years. This tree may have died for these reasons. In 2013, a Maple and Oak were previously approved for removal. It was requested that 1 tree be planted in placement of the removed trees. That tree was never planted. The Commission would like to see the original tree replaced and a 2:1 replacement for the proposed tree with a diameter of 1.5"-2" DBH. The trees removed were full size significant trees. Options for replanting could also include a combination of trees and varieties of berry bearing bushes.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** Present the applicant with two planting choices and explain that it not a voluntary action to replace the trees that have been removed.

**Location:** 24 Hamilton Road – septic system

Project is over 100' from the resource area, thus only the local Bylaw applies. It will be included in the permit conditions that proper erosion controls must be taken. A work plan has not been finalized; therefore can condition to ask for work plan to appropriately condition.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** What is the maintenance plan? Include in the permit conditions a requirement for a fail-safe measure involving the pump alarm system, check valves or other measures that will keep the system working if something breaks.

**Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1014. 234-236 Haynes Road; Petrogas represented by EcoTec Inc. Redevelopment of an existing gas station and restaurant site, including relocation of a culverted perennial stream. Continued from 4/19/18.**

Ed Goodwin and Paul Zapun signed a Mullin's form. They were not present at the first meeting but were able to watch the recorded video of the previous meeting.

Arthur Allen of EcoTec and Patrick McLaughlin, MHF Design presented the project on behalf of the applicant. Conrad Decker represented his client, Petrogas Group Inc. The project is back before the Commission with conceptual plans of daylighting a portion of the currently buried stream that runs through a culvert at the redevelopment site at 234-236 Haynes Road/Route 15.

Mr. Allen presented the environmental side of the conceptual design here tonight. It involves moving the current culverted stream from under the project site to the eastern side of the site, out from all developed area. The stream would be modified at the southern connection to existing infrastructure as well as modifying the perennial and intermittent stream where it would daylight at the north end. Here it would resemble a mountain stream or step pool type restoration project upstream of the current connection with DOT structures.

Mr. McLaughlin explained the civil engineering side of the proposed conceptual design. It will grab the existing infrastructure off the shoulder of Mashapaug Road at a catch basin. The pipe will be 36" RCP (reinforced concrete pipe). The existing buried culvert will be piped with flowing concrete and abandoned. The new RCP pipe will go around the entire site, being relocated away from the development – away from potential fuel spillage or automotive leaks of any kind. There will be a significant amount of grading in the wetland of the intermittent stream on the north side of the site to allow for the stream to daylight. Two new detention ponds are proposed on site to collect the run off from the parking lot versus directing into the culverted stream (as previously proposed).

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018**  
**Center Office Building**

Mr. McLaughlin discussed the finalized septic plans. The existing gravel access road will be used. The existing leach field and concrete chambers will be abandoned and covered. The new system will be situated closer to the road and further away from the wetland. The new system will involve alternating beds – flow will be diverted every six months. The mechanism is electronically adjusted and can even be done from a smartphone.

Ms. Gendreau stated she would like a narrative of the alternative analysis process for trying to meet the Stream Crossing Standards and why certain options cannot be accomplished on site. This is a complicated project with numerous variables, and when the final decision regarding the solution is found, it will be good to have on record how and why the designers and engineers ended up at the conclusion they did. Overall, the culverted pipe is being brought out from under the project site which is a good thing and daylighting the stream at the end is a bonus.

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

- Consider placing screens on the entrance to the pipe to keep out unwanted critters and debris.
- Open detention ponds can attract trash and debris, consider possibly fencing to keep trash and water resources separate.
- The daylight exit of the stream is very steep. Plantation evolution on this will begin with erosion control matting on topsoil to be planted with woody species to reforest the area into native plantings.
- Numerous mature trees are being removed in this project. The design team is aware of this and assures they will be proposing replanting in numerous locations around the site in the final plans.
- Could the pipe be kept in the same place and just replaced? Not really because part of the pipe runs under the former Roy Rogers building. Also, because the pipe is so old and the condition is unknown, the DPW asked them to replace the entire thing. At this point they felt it was better to move the stream outside the redevelopment site even though it will mean disturbance to the grass area surrounding the site.

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

- Barbara Murphy of 30 Bentwood Drive, abutter to the project. Safety concerns with the abandoned septic system. Upon a site walk, it seems very unsafe. She wanted clarification of what would be done to the old system when the new one is built. The design team explained the existing tanks are only 18” deep and are not as much of a safety threat as Ms. Murphy imagined. They are not proposing to crush the tank but rather cover them with soil and replant vegetation. They will explore the option of crushing the tanks due to potential safety concerns. Abandoned systems are not always crushed.
- Ms. Murphy is concerned with barrier plantings on the side of the drive thru. Plantings and buffers to mitigate the noise and lights from this side of the building would be appreciated by the condo owners.
- Will there be enforcement of overnight truck parking? The Commission does not have jurisdiction on this matter and could not comment. There will be 5 spots for tractor trailer parking, but there will not be overnight parking anywhere on site.
- Mark Murphy of 30 Bentwood Drive, abutter to the project. Wanted to thank the Commission and the project team for acknowledging the concerns and questions the condo association has had regarding the project. It is obvious that their voices were heard and they sincerely appreciate that. They will continue, as an association, to go to the relevant meetings

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018**  
**Center Office Building**

be a part of the process. They feel this is an improvement to the site and look forward to seeing it commence appropriately.

The applicants asked for a continuance of the meeting to finalize the site plans of the conceptual plans presented here tonight. Public hearing continued to June 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:15.

**Vote:** 4 – 0 to accept the continuation

**Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1016. J. Radner represented by Jalbert Engineering. Construction of a single family house within the buffer zone.**

Leonard Jalbert presented on behalf of the applicant. The proposal includes the raze and reconstruction of single family home at 139/140 Lake Road. The ZBA has approved the plans. The house is within the 200' buffer zone. There will be a 4' retaining wall at the rear of the house. There is proposed drainage on the north and south sides of the house crushed stone will be the parking area. The soil will be stockpiled and removed; there is no room for soil storage on the site. There is town sewer and the private well is located at the back of the property.

Ms. Gendreau noted that the limits of the work, drip strip, and notation of trees to be removed have all be addressed on the plan. She will be looking for a good work plan that addresses closing the work site off with erosion controls.

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

- The existing dilapidated cottage is 393 sq. ft., the proposed is 885 sq. ft., and the existing house across Lake Road (also owned by Radner) is 783 sq. ft.
- Instead of a drip strip, consider a closed system with a 500 gallon tank to contain the onsite stormwater. This would include closed gutters to collect the water but not debris.
- The rear of site does not have any proposed plantings noted on the plan. The applicant is willing to plant any type of vegetation that the Commission would like to see.

The applicant asked for a continuance of the meeting to rework the drainage system and include a planting plan. Public hearing continued to June 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.

**Vote:** 4 – 0 to accept the continuation

**Public Hearing. Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation. DEP File # tdb. 14 & 50 Douty Road. Confirming the extent of wetland resource areas.**

Public hearing postponed.

Andy Cormier of Escape Estates represented the project. The public hearing did not open, but the Commission was able to have an informal discussion about the next steps for this project. Andy stated that there was previously a question about a culvert on the property. He has discovered that the culvert was damaged when the original farmer was removing the fence for scrap materials.

Mr. Gendreau stated she would recommend that they have a third party review the wetland delineation. The Commission is allowed to request this of the applicant on large projects. The applicant will be asked to provide the Commission of three names of candidates and then the commission will choose out of the qualified consultants. The applicant pays the cost of this review.

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission**  
**Minutes of**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018**  
**Center Office Building**

The Commission requests that the property owner to refrain from mowing portions of the site near resource areas and the portion of the agricultural fields that has the potential to be a wetland resource area. The consultant is required to document the existing conditions and to identify the vegetation growing there. Mowing these areas will limit their ability to accurately document the area and may cause project delays. The Commission will be looking for a consultant that is a certified soil scientist with a wetland background.

The public hearing will be postponed until June 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:45.

**Public Hearing. Notice of Intent – DEP File #300-1007. George Vinton Road; BWC Origination 8 LLC; Replacement of 2 culverts to provide access to the completed solar project. Continued from May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.**

Postponed until June 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.

**Request for Certificate of Compliance**

A tree removal at 110 Westwood Drive triggered the awareness of an open Order of Conditions. The Conservation Agent inspected the work at the site visit and found no areas of concerns. The Commission signed the Certificate of Compliance.

**Order of Condition**

130 Brookfield Road. Single family home is requesting a minor change to make more room for site work. They will reduce the tree boundary disturbance on the north side of the home, and increase it roughly 20' on the front of the home. The Commission would like to see this slight adjustment on the site plans before the start of work. The Commission signed the Orders of Conditions.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** made by Mr. Chidester to approve the minutes of May 3, 2018, as amended.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Mr. Zapun

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** None.

**Old Business:**

The Conservation Agent would like to begin work on reworking of letter permits. The department has never had inspections on tree removals, for example, and moving forward it would be nice to get some type of commitment out of the applicant. One member suggested phrasing such as: “at the conclusion of [*ex. tree removal*] please notify the Conservation Commission.” It could help monitor projects internally and possibly have more concrete actions complete by the applicant when necessary.

**New Business**

Vote on the continued use of Wetlands Protection funds for funding 5 hours of the Conservation Department Administrative position.

**Vote:** 4 – 0

**Discussion:** The new Conservation Admin will begin work on Tuesday, May 22 after appointment by the Board of Selectmen on Monday.

**Sturbridge Conservation Commission  
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On a motion made by Mr. Halterman, seconded by Mr. Barnicle, and voted 5 - 0, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.