

Conservation Commission Minutes of the June 8, 2010 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by John Planinsek, who chaired the meeting in place of Dena DeSena.

Attendance: Marti Blair, Dick Bauman, Mike Duddy, John Planinsek
Town Planner Maureen O'Meara, Jessica Sullivan, Town Council liaison

1. The Commission agreed to take Item 7, Planning Board agenda, out of order to accommodate Jon Whitten, engineer with Terradyne Associates, representing the applicant of the 1055 Shore Rd Private Accessway/Resource Protection Permit. Mr. Whitten described the project located on a 33,000 sq. ft. lot with 100' of frontage. A Resource Protection Permit is needed for the driveway to cross a narrow wetland and fill 250 sq. ft. In order to reduce stormwater flows, the applicant will be constructing the driveway using a porous pavement.

Mr. Planinsek noted that water travels horizontally and well as vertically and is concerned with flooding adjacent conservation land. Mr. Whitten explained that the 13 acre watershed, within which the wetland is located, flows to a 24" culvert located in Shore Rd. The watershed is already either developed or conserved. A 15" culvert will be installed under the driveway to reconnect the wetland. The applicant will be providing drainage easements for the drainage and the project has been designed to coordinate with the proposed Shore Road path. He has modeled the site to the 100 year storm, where water reaches elevation 29, but does not pond over the driveway.

Mr. Duddy asked if the culvert is proposed where water is moving on the property now? Mr. Whitten said yes, during storm event, although it is not a stream. Mr. Duddy about the elevations of the proposed culvert and the 24" culvert. Mr. Whitten said the design should convey water after construction. Originally, he had put the culvert along the drainage alignment, but moved it to the current proposed location in order to provide adequate cover over the pipe and to shorten the pipe. With some grade adjustments, he was able to use just one culvert.

Mr. Bauman questioned if there would be standing water on the south side of the driveway. Mr. Whitten said that the calculations show that the culvert size is big enough so that there will be no significant ponding, even during a 100-year storm.

Mrs. Sullivan asked about the culvert pitch. Mr. Whitten said is it 4%, which is pretty good when the minimum is .5%. Both ends will have rip rap to protect against erosion.

Mr. Duddy wanted to verify the grade of the driveway culvert. Mr. Whitten said it is 26' at the entrance. Mr. Duddy wants to be cautious that water does not back up onto Robinson Woods and asked about the culvert size. Mr. Whitten reviewed his calculations and concluded that water would not back up onto Robinson Woods, even in a 100 year storm. Mr. Duddy confirmed that the rate of water flowing over the driveway during a greater than 100 year storm would not result in backing up onto Robinson Woods. Mr. Whitten said confirmed this. If a larger size culvert is used, the next size up is 18".

Ms. Blair asked if the existing wetland would be drained. Mr. Whitten said it would not drain. It is not a vernal pool, but a wooded wetland.

Mr. Planinsek noted that the area is not that marshy, there is water flow in high flows, but the area is not stripped of vegetation down to the rock bed.

Mr. Duddy wanted to follow up on Ms. Blair's question and confirm it would not drain the wetland. Mr. Whitten explained that the ditching would be at a shallower slope than existing, then the drainage path would change at the driveway, then swale at a flatter slope than now, then culvert and riprap. Mr. Duddy asked if the model addresses when there is too much water draining from a wetland. Mr. Whitten said the model does not address that, but there will not be more water leaving the wetland than now because he is keeping the same minimum grade.

Mr. Bauman asked if there is anything in town rules to require structures to be maintained. Mr. Whitten said the approval includes a maintenance agreement.

Ms. Blair asked how much water flows from the building envelope. Mr. Whitten said not much water is contributed from the north side of the lot. Most of the water is from drainage.

Mrs. Sullivan asked about impact on the abutting Connell property. Mr. Whitten said the project is not impacting the adjacent pond.

Mr. Duddy moved that the Conservation Commission recommend with regard to the wetland impact that the permit is approvable. Mr. Planinsek seconded the motion.

Mr. Duddy said he is philosophically inclined to not have the Conservation Commission impede ad hoc small development. He is more offended by big subdivisions wiping out farmland and forest. He would support more liberal variance from standards for current properties and infill lots.

Ms. Blair said the lot is nonconforming for a reason. The regulations were changed for a reason and she does not support exemptions from resource protection.

The motion was passed 3-1(Blair).

2. Minutes. Mr. Duddy made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Bauman. The minutes of the March 9, 2010 meeting were approved by a vote of 4-0.
3. Conservation Commission draft rules. The Commission reviewed a first draft of rules of procedure and suggested some revisions. The draft will be revised and considered by the Conservation Commission at the July meeting.
4. Miscellaneous Trail improvements. The Whaleback Ridge Trail has been "rough cut." Ms. Blair will do some weed whacking.

The Leighton Trail is cleared as part of the Trails Day event, which included John Planinsek, Marti Blair and 3-4 neighbor volunteers. One abutter claimed tree trimming was on his property and called the police. Mr. Planinsek was able to show the neighbor a greenbelt sign located less than 1' away from the trimming. The Steeplebush connector still needs to be done, but will need confirmation of location first. The Wells Road end also needs more signs.

The Great Pond caps for the boardwalk are on hold, as is the Gull Crest trail surface stabilizing project.

In Winnick Woods, there is still a large pile of gravel that needs to be spread. Maureen will contact Scott Townsend regarding gravel to be spread.

Maureen will also review with Dale Brewer if any additional trail areas need data collected.

5. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner