

Town of Newington, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, February 14, 2019

- Call to Order:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop called the February 14, 2019 meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Present:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop; Co-Chair Weiner; Commissioners Liz Durfee; Jim Tucker; Alternate Jane Kendall and Bill Murray
- Absent:** Commissioner Ann Morton; Alternate Sandra Devin; and Town Planner, Gerald Coogan
- Public Guests:** Justin Cunha with Landscapes Aurelindo; Rob Hoover with TFM Engineering; Jim Gove with Gove Environmental; Richard Davison, Sponge-Jet CEO

1) **NHDES Permit Request:** Follow up regarding property owned by **Sasha Sotirovic**, located at **168 Little Bay Road**, Tax Map 15, Lot 8

Justin Cunha with Landscapes Aurelindo, informed the Commission that he had made the required adjustments on the application to the Army Corp of Engineer's Section 2.1, Streams, Rivers and Lakes within 200 feet; Section 3.2 Highest Ranked Habitat; and Section 4.1 Floodplain.

Co-Chair Weiner moved to recommend approval of NHDES permit for property owned by Sasha Sotirovic; located at 168 Little Bay Road, Tax Map 15, Lot 8 based on prior meeting discussions and update of Army Corp of Engineer updates, 2.1; 3.2 & 4.1. Bill Murray seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that only had two copies were provided instead of the usual five copies. Mr. Cunha replied that the rest may have been with Town Planner, Gerald Coogan. Co-Chair Weiner asked that Mr. Cunha meet him in the morning at Town Hall to sign the remaining copies.

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II) Landscape Proposals:

- A) Amendment to approved landscape plan for **Storage Barn I** located at **2211 Woodbury Avenue**, Tax Map 19, Lot 2

Rob Hoover with TFM Engineering, presented the amended landscape plans. Mr. Hoover noted that the existing evergreens along the back access road from Patterson Lane were in good shape, but there was a large stand of tall, deciduous ash trees that were hanging over the roof of the abutting Sponge-Jet Company who had requested their removal to allow sun in to the solar panels they were installing on their roof. Mr. Hoover stated that they were proposing to leave the stumps of the trees they removed as had been discussed in last month's meeting and replace them with five (5) blue point juniper and ten (10) viburnum.

Co-Chair Weiner commented that although the ash trees were not in the most attractive state, he had been against cutting them unless they were replaced. Co-Chair Hislop said concerned that they were only proposing two species after she had stated that the Commission disliked monoculture plantings and required a third species to ensure survival against disease or pest attacks on any single species. She added that additional staggered heights would also help fill in the gaps. Commissioner Bill Murray asked what a good candidate for a third species would be. Mr. Hoover said he would review species for color, size and texture that would mix well with the others.

Co-Chair Weiner stated that the applicant had attended a Planning Board meeting with their soil scientist, Jim Gove with Gove Environmental to present his assessment of the wetlands on the abutting Storage Barn II site on River Road and Shattuck Way. Co-Chair Weiner said he would prefer to wait until Town wetlands consultant, Mark West of West Environmental had a chance to present his own review of the wetlands at the next meeting, and then they could discuss landscaping of both projects together.

Commissioner Jane Kendall commented that this proposal was an amendment on an approved plan by the Planning Board, and Mr. West's report was for the wetlands across the street that had not been approved yet. Commissioner Liz Durfee asked what information on soils on the abutting property would affect this site. Co-Chair Weiner replied that the applicant would need to return anyhow so there would be no harm in waiting for Mr. West's wetlands report.

Commissioner Jim Tucker asked that the Commission and the applicant would receive the report prior to the next meeting so that the applicant would be prepared to address any issues that were brought up.

Jane Hislop moved to table a decision on the amendment to that approved landscape plan for Storage Barn I located at 2211 Woodbury Avenue, Tax Map 19, Lot 2 until the next meeting. Bill Murray seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

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B) Landscape proposal for **Storage Barn II** located at **River Road and Shattuck Way**, Tax Map 13, Lot 7-A

Rob Hoover with TFM Engineering, presented the landscape plans at the entrance, corners, foundation, front of building facing Shattuck Way, and back of building facing River Road. Mr. Hoover discussed species chosen including PJM rhododendrons, spreading junipers, and an evergreen screen mix of Austrian pine, balsam fir and white pine mix.

Mr. Hoover said they were also planting deciduous shade trees of yellow birch and tupelo trees that liked damp conditions on the edges of the abutting wetlands to replace some of the trees that were cut during the clear cutting, as well as planting a grove of "Kentucky" coffee trees on the Town owned corner of Patterson Lane and River Road. He explained that although it is the state tree of Kentucky, the deciduous trees were now considered by extension services to be a native heirloom further north due to warming temperatures from climate change.

Commissioner Bill Murray asked if the new building would have solar panels, where the trees might impede the sun at maturity, and Mr. Hoover replied that it would not.

Co-Chair Hislop asked if the bioretention areas would be mowed. Mr. Hoover replied that they would be maintained once a year with a bush hog.

Co-Chair Hislop asked what seed the mix would be, and Mr. Hoover replied that he had the list of seeds that were recommended for bioretention in his office. Co-Chair Hislop asked that they add seed specification, and a seasonal maintenance landscape plan, including watering of tree species.

Co-Chair Hislop asked how wet the wetlands were. The applicant's soil and wetlands scientist, Jim Gove with Gove Environmental stated that he had done a couple of test pits in the area and discovered a shallow loam over heavy clay, with the seasonal high water being 2 feet to 2-1/2 feet down over silty clay.

Co-Chair Hislop asked where snow storage would occur, and Mr. Hoover showed three areas at the back of the pavement on the Patterson Lane side.

Jane Hislop moved to table a decision on the landscape proposal for Storage Barn II located at River Road and Shattuck Way, Tax Map 13, Lot 7-A until the next meeting. Bill Murray seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

III) Wetlands Violations Notification:

- A) Property owned by **Brian Short** located at 336 Newington Road, Tax Map 54, Lot 6

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Co-Chair Weiner stated that he had observed paths and piles of dirt going into wetlands along Brian Short's property at 336 Newington Road. He said he stopped in to see Kevin Kelly, Town Building Inspector to ask him to review the situation. Co-Chair Weiner said Mr. Kelly talked with employees on site who were supposed to drive on the driveway, but had not so he called the owner, and called David Price with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) who shut the operation down because they were taking fill from the barn being built in the back and moving it to the front wetlands area.

Co-Chair Hislop commented that she noticed dirt piled on the abutters side. Co-Chair Weiner replied that DES had them put up silt constraints to protect the wetlands.

B) Privately owned docks stored along Fox Point shoreline

Co-Chair Weiner stated that the individuals that left their docks down along Fox point shoreline may never have been contacted that the Department of Environmental Services to move them. Commissioner Kendall asked if Code Enforcer, Kevin Kelly should write a letter. Co-Chair Hislop agreed that Mr. Coogan should contact Mr. Kelly to write a letter and cc DES and the Conservation Commission.

IV) Conservation Projects:

A) Invasives: Oriental Bittersweet on Fox Point

Co-Chair Weiner stated that he had observed that there were large vines of oriental orange bittersweet wrapping around and killing trees across the street from his house on Fox Point, so he was proposing that someone cut them down and burn the roots with Roundup weedicide to kill them. Commissioner Kendall pointed out that they needed to bag the branches and berries that had hundred seed to each berry to prevent further spread of the vines.

Commissioner Kendall expressed concerns about using Roundup and poisons to kill the roots of invasives, especially near the shore line. Co-Chair Hislop agreed that they would need to be careful not to killing the trees. Commissioner Durfee recommended using a direct sponge application to limit the area. She also suggested that the UNH Cooperative Extension could make a recommendation for a less toxic poison for the shoreline area. Co-Chair Weiner agreed that the Commission could do research on what would happen with poison applications.

Co-Chair Hislop also suggested that it would be helpful to do research on a company that would address invasive species, and present information for residents on treating. Commissioner Durfee agreed that including information on proper recognition and disposal of invasive species would be a good topic for the Commission's Community Education Series as well.

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Co-Chair Hislop stated that the Commission also needed to reserve the Langdon Library for a Tuesday night in April for guest speaker Isabel Mouch, a tree pathologist with the U.S. Forest Service discuss identification and treatment for tree diseases and pests, like needle cast spore, as well as recommending the planting of species that were more immune.

B) Backup proposal for **Seacoast Reliability Transmission Expansion Mitigation**

Co-Chair Weiner stated that he called John Ripley on behalf of the Conservation Commission to ask if they were willing to reconsider putting a portion their property into a conservation easement. Mr. Ripley said he was not interested in putting ten acres into an easement right now, but they might still be interested in putting a smaller portion into a wetlands and wildlife corridor.

Co-Chair Hislop responded that the mitigation funds from the Seacoast Reliability Transmission Expansion Project had to follow DES Aquatic Resource Mitigation (A.R.M.) funding criteria for ten acres and they were only proposing three acres. Co-Chair Hislop added that so it was unlikely that they would be eligible for outside funding.

Co-Chair Hislop said Town Planner, Gerald Coogan contacted her regarding Great Bay Watershed Resource Protection (GBWRP), but she wasn't sure what property. She wondered if the Knox farm uplands would count toward watershed, but there were no streams or wetlands. Commissioner Durfee said she had some experience with GBWRP as she wrote a grant to them.

Co-Chair Hislop expressed doubts as to whether the mitigation funds from the Seacoast Reliability Transmission Expansion Project would be given to Newington, or if anything could be done with Fox Point. Co-Chair Weiner said the Board of Selectmen were hoping to use the Seacoast Reliability Transmission Expansion mitigation funds of \$120 in conjunction with Fox Point funds.

C) **Conservation and Wetland Area Plaques**

Commissioners approved the recent plaque designs to identify and protect conservation and wetlands areas in town. Co-Chair Hislop said she would inform Mr. Coogan to go forward with printing them so they would be available to use on Town properties and for property owners to purchase.

V) **Other Business:** Wetlands Overlay District

Co-Chair Weiner informed the Commission that Town wetlands consultant, Mark West with West Environmental met with the Planning Board on January 28, 2019 to answer their questions regarding his work on the Commission's recommendation for a

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Warrant Article for a Wetlands Overlay District, and that the Planning Board decided to withdraw the warrant article until next year after Mr. West remapped more wetlands.

VI) Discussions and Announcements:

Commissioner Durfee informed the Commission that she would be attending a talk by DES A.R.M. with a Conservation Commission member in Hampton on February 26, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. with Jay Deaner, Executive Director of the Seabrook and Hampton Estuary Alliance who she worked with sometimes.

Co-Chair Hislop noted that the State and Federal Governments had been doing a lot of testing on local water sources.

Commissioner Tucker commented that the ground water report that was scary regarding the effect on people, wildlife and crops from the runoff pollutions from Pease.

Commissioner Tucker said he researched records from Dover when Dover and Portsmouth fought over Newington in the 1600's, and discovered that the ditch near his house was originally called Pinkham's Creek, not McIntyre Brook, and was then dug out to enhance the flow from Pease.

VI) Correspondence and Invoices:

Jim Weiner moved to approve a payment of \$340 to Town wetlands consultant, Mark West of West Environmental for work he did on the Wetlands Overlay District Ordinance work. Liz Durfee seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Minutes: *Jim Weiner moved to approve the Minutes for the January 10, 2019 meeting with corrections as noted. Jim Tucker seconded, and all were in favor.*

Adjournment: *Liz Durfee moved to adjourn. Jane Hislop seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned 7:52 p.m.*

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 14, 2019

**Respectfully
Submitted by:** Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary

These Minutes were approved and adopted at the March 14, 2019 Conservation Commission Meeting.