

Town of Newington, NH
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, December 14, 2017

- Call to Order:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop called the December 14, 2017 meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Present:** Co-Chair Jane Hislop; Co-Chair Weiner; Commissioner Sandra Devin; Alternate Jane Kendall and Town Planner, Gerald Coogan
- Absent:** Ann Morton; Bill Murray
- Public Guests:** John and Meg Ripley; Larry Rubin with Bernie and Phyl's Furniture; Lawler; Vicky Martel from Woodburn and Company; Gary Thomas, General Contractor; Mark Phillips with Storage Barn of Newington, LLC; John Lorden, PE with MSC Engineering; Hoover, landscape architect

1) Mitigation and Conservation Easements:

- a) Update on proposal for property owned by **John and Meg Ripley** located at 50 Old Post Road, Tax Map 17, Lot 15

John Ripley stated that Co-Chair Weiner, Town Planner, Gerald Coogan and he had a brief meeting earlier in the week. He said Mr. Coogan asked if he was interested in a non-refundable deposit for the easement, but in he said he was not comfortable waiting for the balance from Eversource if they had not finalized the Seacoast Reliability agreement.

Co-Chair Weiner said they also discussed setting aside a smaller easement, but anything less than 10 acres would disqualify them from the Eversource mitigation fund when it came through. He noted that he expected that the \$80,000 mitigation payment would eventually come from Eversource. He added that the Conservation Commission would need to discuss if a smaller section with a buildable lot in front was something they could justify, whereas the ten acres would limit the building of another lot.

Co-Chair Hislop asked the Ripleys how many acres they were considering for a smaller lot and Mr. Ripley replied that they were thinking of three to five acres.

Mr. Ripley asked when the last day was to get on the docket for a warrant article. Mr. Coogan said replied that he thought it was sometime in late January or early February, but they would probably encumber the 2017 request for 2018.

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Co-Chair Hislop asked if Eversource would have a final date on their decision and Mr. Coogan replied that the final decision might happen anytime between August to October 2018.

Co-Chair Weiner recommended tabling the discussion until January 2018.

b) Carter's Rock

Co-Chair Weiner updated the Commission on the status of the that a the existing sign frame would be used for the new sign.

2) Landscape Plan Reviews:

- a) Landscape plan proposal by Convertible Castle, Inc. for a **Bernie and Phyl's Furniture** change of use at 30 Fox Run Road, Tax Map 26, Lot 2

Scott Lawler from Norway Plains Associate representing Bernie and Phyl's Furniture appeared before the Commission to present their landscape plan.

Mr. Lawler stated that they had been before the Newington Planning Board for a change of use site review for the former Planet Fitness building and they were not changing anything with the building, but they would renovate the asphalt, lighting and interior. Mr. Coogan noted that Bernie and Phyl's had received a conditional approval from the Newington Planning Board on Monday, December 11, 2017.

Mr. Lawler stated that there were a lot of painted and curbed islands without landscaping in the parking lot, along with some landscaping around the building. He said they would reduce some impervious paving, create a more uniform parking lot and would add some curbed islands and landscaping. Co-Chair Weiner added that the Planning Board had asked them to add granite curbing and landscaping on the exterior of the parking lot.

Co-Chair Weiner explained that Bernie and Phyl's would be using their own trucks and drivers for deliveries and would be using the cul-de-sac at the end of Fox Run Road to take a right turn instead of crossing lanes with a left turn.

Vicky Martel from Woodburn and Company said that they would plant a combination of elms and crab apples to the four islands they were adding. He said they would clear the over grown shrubs around the existing signs and replant. She went on to say that they would relocate some of the overgrown boxwoods in the front and replace them with birch, rhododendrons and low growing sumac, while adding oak to the boxwoods at the back.

Co-Chair Hislop recommended the use of water bags for two to three years until the trees were established. Ms. Martel replied that they would water the trees for the first year, but it would be up to owner to continue their care after that. Co-Chair Hislop stated that the Commission required a landscape management plan for three years. Ms.

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Martel replied that the general contractor would take care of the management plan. Mr. Coogan stated that the applicant would be putting funds into escrow to be held for two growing seasons.

Jim Weiner moved to accept the landscape plan by Convertible Castle, Inc. for Bernie and Phyl's Furniture change of use at 30 Fox Run Road, Tax Map 26, Lot 2 with the condition that they would provide a maintenance plan. Sandy Devins seconded the motion and all were in favor.

- b) Landscape plan presentation by the **Storage Barn of Newington, LLC** regarding property located at 2211 Woodbury Avenue, Tax Map 19, Lot 12

The applicant, Mark Phillips and landscape architect, Rob Hoover appeared before the Commission to present their site proposal landscape plan. Mr. Phillips said he had an agreement to purchase two lots that he intended to merge to make the site productive and to allow an exit at back onto River Road.

Mr. Phillips said he was proposing two storage buildings at the back and another climate controlled storage unit toward the front with a manager's apartment at the entrance. He said there would be a right turn in and out only on Woodbury Avenue and another exit connecting to River Road at the back.

Co-Chair Hislop asked about the location of the easement on the property and Mr. Phillips showed the area where the sign was that would be removed. He said there was also a view easement at the front where they couldn't park and there was a gas line easement with an electromagnetic field to prevent freezing toward the back, so they were building up a protective area. He added that this site had an elevation of 109 feet, which was the highest elevation above sea level on Seacoast.

Rob Hoover with TFM Landscape Architects talked about landscaping focal points, the parking lot and undesirable views with boxwood, Canadian hemlock, honey locust, London plain trees, Russian cypress, white spruce and low maintenance Stella Dora daylilies. He added that they would also landscape a rain garden at the back with red oser dogwood and native grasses for storm water management. He said they would a different, drought tolerant mix of fescue grasses outside of the rain garden that would mix with existing vegetation.

Co-Chair Hislop asked about snow storage and Mr. Hoover said there was storage in the yard area.

Mr. Coogan asked how they would manage the blue spruce along the private road at the back. Co-Chair Weiner added that there was a concern that branches would get in the way of trucks, but he didn't think the branches were in the road. Mr. Phillips said they were going to try to expand the other side of the right of way first. Mr. Hoover said they would need to hand trim the trees rather than sheer them.

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Jane Hislop moved to accept the landscape plan by the Storage Barn of Newington, LLC regarding property located at 2211 Woodbury Avenue, Tax Map 19, Lot 12 with the condition that they provide a maintenance management plan. Sandy Devins second the motion and all were in favor.

3) Updates: Town Planner Report

Mr. Coogan informed the Commission that the Town did not receive their request for funding for restoration of Fox Point shoreline from the New Hampshire State Moose grant. He went on to say that Lori Sommer, Coordinator of the Aquatic Resource Mitigation (A.R.M.) Fund at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) said they might be interested in a restoration project at Fox Point.

4) Additional Discussions:

Co-Chair Weiner mentioned that the Smith Farm in Greenland would no longer be planting or haying in the fields at Fox Point any longer. He also said they didn't harvest their last planting. Co-Chair Hislop noted that they didn't cut the field on the Knox lot on Nimble Hill Road either.

Mr. Weiner said Fox Point Road resident Brendon Arsenault had asked if the Conservation Commission was responsible for the maintenance of fields and he told him it was under the Board of Selectmen's purview. He added that there was \$120,000 left in the Fox Point fund to hay the fields twice a year.

Co-Chair Weiner said John Frink and Dick Spinney both haying equipment that could be used. Co-Chair Hislop added that Lenny Thomas sometimes used John Frink's equipment. Co-Chair Weiner suggested that the Town could also inquire with other farmers through the UNH Cooperative Extension.

Co-Chair Hislop said UNH had been promoting sustainable agriculture, but it was tough for young farmers to find land to farm, yet one local produce supplier left the Frink Farm because she didn't have time to do that garden anymore. She added that Tendercrop Farm was commercial but their corn and pumpkin maze off the exit in Newburyport was very successful, so they might be interested. Alternate Commissioner, Jane Kendall said the issue there was that the Town wanted Fox Point to be for residents only.

Co-Chair Hislop discussed wetlands boundary markers. Commissioner Kendall suggested having Mr. Coogan contact Town wetlands consultant, Mark West who said his town had done some. Co-Chair Hislop said she would like some for the wetlands buffers and the prime wetlands.

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Commissioner Sandy Devins commented that she thought there should be fine for developers that encroached on wetlands boundaries. Co-Chair Hislop replied that it was up to DES to apply finds. Commissioner Kendall noted that Mr. West suggested that the Commission consider having property owners could make a contribution toward mitigation area, however.

Minutes: *Jane Hislop moved to approve the Minutes for the November 9, 2017 meeting. Jim Weiner seconded, and all were in favor.*

Adjournment: *Jane Hislop moved to adjourn. Jim Weiner seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.*

Next Meeting: January 11, 2018

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

These Minutes were approved and adopted at the January 11, 2018 Conservation Commission Meeting.