

GROTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 11, 2017

Location: Town Hall, 2nd Floor

Members Present: John Smigelski (Chair), Peter Morrison (Vice Chair), Olin Lathrop (Clerk), Susan Black, Bruce Easom, Eileen McHugh, Marshall Giguere

Others Present: Takashi Tada (Conservation Administrator)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Smigelski.

General Business:

Certificate of Compliance, 402 Lowell Road, MassDEP#169-468

-BOH Agent asked for sink/piping to be removed from pool house.

-T. Tada confirmed removal of items on 4/3/17, such that it is okay to issue the CoC.

P. Morrison made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 402 Lowell Rd., MassDEP#169-468. S. Black seconded and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Certificate of Compliance, 35 Cannery Row, MassDEP#169-1107

P. Morrison made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 35 Cannery Row, MassDEP#169-1107. S. Black seconded and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

P. Morrison made a motion to approve minutes from 11/22/17. M. Giguere seconded and the motion passed with five ayes and 2 abstentions (J. Smigelski and S. Black).

Land Management: Forestry Proposal, Surrenden Farms

P. Morrison made a motion to approve the forestry plan for Surrenden Farms. S. Black seconded and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

7:05 p.m. – Discussion: Forestry: Raddin Road (Marsh Family Trust Parcel 224-20.1243

Owner/Applicant: Bennett and Sue Black, George Marsh

B. Black explained that the project is to create forestry access, noting that it was started when the ground was frozen and stopped when it became muddy. He said they would file an RDA for the remainder of the work.

G. Marsh said they have DCR/Ch. 61 plans. B. Black said the existing access is both inadequate and on a house lot.

G. Marsh cited FCPA, ch. 132. He said two trees are within 50' of wetlands. He said there are four large poplars in total, plus other trees and shrubs.

E. McHugh said the purpose of today's meeting is for information, noting that work has stopped. She said the family will file an RDA and proposed a site walk.

M. Giguere said it is definitely jurisdictional if it is within the buffer zone.

B. Easom said they don't have carte blanche, even with a cutting plan. He said it is up to the applicant to file an FCP or RDA.

7:15 p.m. – Public Hearing: NOI, Building Addition, 110 Boston Road (Groton Community School), MassDEP# not issued.

Owner/Applicant: Robert Collins and Stan Dillis for Groton Community School

R. Collins recapped the history of MassDEP#169-1013, issued for a smaller addition to the existing school building. He said a new NOI has been filed for a larger addition, noting that there will be a reduction in impervious area compared to the last NOI (169-1013). He said the whole school area has been previously disturbed. He said they have also augmented the storm water design, noting that there is currently little to no treatment. He said the storm water permit has already been granted after a review by the ERSWAC. He said this is an improvement over the existing conditions and an improvement over #169-1013.

S. Black said the addition seems awfully close to the wetlands on the NW side. S. Dillis said it is 20' (not in the RFA), which is the same as #169-1013 distance from the SE side, which is in the RFA.

E. McHugh said it is a tough call, noting that the school is important to the community. She said she is going to nitpick, starting with the inadequate snow handling and the need to show the recycling dumpster on the plan. S. Dillis said the snow storage areas are shown adjacent to the rain gardens. He said they can be defined better, noting that currently it goes into the brook.

M. Giguere asked about the pre vs. post impervious surface and whether it "screams" improvement. R. Collins said that a more valid comparison is #169-1013 vs. the new NOI. S. Dillis suggested looking at the table on Sheet 4, noting that it is more of a whimper than a scream. R. Collins said there is currently no treatment of runoff.

B. Easom restated his opinion that the school has outgrown the site.

O. Lathrop asked for the drainage patterns to be explained. S. Dillis said that most drain to the SE to the brook and some drain to the NW into the wetlands. He said they would provide rain gardens and permeable parking spaces. He said that gutters could be added, per the architect.

P. Morrison said that with the existing plan there is no snow removal or treatment and it all goes into the brook or wetlands. He said that with the new plan there is an infiltration system, rain gardens and a snow storage plan.

J. Smigelski asked whether there have been any comments from ERSWAC. S. Dillis said no.

J. Amaral said he doesn't believe the school has outgrown the site, noting that the expansion is to meet the needs of the staff and students. He said he believes the new proposal improves the environment and that although #169-1013 is ready to be built, he believes the new plan is better for all.

Steve Lane, trustee, said the shift out of RFA is a compelling benefit.

B. Easom said they shouldn't be pushing snow into the wetlands anyway, noting that this is not a compelling argument to improve snow storage. R. Collins said it is not just snow but also storm water runoff.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by S. Black it was

VOTED: to continue the hearing to 4/25.

The vote was unanimous.

7:45 p.m. – Public Meeting: NOI, Parking Lot, 2-8 Hollis Street (2-8 Hollis Street LLC, MassDEP# not issued

Applicant: Dan Wolfe for Murphy

Owner: 2-8 Hollis Street LLC (Murphy)

D. Wolfe gave a brief history, noting that major building renovations were done for the previous tenant. He said this proposal is to pave the parking area for the new veterinary office, which was a requirement of Planning Board site plan review. He said there would be an increase in impervious surface that will be mitigated by a rain garden, noting that a rain garden offers more infiltration than the previous un-built plans.

E. McHugh asked whether the paved vs. gravel areas would be roughly equal. D. Wolfe said the pavement has a higher runoff coefficient.

E. McHugh said now storage next to the rain garden is a concern. D. Wolfe said the snow could not be pushed to the rain garden because it is too narrow.

Discussion ensued regarding the traffic flow. D. Wolfe said there is better egress from the northern point.

M. Giguere asked whether the entire parking area needed to be paved. D. Wolfe said the PB required pavement, which will be better for snow plowing.

M. Giguere said he mirrors E. McHugh's snow storage concern. D. Wolfe said this proposal is better than the existing conditions.

B. Easom suggested adding a swale on the south side of the paved area. D. Wolfe said that if a swale is added, the flow needs to be directed somewhere. He said the current proposal balances the site regarding runoff.

O. Lathrop asked about storm water calculations and wanted to know the exact coefficient for the gravel. D. Wolfe said the flow would be reduced in two years and equalized in 10 to 25 years. He also said that over time, gravel becomes compacted such that it is nearly impervious.

S. Black said she agreed with the others' concerns.

J. Smigelski said that in comparing snowplowing gravel versus pavement, with gravel the dirty snow goes into the rain garden and with pavement a small amount of sand does.

P. Benedict said that a fence could be added next to the rain garden to deter the plow. E. McHugh suggested a wood rail fence/guard rail.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was

VOTED: to continue the hearing to 4/25.

The vote was unanimous.

8:05 PM Public Meeting, NOI: Detention Basin, 164 Main Street (Perini), Mass DEP #169-1152
Applicant: Dan Wolfe, Peter Benedict

D. Wolfe said the old garage/rear wing was not built well and needs replacement with a newly planned addition. He said there is an existing flooding problem, noting that a very large volume of runoff in the watershed ends up in the low point on the property. He said the plan is for a catch basin, cistern and pump to the drywell and basin and outlet. He said the basin would be in the 100-foot buffer zone and some grading would be necessary in the 50-foot buffer zone. He said the storm water calculations improve conditions in two, ten and 25-year events.

M. Giguere said this is definitely a flood prone area. He asked whether any trees would be removed. D. Wolfe said no.

B. Easom said this is a clear benefit to his clients but asked what benefits to the water resource is. D. Wolfe said they are providing treatment where there is currently none.

O. Lathrop said this is okay.

P. Morrison asked about basin maintenance. D. Wolfe said there would be 6:1 grading on the upside and 3 or 4:1 on the downside, both of which will be easy to mow.

S. Black said the plan looks excellent.

B. Easom asked whether there is any lawn in the buffer zone now and whether there would be any reverting to native vegetation for the wildlife habitat. D. Wolfe said there currently is lawn in the buffer zone and noted that there is a landscape plan that was designed by L. Black. B. Easom asked if they are willing to offer any deed restrictions to protect the buffer zone vegetation. D. Wolfe said no.

P. Benedict said they are considering letting native grasses grow. S. Black said she thinks this would be an invasive mess.

P. Morrison asked whether meadow grass would improve infiltration and was told that yes, it would.

E. McHugh said she would be comfortable incorporating some of the landscaping plan into the Order of Conditions.

G. Marsh asked what the distance of the basin would be from the water. The distances are 20 to 25 feet from the toe of the slope and 35 feet from the top of the berm.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by S. Black it was

VOTED: to close the public hearing.

The vote was unanimous.

8:20 PM Public Meeting, RDA: Sewer Connection, 28 Boston Road

Applicant/owner: Barry Cunningham

B. Cunningham said he is required to tie in to town sewer, noting that the existing septic is in back. He said he needs a pump chamber and pipes. He said the additions would be on five piers and be eight feet off the house and not 11 feet.

M. Giguere asked about the septic disposition. B. Cunningham said it would be crushed and filled.

O. Lathrop said the permanent structure is on the 50-foot buffer zone and asked about mitigation. He also said the addition needs more detail.

M. Giguere said there is no foundation.

E. McHugh said she would also like to see more detail about the addition.

O. Lathrop said he would like to see it all laid out on the plan.

B. Cunningham marked up the plan with the revised addition dimensions; the plan was dated and annotated by M. Giguere, 4/11/17.

Upon a motion by M. Giguere, seconded by P. Morrison, it was

VOTED: to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability (#3) for the sewer connection, with the following conditions:

1. Roof runoff shall be mitigated by gutters with a drywell, or a stone trench;
2. The old septic tank shall be crushed/filled;
3. There shall be erosion controls installed;
4. Crushed stone shall be placed under the addition.

The vote was unanimous (6-0).

8:35 PM Public Meeting (con't), NOI: Swimming Pool, 26 Indian Hill Road (Van Geffen), MassDEP#169-1152

Applicant/Owner: Christie Van Geffen

A "no take" determination letter was received from NHESP.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by S. Black it was

VOTED: to close the public hearing.

The vote was unanimous.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by E. McHugh it was

VOTED: to issue an Order of Conditions under the Wetlands Protection Act to 26 Indian Hill Road (Van Geffen), MassDEP#169-1152, striking 54 and modifying 43.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by M. Giguere it was

VOTED: to issue an Order of Conditions to 26 Indian Hill Road (Van Geffen), MassDEP#169-1152 under the Groton Zoning Bylaw, striking conditions #7 and 15.

The vote was unanimous.

Return to General Business:

Land Acquisition Discussion:

Ready Meadow estates: The deed was forwarded to Selectmen for approval.

Land Management Discussion:

Surrenden Farm: The invasives/Red Pine proposal was signed. Of note: No RDA is needed. B. Easom (Keystone Alum) said he would do public relations, via the cable access program, etc.

Pacer Way: An email was received from Brian Bettencourt (Invasive Species Committee) about collaborating with the Cons. Comm. O. Lathrop said the main focus is on Phragmites, which need to be bundled, cut and painted with Glyphosate (per Tim Simmons of NHESP). S. Black asked what appropriate licenses are required. O. Lathrop said that is based on the type of herbicide used. E. McHugh asked whether this is a discussion or a proposal, suggesting that they should be given 20 to 30 minutes.

Committee Updates:

B. Easom said the CPC want the GCC to get involved in the Longley Road dispute.

A brief slide show is available for CPC/Town Meeting.

Upon a motion, it was

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Notes taken by Takashi Tada
Conservation Administrator

Exhibits on file at Conservation Commission Office:

1. NOI, 110 Boston Road, Groton Community School, MassDEP # not issued
2. NOI, 2-8 Hollis Street, MassDEP # not issued
3. NOI, 164 Main Street, MassDEP #169-1152
4. OOC, 26 Indian Hill Road, MassDEP #169-1151
5. COC, 402 Lowell Road, MassDEP # 169-468
6. COC, 35 Cannery Row, MassDEP #169-1107
7. Meeting Minutes, 11/22/2016

Approved: 12/12/2017