



TOWN OF GROTON
Conservation Commission
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Groton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

BROADCAST ON ZOOM AND THE GROTON CHANNEL
PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER
CONCERNING THE OPEN MEETING LAW
WEBINAR ID: 825 6063 0825

Present Larry Hurley, Vice-Chair; Eileen McHugh, Clerk; Bruce Easom, Olin Lathrop, Peter Morrison

Members absent: John Smigelski, Chair

Others present: Nikolis Gualco, Conservation Administrator

APPOINTMENTS AND HEARINGS*

6:30PM – RDA, 12-14 Valliria Drive, for the construction of an addition (R. Morris)
Representative: Dan Wolfe, David E. Ross Associates

D. Wolfe explained the project which involves the applicant proposing to build a 28x30 foot addition off the front of the house to be used as a garage. The closest portion of the proposed structure is within 90 feet of a small wetland. Currently the area of interest is comprised of maintained lawn and a portion of a paved driveway.

B. Easom commented that a garage is better than an open driveway when it comes to containing runoff and contaminants associated with automobiles. He then asked if there was a plan to capture the runoff of the roof, to which D. Wolfe suggested that a drip edge could be added to the design.

O. Lathrop stated that he was OK with the design and commented that the wetlands in question are not high functioning as they are associated with a stormwater drainage system and that the structure is only in the outermost edge of the buffer zone.

6:36 PM – Commissioner Morrison entered the meeting

Upon a motion by O. Lathrop, seconded by E. McHugh, it was:
VOTED: to issue a Negative 3 Determination for the proposed home addition at 12-14 Valliria Drive. **The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes – E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).**

At this time the Commission moved to GENERAL BUSINESS item: “Deed for Village Meadows Open Space (to be discussed at June 23, 2020 meeting)”

Gualco shared that he had received a deed for the open space donation associated with the flexible development proposed at 372 Townsend Road.

E. McHugh commented that she would like to have the surveyor mark for the Commission the edge of the proposed trail entrance for ease of documentation in photos. Gualco agreed to talk to the surveyor.

6:40PM – NOI, 67 Gay Road, for the demolition and reconstruction of a single-family dwelling, MassDEP#169-(not yet received)

Representatives: Attorney Bob Collins & Chris MacKenzie, Ducharme & Dillis.

B. Collins described the project, which involves the demolition of an existing structure (double-wide trailer), deck, and shed to be replaced with a modern septic system, new driveway, and 3-bedroom single-family home with attached garage. A portion of the house is within the 50-foot buffer zone and the vast majority of the site is characterized as “previously disturbed.”

B. Easom asked about why the proposed development was sited at its location with a portion within the 50-foot buffer. Collins replied that the septic system, which is proposed as gravity fed, pins the house to its approximate location. Easom stated that he would like to see if the design can be tweaked so that all new development is outside of the 50-foot buffer.

Lathrop and Morrison concurred that they would like to see if a new design could move the house and garage outside of the 50-foot buffer.

E. McHugh expressed that she is not convinced that the garage is owed in this scenario. She explained that the trailer for a house is a fair swap but the existing deck, which is in advanced decay, is excessive. Collins commented that a garage would be the better option considering the proximity of the parking area to the wetland system.

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O. Lathrop commented that he would like the applicant to calculate the square footages within the 100-foot buffer zone for the existing structure as well as the proposed so that they may be easily compared.

Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded by O. Lathrop, it was:

VOTED: to continue the public hearing to June 23, 2020 to allow the applicant to provide the requested revisions and calculations and for MassDEP to issue a case number. **The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).**

6:50 PM – Discussion on the treatment of Lost Lake/Knopps Pond (Groton Lakes Association)
Presenter: Brad Harper, Groton Lakes Association

Harper came before the Commission to make the annual presentation on the status of the herbicide treatment of Lost Lake/Knopps Pond. GLA is looking to spot treat for curly leaf and milfoil in 2020. Harper provided a summary report from 2019 as well as a plan for treatment for 2020. Harper discussed how there may be a pending whole-lake treatment that is 9 times as expensive (approx. \$80,000 to \$100,000) as compared to spot treatment. GLA has a CPA application that will be voted on in the Fall for this project.

7:00PM – RDA (cont.), 366 West Main Street, for the construction of a deck, (N. Kiernan)
Application: Nick Kiernan

Kiernan provided calculations showing the impact to the 100-year flood zone. Based on his review of the elevation of the flood plain, Kiernan choose to switch the footings type from sonotubes to helical piles, which displace much less volume. Kiernan then shared that upon his review of the file, the Commission had previously permitted a more sizable deck along the backside of house with almost 2/3's of it being within the floodplain.

P. Morrison commented that he likes the switch to helical piles.

E. McHugh asked if the new deck will “replace” the back deck. Kiernan expressed that this was his intention. A discussion ensued about how the Commission could document this in the file to inform future homeowners of this “swap”.

B. Easom asked where the flood storage compensation would be located. Easom continued and stated that this location should be notated on a plan.

O. Lathrop commented on Kiernan’s calculations as they accounted for the volume of the helical piles above and below grade. Lathrop expressed that the only volume that is regulatory is that which is above grade and below (in elevation) the 100-year flood plain.

The Commission tabled the hearing until later in the meeting to allow the for the applicant to re-calculate the required amount of compensatory flood storage and to provide an update plan showing the location of said storage.

7:10 PM – Discussion, 305 Martins Pond Road, long-term management plans to address flooding caused by beavers (W. Jason Grennel).

Gualco reported that Grennel has been making progress with the NOI and that he has provided partial drafts for his review.

7:15 PM – Extension of Order of Conditions

Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED: to issue a 3-year extension to Groton Community School, MassDEP#169-1154.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED: to issue a 3-year extension to Lake Massapoag, MassDEP#169-969.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED: to issue a 3-year extension to Academy Hill, MassDEP#169-917.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

At this time the Commission reviewed a deed for Parcel "L", Article 97 Land Swap (Olivia Way).

Upon a motion by E. McHugh, seconded B. Easom, it was:

VOTED to accept Parcel "L" as shown on the Olivia Way Land Swap Plan as part of the Article 97 Land Swap. **The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).**

At 8:01 PM, the Commission resumed item "RDA (cont.), 366 West Main Street, for the construction of a deck, (N. Kiernan)"

Kiernan reported that the base elevation of grade at the helical pile within the flood plain was 209.9 feet. The floodplain at this location is 210.1 feet. This translated to 2.4 inches (by 2 inch diameter pole) for a total of 4.8 cubic inches of displacement. Kiernan then presented an updated plan, which was signed and dated, showing the location of the compensatory flood storage.

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

VOTED: to issue a Negative 2 Determination under the condition that the applicant compensate for 4.8 cubic inches of flood storage as shown on the plan signed and dated June 10, 2020. **The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).**

At this time the Commission moved to GENERAL BUSINESS item "UMass invasive species research at Hemlock Grove"

Proponent: Ryan Crandall, UMass Master's Student

Crandall presented his research, which will include a study site at Hemlock Grove, on the Woolly Adelgid. Specifically, he is looking into documenting the presence and efficacy of certain predators. Nets will be placed in several hemlock trees to sample the insect communities.

At this time the Commission reviewed an Emergency Certificate for 599 Lowell Road for damage to the house as part of the May 15, 2020 microburst.

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

VOTED: to ratify the Emergency Certificate for 599 Lowell Road as drafted.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (Yes - E. McHugh, B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

At this time the Commission reviewed a drafted Order of Conditions for 50 & 52 Island Road, MassDEP#169-1203.

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED to issue the Order of Conditions under the Wetlands Protection Act for 50 & 52 Island Road, MassDEP#169-1203 as amended.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (YES: B. Easom, P. Morrison, L. Hurley, O. Lathrop; NO: E. McHugh).

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED to issue the Order of Conditions under the Groton Wetlands Protection Bylaw for 50 & 52 Island Road, MassDEP#169-1203 as amended.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (YES: B. Easom, P. Morrison, L. Hurley, O. Lathrop; NO: E. McHugh).

Committee Updates/Announcements

B. Easom commented that his term with the Community Preservation Committee is up and if the Commission would like, he would be willing to serve another 3-year term. This will be added to a future agenda.

Gualco shared two letters he received from 1.) National Grid letter – updated June 8, 2020 no need for action, just a notice and 2.) NEFF: Notification: Forest Cutting Plan (Wharton Plantation, NEFF) – updated June 8, 2020 salvage began on June 3, 2020 with DCR approval.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by B. Easom, seconded by O. Lathrop, it was:

VOTED to approve and release the minutes for May 12, 2020 as amended.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (YES: B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

Invoices

Upon a motion by O. Lathrop, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED to approve the invoice for Moisson's Hardware store for \$10.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (YES: B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

Upon a motion by P. Morrison, seconded by B. Easom, it was:

VOTED to move to Executive Session not to return to the open meeting to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate.

The motion passed by a roll call vote: (YES: B. Easom, O. Lathrop, P. Morrison, L. Hurley).

Minutes Approved: July 28, 2020