

PEPPERELL CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes – January 19, 2010

The Pepperell Conservation Commission (PCC) held a regularly scheduled meeting under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, MGL Ch. 131, §40 and the Pepperell Wetlands Protection By-Law. The meeting was held in the Town Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Elliott presiding, Rand, Rice, Sauer, and Steeves; member absent: Moody. Masterson arrived at about 7:40 p.m.

Fisher presented a Bills Payable form, including a request for reimbursement from Chris Schott, an Eagle Scout candidate who had built a series of wetland spans to create a trail from the new parking lot to the existing trails on the Keyes Farm Conservation Land. The Commission had approved an expenditure of up to \$400 to support this project, but the request was for \$432. While the Commissioners decided to fully reimburse the expenses, both Sauer and Rice felt that Schott should be asked to clarify the reasons for the overage. Since Fisher was leaving for vacation within 2 days, Sauer agreed to be the contact person and to submit the Bills Payable form to the Town Accountant after he heard from Schott.

7:10 p.m. Continued Public Hearing re NOI filed by Robert Lee, Pepperell DPW, for construction of a new municipal well with pump station, access road and associated infrastructure west of Nashua Road near the NH state line

Bob Lee, Jeff Faulkner, Nicole Sanford, and Tom Mahanna attended the hearing. Faulkner gave an overview of the site and the project, including details of revisions to the plans that had been made since the previous session of this hearing. The design of the driveway across the wetland, from the pump station to the well head, had been significantly changed. He said that probes in the area indicated that the wetland soils are about 18 inches thick here. Instead of “floating” the driveway on top of the wetland soils as previously proposed, he said that they now propose to remove 18” of soil and replace it with suitable fill. A 12 inch thick layer of trap rock on top of the fill, lined above and below with Mirafi 500 fabric, would provide a drainage connection beneath the driveway. Faulkner said that the Mirafi would contain the rock and reinforce the load-carrying capability of the trap rock layer.

Steeves asked where the nearest stream was located. Sanford said that the wetland is the headwaters of a brook named Sucker Brook, which flows north into NH, but no part of that brook was within 200 feet of this project. Rice asked if the erosion control blankets to be used on this project would be biodegradable. Faulkner said yes.

Sanford then explained the detailed grading and planting plans for the replication area. She said that the driveway slopes in the revised plans were now 2:1, which reduced the wetland impacts. She submitted a memo with revised details of the compensatory storage to be provided for BLSF filling. Sanford said that the replication area would mimic the existing palustrine forest, including the muck soils with vegetated hummocks. She said that there would be 32 constructed hummocks in the replication area with muck soils salvaged from the driveway area placed around them. Rice asked why the hummocks in the driveway path were not being moved. Sanford said it would be difficult and that there would not be enough material, but that it could

be done as much as possible. Rice also asked about the trees that the plan calls out to be saved along the edges of the replication area. Sanford said they were white pines. Rice said that the raised water table around the trees would likely kill them, but that that would be OK. She noticed that the mix of species on the planting list were from both northern and southern areas. Sanford said that all plants on the list already exist on site. Rice suggested that no white pines be planted in upland areas since the species so easily seeds itself in. She said that self-seeded trees would have genes characteristic of the local area, whereas planted white pines probably would not. Sanford agreed.

Sanford said that they had proposed reporting on the replication area only twice yearly, rather than monthly during the first year, as the Commission's generic special conditions read. The Commissioners did not object to this schedule. On a motion from Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to issue an Order of Conditions with special conditions as described above.

7:30 p.m. Continued Public Hearing re NOI filed by Brian Doak for construction of a garage at 8 Powhatan Road

Brian Doak and his builder, Jeff Chabot, attended the hearing. Doak submitted a revised sketch plan for his project, pointing out that he had changed the garage doors to the front (west) side of the addition so that the new driveway would be south of the existing driveway and no part of the project would be closer to the wetland than existing conditions. Elliott asked if grading would be required to relocate the driveway. Doak said no, and Chabot confirmed that the present elevations would be very close to the proposed conditions. Chabot said that they were proposing to install erosion control all along the existing paved driveway, as shown on the 1993 As-Built Plans, with an extension southward behind the area of the proposed addition. The erosion control barrier would be the limit of work.

Masterson arrived at this point. Chabot said that the existing driveway was to be abandoned, and the pavement would be removed. Sauer asked what would happen to the pavement that is removed. Chabot said that it would be taken off site to an approved hazardous waste facility.

Elliott said that a more clear, detailed plan would be needed. Doak and Chabot agreed to submit a revised plan to the office before an Order of Conditions would be issued. Fisher asked the Commissioners if the erosion control barrier should be both haybales and silt fence. All agreed that it should be. Rand asked that the existing gravel parking area be removed and allowed to revegetate. Doak agreed. On a motion from Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to issue an Order of Conditions with special conditions as described above.

Conservation Administrator's Report

Review of *Open Space & Recreation Plan* update

After making several minor changes to wording, on a motion by Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to approve the Plan draft as amended.

Steeves said that he would like to see the Commission work on items contained in the plan regularly. Masterson expressed particular interest in the oversight committee listed in Goal 3. She suggested that all Commissioners look over the Action Plan so that work could begin on prioritizing the various projects at the next meeting.

Review of draft Annual Report

After making several minor changes to wording, on a motion by Elliott, seconded by Rand, all

VOTED: to approve the Annual Report draft as amended.

February 2nd Meeting Status

Since there were no filings requiring public hearings or public meetings on February 2nd, the Commissioners decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for February 2nd.

Upcoming meetings and conferences

Fisher announced several upcoming events.

Other Business

Upon a motion by Elliott, seconded by Rand, with Masterson abstaining, it was

VOTED: to approve the minutes of January 5, 2010 as amended.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved email responses for Fisher to use to reply to people who sign up to be Trail Monitors or Maintainers. Sauer described how he had set up a sign-up procedure on the Commission's page of the Town website. The Commission discussed whether they should prohibit the use of power equipment, such as chain saws, for trails maintenance.

Fisher was asked to check with the Town Clerk about whether Commissioners need to take the State Ethics Commission's on-line ethics test and to notify members.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen L. Fisher