

CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

July 14, 2021, 7:00 PM

Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 41 Green Street

Attendees: Chair Kristine Tardiff, Vice-Chair Jim Owers, Members Jeff Lewis, and Kathy Healy.

Absent: Councilor Brent Todd, Chris Kane, Rick Chormann, and Stefan Matlage

Staff: Beth Fenstermacher, Assistant City Planner
Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist
Cathy McComish, Forestry Intern

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tardiff at 7:00 p.m.

1. Minutes

June 9, 2021

A motion was made by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Healy, to approve the minutes from June 9, 2021, as amended, with edits that do not alter the content of the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Bohler Engineering, on behalf of Atlantic Broadband (NH-ME) LLC, requests a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for installation of 2,500 square feet of impervious area in the Aquifer Protection (AP) District at 264 & 268 Sheep Davis Road.

Jeff Drapeau from Atlantic Broadband, along with Chris Leonard of Malcom, and Randy Miron from Bohler, represented the application.

Mr. Miron explained that Atlantic Broadband is proposing to build a 924 sq. ft. public utility building on a 6.64 acre parcel and requesting approval for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) due to 5,350 sq. ft. of new impervious surfaces in the Aquifer Protection District. He noted that this will be a reduction of the impervious surface overall. The existing house on the adjacent lot is proposed to be demolished. A parking area will be added for employees when visiting the site for any maintenance issues. A generator will be on site for emergency purposes. A fence will be added for privacy.

A driveway permit has been filed with NHDOT. They are currently working with NHDDES due to the wetlands. Mr. Miron noted that rare snake species and sensitive plants have been found in the area. Any impacts will be addressed and they will relocate any plants if found.

Mr. Lewis asked if the site plan is for both lots. Ms. Fenstermacher explained that the CUP is only for the proposed site plan, not demolition. Mr. Lewis asked about the septic and well associated with the house to be demolished. Mr. Miron explained that there is a septic system and municipal water connections; there are no wells. Mr. Lewis stated that if there is a well, it should be sealed. He noted that the Zoning Ordinance requires the application to comply with certain performance standards, and stated that Engineering staff should review this as part of the site plan application. He noted that there should be an Inspection and Maintenance plan for the stormwater improvements. He stated that there is not actually an overall decrease in impervious surfaces since the house lot will eventually be developed.

Ms. Tardiff spoke to the location of the bluffs. If there is future development of the house lot, the buffer area should be planted; additional restoration beyond loam and seeding.

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A motion was made by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Owers, to recommend approval of the CUP with the condition that performance standards per Section 28-3-6(d)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance for the Aquifer Protection District are met.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. NHDES Items

There were no NHDES items.

4. Reports

a. Trails

Mr. Lewis attended the Trails Subcommittee meeting and provided an overview. He noted that Mr. Daniels, the new vice chair, ran the meeting and did very well; Ms. McComish filled in for Mr. Klemarczyk.

Mr. Lewis stated that the committee will start construction on the new Trout Lily Loop at the West Locke Road trails. Natural Heritage Bureau and Fish & Game determined they had no concerns. The Forest Society has provided an approval of the trail as well.

Mr. Lewis stated that trail work on the Back Woods Trail has been completed, with the exception of a plank walk to be completed when Ron returns.

Mr. Lewis stated the Knowlton Trail and Bowl Trail at Knowlton Woods have unofficially been opened. Signs have been ordered and the trail will need to be blazed. A map will also be added at the kiosk.

Mr. Lewis stated that trail maintenance continues.

Trail guide updates – Mr. Lewis mentioned that the Committee will work on the Trail Guide updates during the meetings starting in September and it will hopefully be completed and coincide with the Trails Master Plan.

b. Forestry

Mr. Klemarczyk's report was circulated.

c. Tree Committee

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that Tree Committee is working on establishing a grant using funds from the Urban Tree Trust Fund, which will cover half the cost of trees for residents interested in planting a tree through the Sustainable Tree Program. General Services will be updating the application with a check box for people interested in the grant. The plan is to have this program begin in 2022. She added that the Committee is looking to work with the schools to encourage them to plant more trees on school properties.

The Tree Committee will be meeting again July 22.

d. Local River Advisory Committees

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that there are no Concord residents on UMLAC at this time; Mr. Chormann has retired. There is room for three members. Members must be nominated, must be a Concord resident, and interested in the protection of the rivers. She requested that if members had any recommendations that they reach out to her or the City Manager.

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- e. Ms. Tardiff referenced an email she received announcing an online presentation of the Turkey River Watershed Study on August 22, at 5:00 p.m. She will forward the email.

5. City Open Space and Easements

a. Dimond Hill

Ms. Fenstermacher explained that Equity Trust, although a fee title owner, feels that they do not have any obligations and all obligations fall to all other owners, which include Five Rivers, The NH Preservation Alliance, and the City. She added that Equity Trust has made it clear that they are not interested in doing any fundraising.

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that Jennifer Goodman of the NH Preservation Alliance is working on a grant application applying for a feasibility study to see what can be done for the property. The Preservation Alliance has requested \$500 as a donation from the Commission towards feasibility study. A consultant will be hired to determine maintenance issues and what can be done with the property.

Mr. Lewis suggested giving it back to Jean Presby who has a life estate. Ms. Fenstermacher replied that she is not sure that she wants it.

A motion was made by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Owers, to contribute up to \$500 towards the feasibility study for the Dimond Hill property.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Easement Reports

Ms. McComish provided an update about the easements and encroachment issues. She stated that she plans to make a master list of the easements and a few fee property issues.

6. City Council/Planning Board

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that the City Council approved the Pan Am land purchase. Many encroachments were noted and discussed.

7. Follow-up/On-going Items:

a. Trail Master Plan Update

Ms. Tardiff commented on the draft, stating the proposed connection between Memorial Field to St. Paul's campus should be removed from the plan.

The Commission discussed scheduling a separate meeting for the public hearing for the Trails Master Plan, but due to scheduling conflicts, the Commission will discuss comments at their September meeting and schedule a separate meeting then, if deemed necessary, so that the public hearing can be held in October. Mr. Lewis spoke to the future and needs of the trails. He stated that there is going to be a need to have a separate staff person to address the trails. He would like to spend more time reviewing the master plan further and have more time for additional modifications.

b. Conservation Preserves

This item is ongoing and another work session will be scheduled.

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c. MRGT

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that the City is waiting on a response from NHDES to determine if the trail can go through the mitigation easement in the farm fields.

d. Education/Outreach: ConcordTV videos, 50th anniversary ideas

Ms. Tardiff suggested that she, Ms. Fenstermacher, and Ms. McComish get together and create something to present to Council.

Ms. Fenstermacher noted that the NHACC is having a 50th celebration on September 11.

e. Conservation Easement Standard Templates

Continued to next month.

8. Other Business

Ms. Fenstermacher stated that there was a disc golf presentation given to the Recreation Policy Advisory Committee (RPAC). This is from a different group than what was presented previously to the Commission. Their presentation noted City-owned lands that are underutilized and City Trails as potential suitable locations for the disc golf course. Discussion ensued relative to parking and traffic concerns, safety concerns with people on trails, and overall impact to the land. Ms. Fenstermacher noted that City Planner Heather Shank attended the RPAC meeting and she indicated that this was not compatible with Conservation land, and there is no conservation land in the City with large enough parking areas that would accommodate this activity. She also noted that there would be staffing issues as well as parking and traffic concerns and overall safety concerns.

Mr. Lewis stated that the group should determine a piece of land for their presentation. He added that there will definitely now be a large need for a full-time park ranger. He stated that this is the second time this activity and been presented and it will come up again.

9. Non-Public Session

Mr. Lewis made a motion, second by Mr. Owers, to enter into a non-public session at 8:25 p.m. per RSA 91-A:3, II(d).

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Tardiff – in favor
Mr. Lewis – in favor
Ms. Healy – in favor
Mr. Owers – in favor

Mr. Lewis made a motion, second by Mr. Owers, to come out of non-public session at 8:38 p.m. per RSA 91-A:3, II(d).

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Tardiff – in favor
Mr. Lewis – in favor
Ms. Healy – in favor
Mr. Owers – in favor

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Mr. Lewis made a motion, second by Ms. Tardiff, to seal the minutes of the non-public session, per RSA 91-A:5, IV.

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Tardiff – in favor

Mr. Lewis – in favor

Ms. Healy – in favor

Mr. Owers – in favor

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Lewis made a motion, second by Mr. Owers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist