

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Feb. 13, 2017, 7:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM B MADISON TOWN CAMPUS**

Subject to approval: Minutes of the Meeting of Feb. 13, 2017 - 7:30 p.m. - Meeting Room B- Madison Town Campus.

Members present: Chairman Heather Crawford, Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard, George McManus, Alex Cushing, Richard Gedney, and Rachel Klein.

Members absent: Clyde Burkhardt.

Additional attendees: Inland Wetlands Officer Robert Kuchta.

1. **Call meeting to order:** At 7:32 p.m., Chairman Crawford called the meeting to order.
2. **Call for additional agenda items:** Chairman Crawford stated she would add items received in the mail toward the end of the meeting.
3. **Application Review: 17-01. 28 Creamery Lane.** Map 85, Lot 27.
Owner/Applicant: Antonio Suppa. Regulated Activity Permit for deposit of material and regrading within the 100 ft. wetland review area.

Inland Wetlands Officer Robert Kuchta explained that this application is separate from the last application and violation; there will be an in-ground swimming pool, patio and landscaping, in addition to some walls and fencing along the riverside. A proposed four-foot chain link fence is proposed for the perimeter of the lot, running along the river, as well. That chain link fence will be in addition to a fence around the pool, according to Mr. Kuchta. There will be filling of the area along the berm, Mr. Kuchta stated. The landscaping has a buffer between the river and the lawn, and the applicants may create a rain garden swail configuration, according to Mr. Kuchta, who stated he has had conversations with the landscaper. Chairman Crawford stated that she has concerns about the four-foot chain link fence, the silt fence, serious concerns about the drainage pipe, the invasive species that are listed in the planting plan, such as Norway Spruce, and that she would rather see a swail, such as a 300-foot swail that had been included on a different, earlier application from another applicant. Norway Spruce is listed on the state of Connecticut invasive species list, according to Chairman Crawford. Commissioner Gedney had questions about any procedures involved in disposing of the swimming pool water so close to the river, along with the possible disposition of pool chemicals. Mr. Kuchta stated that the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has a set of regulations about swimming pool water, which he would send to the commissioners. Commissioner Gedney stated that he would like the property owners to be made aware of those regulations, because he does not want swimming pool water to be disposed of in the Hammonasset River, adjacent to the property. Chairman Crawford stated that there does not seem to be any storm water management on the proposed patio and pool complex; in addition, she questioned construction access; finally there is temporary fencing around the septic system, but it

appears as though construction vehicles will still be driving on the septic system. Mr. Kuchta stated that he had a conversation with the landscape architect about that, and it is not wide enough for a truck; they will also be installing plates or plywood over the septic system to protect it, and they have permission from the adjacent property owner for construction access. There are plants that will be planted in the wetlands, and those plants have already been approved by the inland wetlands agency, according to Mr. Kuchta. There will be a five-year monitoring program that the applicant has to pay for; there's a certain percentage of survival of plantings that have to be approved, through a five-year paid consultation, as part of the violation; if plantings do not survive, they will have to be replanted, according to Mr. Kuchta. Chairman Crawford stated she has a problem with the four-foot chain link fence, because it creates a trap for all the leaves, debris, and even the safe passage of wildlife alongside the river. Commissioner McManus proposed the landowners might want the fence to ensure children do not wander into the river. Mr. Kuchta stated that, in the past, property owners have been asked to have a six-inch clearance from the ground for such fencing. But children and dogs could dig under that, according to Chairman Crawford.

Commissioner McManus made the motion that the chairman write a letter to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency recommending questions the wetlands agency should raise when the application comes before it, focusing on concerns about: the four-foot chain link fence; the silt fence location; drainage pipe for surface runoff; invasive species on the planting list; the amount of impervious surface; plans on how to drain the pool; storm water management; construction access with leaching fields; and proposed shade tree plantings near the driveway. In addition, the chairman is authorized to include in the letter some ideas of non-invasive species to plant, such as native firs, eastern red cedars, among others. Vice Chairman Bouchard seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Vote to write the letter passed, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Cushing, Gedney, and McManus.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Mr. Kuchta stated that there will be a public hearing on the application before the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency on March 6, 2017.

4. Application Review: 17-02. 175 Copse Road. Grove School. Map 47, Lots 4, 5, and 24.

Owner/Applicant: Richard L. Chorney. Regulated Activity Permit to demolish two existing buildings and construct new academic building within the 100 ft. wetland review area. (Rachel Klein recused herself from the application review.)

Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor Thomas Stevens, on behalf of Applicant Richard L. Chorney, stated that plans are to demolish two existing buildings to construct a new academic building, on the west side of the road, by the soccer/baseball field. The academic building will be on a slab adjacent to the gymnasium; two septic systems will be used, and there will be 38 square feet of affected wetlands. Mr. Stevens discussed the detailed engineering plans shown on large-scale maps to the commission. Vice
Page 2. Conservation Commission, Feb. 13, 2017

Chairman Bouchard asked whether any of the classrooms will be used for science or chemistry and if there are disposal plans to ensure chemicals are not released into the septic system. Mr. Stevens stated that he did not know what types of plans have been made to dispose of science classroom chemicals, if there are science classes inside the academic building. Chairman Crawford stated she was concerned because the building is being constructed so close to the wetlands; it was her recommendation that dense vegetation be planted behind the building, to prevent any activities, and that no vehicles be allowed behind the structure. Chairman Crawford also stated that she would like to see a landscaping plan with vegetation as dense as possible to protect the wetlands; if planting grass is a consideration, she recommended "larger than grass," because narrow waterways need more buffering. It is expected construction will start in June, according to Mr. Stevens. Plans are to keep soils separated, and Chairman Crawford endorsed this idea, stating that doing so would minimize adverse environmental impact.

Vice Chairman Bouchard made the motion to write a letter to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency with the following recommendations: that a planting plan be included; that there be a separation of potential waste; and that the inland wetlands officer observe, during the digging of the trench through the wetlands. This motion was seconded by Chairman Crawford and unanimously approved.

Vote to write the letter passed, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Cushing, Gedney, and McManus.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

5. Project/Issue Updates

~ Additional Public Education/Outreach for 2017: Facebook page, newspaper articles?

Vice Chairman Bouchard reported that there have been 13 new views on the Facebook page. There was no discussion on newspaper articles.

~ **Hammonasset River ecosystem restoration:** Up to \$50,000 in funding is available to restore the ecosystem on the Hammonasset River; plans are to try to partner with the town of Clinton to use the funds. Chairman Crawford stated that she needs to get in touch with the town of Clinton to further this partnership.

~ **Upcoming educational opportunities:** Programs are being offered in the near future by the University of Connecticut, which may be of interest to the Conservation Commission; a land conservation program will be presented at Wesleyan University; and there is a planning and zoning training on land use law and environmental interventions. Chairman Crawford stated that funds remain in the Conservation Commission budget for commissioners to attend any educational events in which they may be interested.

6. **Natural Resource Inventory: Discussion of examples and assignments** ~ Chairman Crawford stated the commission has examples of published natural resource inventories from Guilford and Woodstock; they reference resources readily available to the public and may be tailored to Madison's

Page 3. Conservation Commission, Feb. 13, 2017

writing of its natural resource inventory. Some sections to include in Madison's would be the Dark Night Sky, which appears in Guilford's inventory, coastal resources, a wetlands section, agriculture, town geography, conservation, forestry, vernal pools, and birding, among others. Mr. Kuchta stated that the town has a website technician who could help the commission with information on how the commission's written inventory reports could be submitted for publication on the town website, thus providing access to the public.

7. Review and approve minutes for Jan. 9, 2017 meeting.

Commissioner McManus made the motion to accept the Jan. 9, 2017 minutes, as amended, with the following change: On page two, the sentence that says, "Invasive bamboo plants are not allowed by the state of Connecticut," should be changed to read, "Invasive bamboo plants are not allowed to be planted within 40 feet of a property line." It was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to approve the minutes as amended passed, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioners Cushing, Gedney, and McManus.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

8. Adjournment:

Commissioner McManus made the motion to adjourn at 8:58 p.m.; it was seconded by Chairman Crawford and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn passed unanimously, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Crawford, Vice Chairman Bouchard and Commissioners Gedney, Cushing, and McManus.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk