

SOUTH HADLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 3, 2019

PRESENT: Bill DeLuca, Chair; Jim Canning, Vice-Chair; William (Bill) Bacis, Member; Steph Clymer, Member; Anne Capra, Conservation Administrator/Planner; Colleen Canning, Senior Clerk ; Meredith Savage, SWCA; Naomi Valentine, SWCA; David Parson, Orchards Golf Course; Jason Ouellette, Chicopee Concrete Services; Walter Hamilton, Town Reminder; Chris Cloutier, 11 Amherst Road; Robert Pleasure, 11 Jewett Lane; Keith Cunningham; Tom Dennis; Jodi Lauzier, Orchards Golf Course; Alistair Catto

Chair DeLuca called the meeting into session at 6:03 PM.

1. 6:00 PM Discuss and Consider Status of pending submittal of Notice of Intent for General maintenance at Orchards Golf Course at 18 Silverwood Terrace (Map 52, Parcel 164)

The Conservation Administrator opened with some background on this case. SWCA had been working with Orchards Golf Course on getting a new ‘Operations and Maintenance’ Notice of Intent (NOI). The previous OOC had expired and the DEP had received multiple anonymous complaints alleging work within resources areas. The DEP requested that the Commission investigate and take appropriate action. SWCA intended on submitting an NOI application by Monday, April 8th and intended on scheduling a Public Hearing for the next Conservation Commission Meeting on April 24th. Additionally, the applicant had requested to perform some necessary maintenance tasks prior to approval of the new NOI and was seeking the the Commission’s approval to proceed

Meredith Savage and Naomi Valentine, representatives of SWCA, presented to the Commission. They were on track to having the ‘Operations and Maintenance’ NOI submitted by April 8th. They went on to explain that the new NOI will include the ‘historic maintenance’ of the course- no maintenance activities would be expanded.. They presented a map of the golf course which illustrated six different maintenance zones. Each zone represented a different Resource Area/Buffer Zone and stipulated the type of appropriate maintenance activities in each.

SWCA are performing a new wetland delineation at Orchards Golf Course. Naomi Valentine shared that it appeared that the previous delineation went right up to the fairway and that, in some areas, the fairway was on wetlands.

The Commission wanted to ensure that lines of communication between course staff, course members, and the public would be maintained. A ‘manual with check list’ could be used to ensure that maintenance crews would be informed of appropriate activities within resource areas. Additionally, it was recommended that Orchards post their maintenance order on-line to help inform the public of their activities. The Commission would require monumentation along the approved wetland delineation..

Chris Cloutier, 11 Amherst Road, addressed the Commission. He asked why Orchards was considered to have 'wet'land when the soil at the course wasn't 'wet'. Chair DeLuca responded noting that soils, hydrology and vegetation are used to delineate a wetland.

Following the NOI update, Meredith Savage appealed to the Commission on behalf of her client. She requested that the maintenance crew be allowed to start mowing the fairways on April 15th and be allowed to preform one application of fungicide. If this work was not performed, the golf course would have to close. The Commission stated that maintenance of the historic fairways is permissible. However, approval was contingent upon the applicant submitting an NOI application by the end of day on Monday April 8th for general operation and maintenance of the facility.

2. Discuss and Consider Preliminary Subdivision Plan – North Pole Estates, Hadley Street, Map 56 Parcels 20, 26, 43, 43A, 104, 109, 112 & 121; Map 54, Parcels 15 & 20, submitted by Chicopee Concrete Services

The Conservation Administrator opened with general information about the application process for a Preliminary Subdivision Plan. She noted there are two main advantages to the applicant in filing a Preliminary Subdivision Plan: 1) freezes zoning of the property to the time of Preliminary Plan approval for seven months; and, 2) allows the applicant to work with the town prior to submitting a Definitive Subdivision Plan . She went on to explain that the approval of a Preliminary Subdivision Plan does not guarantee the approval of a Definitive Subdivision Plan as the Preliminary Plan only offers limited information such as lot and road dimensions. The Town must act on a Preliminary Plan within 45 days of submission of the application. The Preliminary Plan was sent to the Conservation Commission for comment.

In discussing the Preliminary Plan a number of comments were generated as follows:

- The presence of wetland on site was noted. The Conservation Administrator noted that the wetlands to the north has an approved delineation.
- Stormwater runoff was a point of concern. Where would catch basins be located and how will vegetation before and after construction effect storm water?
- The stabilization of the site was questioned. How will the current slopes on site be stabilized? Will retaining walls be required?
- The intended landscape of the subdivision was questioned. How will site be vegetated? Will there be residential landscapes?
- There were concerns for the quality of soils on the land. What contaminates were present in the soil? What type of restoration would take place prior to construction?

Upon reflection of the Preliminary Subdivision Plan, Commissioner Canning expressed reservations about even having a residential development at this location. He did not support such a project over a public drinking water aquifer.

Robert Pleasure, 11 Jewett Lane, addressed the Commission and referenced the Town's Subdivision Regulation: 360-8 which he stated requires coordination with municipal departments in getting subdivision approval. In response, the Conservation Administrator noted that the

Conservation Commission was not one of the listed municipal departments under Subdivision Regulation: 360-8.

Commission members will send their comments to the Conservation Administrator and she will compile them and send them to the Planning Board to be considered during their review of the Preliminary Subdivision Plan.

3. Discuss and Consider Wetlands Bylaw Amendments and Water Supply Protection District Bylaw Amendments

It had been previously decided to delay the drafting of proposed Wetland Bylaw amendments. As Town Meeting was quickly approaching, there wouldn't be adequate time to generate an appropriate draft. However, this would afford the Commission additional time to draft more comprehensive amendments. The Commission wanted to consider Bylaw amendments which would give the Conservation Commission jurisdiction over activities within the Water Supply Protection District (WSPD). However, jurisdictional amendments to the WSPD will not be considered for this year's Town Meeting in May 2019, but could potentially be consider for the next meeting.

On March 13, the Planning Board hosted an all boards meeting to discuss proposed changes to the Zoning Bylaw and General Bylaw regarding the WSPD. Representatives of the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, and the District 2 Water Commissioners were present for discussion. Four Warrant Articles will be brought to a Public Hearing prior to Town Meeting in May. The Conservation Administrator advised that future discussions regarding the Commission's potential jurisdiction within the WSPD be reconcilable with current (and potentially newly ratified) laws and performance standards town-wide. A consideration was made to use the DEP's regulations for Riverfront Area as performance standards for potential amendments with the WSPD. The Commission will schedule time during the coming months to work on appropriate amendments.

4. Discuss and Consider Arbor Day Event Planning with Tree Committee

As Commissioner Canning was on the Tree Committee, he shared updates for the upcoming Arbor Day festivities on April 26 at the Middle School Arboretum. In preparation for the event, volunteers will perform clean-up on April 20th. Additionally, Commissioner Canning was working on structuring the event programming which will include a few words from Chair DeLuca and the presentation of the tree planting to this year's honored guest, Bill Bacis of the Conservation Commission. Commissioner Canning went on to share that Linda Young, member of the Tree Committee, was working with local newspapers and television networks to get press coverage. Commissioner Canning will purchase gift cards to be awarded to students with the best Arbor Day essays. He will be reimbursed through Conservation Department funds.

5. Discuss and Consider Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 13, 2019, and Bylaw Review Meeting Minutes from March 13, 2019

Motion: Vice-Chair Canning motioned to approve the draft minutes from the Regular Commission Meeting on March 13, 2019 and motioned to approve the draft minutes from the

Bylaw Review Meeting on March 13, 2019. Member Bacis seconded the motion. Four (4) out of four (4) members voted in favor.

6. Administrator's Report including updates on projects, violations, next meeting dates, correspondence log

Cedar Ridge Emergency Certification

The Conservation Administrator explained that a culvert at Cedar Ridge had filled to the extent in which the road was compromised. Sharon Hart, Public Health Director, preformed a site visit and recommended that an Emergency Order would be necessary to remedy the situation. The DPW constructed a makeshift dam to slowly flush out the water. In the future, considerations for a permanent solution should be made. The Commissioners ratified the Emergency Order.

46 Canal Street – ACP for tree removal by HG&E

Last meeting, the Commission agreed to refer a request to the 'National Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP)' to remove 6 old trees along the Connecticut River. NHESP informed that the proposed removal would require a formal review. They requested a fee of \$300 and the Conservation Administrator has notified applicant, Holyoke Gas and Electric (HG&E).

Rivercrest Condominium Request for Determination

The Conservation Administrator shared that the Public Meeting was scheduled for April 24 at 5:00PM to consider the Request for Determination (RFD) to remove over 20 trees near the Buffer Zone. She informed the Commission that Special Permit conditions given to the site in 2014 required that the buffer be maintained. Additionally, the property boundaries need to be confirmed by the applicant as it appears some flagged trees for removal are on abutting properties.

Dog Park, Mulligan Drive

The Conservation Administrator shared that she had received updated plans for the proposed dog park moments before tonight's meeting. The current plan encroaches on the 50' conservation Zone slightly with grading and vegetation. The Commissioners questioned the necessity of having paved parking at the site. The applicant's representative, Berkshire Design, will be filing an RDA in the coming weeks.

South Hadley Senior Center

The Conservation Administrator explained that a new Senior Center is planned for the same location as the exiting one. The project is still in its early stages however, a wetland delineation was performed on the site in September 2018 in anticipation of new construction which shows an existing wetland with a stream at the rear of the lot.

E-Ink, 7-25 Gaylord Street

The Conservation Administrator explained that E-Ink had recently acquired two large buildings at the 'Gaylord Street Mill Complex' referred to as 'Mill Three' and the "Administrative

Building'. As the existing site conditions are degraded, she believed that the proposed project would meet the 'Riverfront Redevelopment Standards' as it would improve the overall conditions of the area.. The project will require a Notice of Intent (NOI) and the Commission could expect the applicant's submission within the upcoming months.

36 Bridge Street, Mixed Use Development, Luis Builders

The Conservation Administrator shared that she has been working with Luis Builders on a mixed-use project at 36 Bridge Street. She explained that, eight years ago, the existing single-family-home was demolished. Luis Builders, who are also the owners of the property, want to construct a mixed used building with commercial space on the bottom floor and four apartments on the top floors. This type of redevelopment would be an exciting project for the Falls area. Initial conversations with DEP made it clear that if the area proposed for redevelopment was not previously degraded Riverfront Area, it would be considered new development and Riverfront Area performance standards would need to be met. The Conservation Administrator has advised the applicant to secure a consultant in moving forward with the project.

21 North Sycamore Knolls Tree Removal Inquiry

The Conservation Administrator shared that she performed a site visit at 21 North Sycamore Knoll. The property has a new homeowner and she wants trees removed for aesthetic purposes. She advised that the work being sought would require a RDA at a minimum.

5 Lynch Place – Tree Removal Inquiry on Black Stevens Conservation Area

The Conservation Administrator preformed a site visit to look at a tree that was causing concern for residents on Lynch Lane. The tree is located on what appears to be Town owned conservation land at Black Stevens. Upon review of the concerning tree, the Conservation Administrator wasn't convinced that the tree was a hazard. This feeling was shared by the Town's Tree Warden, Chris Ryan. It was proposed that the Town develop a list of consultants who can offer a third party opinion on the condition of potential hazard trees. Additionally, the Conservation Administrator was seeking a surveyor to determine the legal property boundary along this line.

25 Riverlodge Road – Inquiry by Steve McCray

The Conservation Administrator has been in contact with the property owner of 25 Riverlodge Road. This parcel has a Negative Determination from 2015 and is currently undeveloped. The owner's intention was to sell the lot and build a house for the potential buyer on the lot. The lot is located within Buffer Zone. At the time, the Commission allowed the building of the house with a number of restrictions on the property. As years pass, the owner has not been able to sell the lot. He has inquired with the Commission to ease the restriction in the hopes it would make the lot easier to sell. The Commission was inclined **not** to ease the restrictions. The Conservation Administrator pointed out that the land was originally agricultural property and if the owner wishes to return it to such, he would need to act before the land turned fallow for five years.

7. Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice).

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Colleen Canning, recorder

Appendix

Cedar Ridge Emergency Order	Conservation Files
Rivercrest Condo Special Conditions to maintain buffer zone	Conservation Files
Municipal Dog Park Plan (4/3/19 update)	Conservation Files
25 River Lodge Road Potential Building Plan	Conservation Files
310 CMR 10.58: River Front Area	Conservation Files
North Pole Estates Preliminary Subdivision Plan	Conservation Files
Orchards' Golf Maintenance Zoned Map	Conservation Files