

Wakefield Conservation Commission – Minutes – April 23, 2020

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Attendance: Vice Chairman, Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Frank Calandra; Peter Miller; Yue Ren

Absent: Jim Luciani, Mickey Laskey

Agent: Elaine Vreeland, Recording: Judy Green

3/12/20 minutes – Mr. Calandra made a motion to approve the 3/12/20 minutes.

Mr. Miller made a second to the motion. The motion passed with an abstention from Ms. Belmonte.

DEP#313-585 – 610 Salem Street – Notice of Intent – this meeting was continued to 5/14/20 at the applicant's request.

9 Robert Street – Robert Macaleese - Request for Determination of Applicability – Public Hearing: remove 5 trees and create planting area within 100' of a wetland and within the Crystal Lake Watershed – Mr. Macaleese stated that the trees have been removed. The stumps and associated roots had been grinded. He has not yet established a planting area.

Ms. Vreeland stated that she would develop a planting plan for review at the next meeting.

This matter was continued to 5/14/20.

DEP#313-582 – Robert Casaletto – Lovis Ave. Ext. – Notice of Intent: continued public hearing for the construction of a 3-lot subdivision within 100' of a wetland – John Ogren of Hayes Engineering was present for the applicant. Scott Smyers of Oxbow Associates, consultant for the Commission was also present. A wildlife impact report compiled by Mr. Smyers was presented for review this evening.

Mr. Smyers stated that they were unable to record enough field evidence for vernal pool certification.

Mr. Calandra stated that based on the evidence presented, wood frog calls and spotted salamander egg masses, one could determine that this is a robust wetland. He asked what if any alteration could be expected beyond the 25' buffer zone.

Mr. Smyers stated that wood frogs and spotted salamanders use between 5' to 100' of upland. It would be unlikely that the species would return the following season if its habitat has been removed. He noted that the larger the buffer, the more likely they would survive.

Mr. Calandra asked what a realistic setback would be for this project.

Mr. Smyers stated that this could vary. He felt that a larger corridor on the Northern edge of the property would be favorable.

Ms. Belmonte asked what Mr. Smyers felt the impact would be of the removal of 124 trees, specifically the potential for an increase in water levels due to lack of uptake.

Mr. Smyers stated that the proposed storm water systems should be adequately designed to control runoff. He added that water levels should be closely monitored during construction. Monitoring growth of invasives following the removal of trees and understory will also be important.

Mr. Romano asked if the loss of water uptake due to tree loss had been mitigated.

Mr. Ogren stated that the rate and volume of runoff for existing and proposed conditions are captured in the storm water management report.

Mr. Romano stated that the house on lot #2 would provide some shading in lieu of lost canopy.

Mr. Ogren stated that they would preserve, in its natural state, the area to the right of the house on lot #2. The proposed grading could be removed and replaced with a small retaining wall. He also felt that due to the steep slope, migration of amphibians would not be possible in that area.

Mr. Smyers stated that they could however migrate back and forth across the yards. He suggested relocating the infiltration systems on lot #3 to retain a greater open area.

Mr. Miller stated that although the main focus of the last few meetings was the proximity of the house on lot #2, he felt that the wildlife report also highlighted the need to focus on lot #3 as well.

Mr. Smyers stated that both lots should be reviewed in order to retain as much habitat as possible.

Mr. Romano asked if the infiltration chambers on lot #3 could be moved to the side or front of the house.

Mr. Ogren stated that realistically moving the chambers would gain 5' to 10'.

Mr. Smyers stated that the more open area the better.

Ms. Belmonte felt that there was sufficient side yard area for a lawn.

Mr. Romano asked what storm event the chambers on lot #3 were sized to capture.

Mr. Ogren stated that are designed to contain the 100-year storm. The ground water in this area is high and would limit relocation areas. It could then force them closer to the wetland due to grading.

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Ms. Smyers stated that it would be preferable if chambers could be moved closer to the house in order to save more trees in the rear. He also noted that it would be preferable to preserve trees on the west side of lot #3.

Mr. Ogren stated they would assess this possibility.

John Todisco – abutter – asked about blasting impacts to lot #3.

Mr. Smyers stated he did not review blasting impacts.

Mr. Calandra stated that the Commission had suggested establishing a baseline water level that could be monitored throughout construction.

Mr. Smyers stated that he did not have concerns regarding blasting as it would not occur in close proximity to the wetland.

Mr. Ogren stated that the limit of work line would be revised based on tonight's suggested changes.

This matter was continued to 5/14/20.

DEP#313-585 – 610 Salem Street – Notice of Intent – this matter was continued at the applicant's request.

DEP#313-591 – Audubon Rd. right-of-way – request for minor modification - An additional boring location will be added to the approved plan.

Mr. Miller made a motion to accept the change as minor modification.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. It passed unanimously.

14 Wiley Street – Request to install french drain – The Commission is not opposed to this. A proposed plan and installation details will be required.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve this project.

Mr. Miller made a second to the motion. It passed unanimously.

0 Greenwood St./Cherry Lane – request for minor modification – due to ground conditions the applicant would like to move the building 15' to the west. The closest point of the house to the wetland would now be 35.1'.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the minor modification.

Mr. Calandra made a second to the motion. It passed unanimously.

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Gertrude Spaulding Park – The Department of Public Works would like to begin work on this project. A Zoom pre-construction meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

This meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.