

Wakefield Conservation Commission – Minutes – October 6, 2021

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Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani, Vice Chairman Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Ken Alepidis, Peter Miller; Silvana Bouhlal

Rebecca Davis, Elaine Vreeland, Judy Green

Absent: Frank Calandra

9/23/21 minutes – Ms. Bouhlal made a motion to approve the September 23, 2021 minutes.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Luciani and Mr. Miller were not present for the vote.

Discussion of Wetland Protection Act and storm water management standards – Ms. Davis proposed streamlining the project review process. She reviewed the importance of data sheets when performing review of a delineation. Assessments based on plants only may not be conclusive. In that case, it is within the boundaries of review for the Commission to ask for additional information in order to confirm the wetland line.

Ms. Bouhlal asked if applications are vetted prior to acceptance.

Ms. Davis stated that they are. She noted that she makes an applicant aware if the project does not meet the regulations. She does not reject applications.

Ms. Belmonte felt that it is not the role of the Agent to opine on whether an application complies with the regulations. She believes that if an applicant is unclear on the rules and regulations they should then retain representatives to guide them through the process.

Ms. Davis noted that it is made clear that it is the Commission that votes on applications, not the Agents. By and large, it is an individual homeowner who needs guidance on the process. She views it as a chance to educate homeowners on the values of the resource areas.

Mr. Romano feels this direction provides a valuable service to homeowners. He noted that well-defined borders make delineations easier to confirm. Developed areas however can be challenging.

Ms. Davis stated that the delineation should clearly note both an upland and a wetland area.

Mr. Romano noted that associate member applicant Paul Wendelgass was present.

Ms. Davis stressed that each resource area needs to be identified and located on the plan.

Mr. Miller would like to have a review of the applicable regulations for each application at the commencement of the hearing. He felt that would also help outline for the public what matters are within the Commission's purview.

Ms. Davis felt that it is important to review the verbiage within the regulations to ensure that all aspects are covered.

Ms. Vreeland reviewed the riverfront regulations. She noted that a proposed project could not exceed existing degraded conditions and needs to be an improvement. Work cannot take place closer to the riverfront than what currently exists.

Ms. Davis felt that it is vital to refer back to regulation standards during the review process rather than rely upon an applicant's definition and understanding. The preamble for each resource area defines its importance and value. This should be used as a reference point to guide review of the performance standards and how they are met. Reviewing the actual definitions can also help guide the review process.

BSC Group peer review for 200-400 Quannapowitt Parkway - Ms. Davis spoke with the representatives for the project to inform them that this would be discussed tonight. The base contract price is \$6,100.

Ms. Davis stated that the scope of work needs to be signed by a Commission member.

Ms. Belmonte questioned why the consultant would not flag unidentified wetland areas.

Mr. Romano noted that if there were an identified area it would be pointed out to the applicant to address.

Mr. Luciani noted that a reference point would need to be provided.

Ms. Davis stated that if discrepancies were noted, the applicant would then be required to submit supporting documentation.

Ms. Belmonte questioned coordination with the Commission as well as if 2 hours attendance at meetings was sufficient.

Mr. Romano felt that most coordination would be done with the Agents.

Mr. Miller asked if additional meeting time were needed would it be considered a change order.

Mr. Romano noted that the contract states that it's an estimate. Additional charges could be necessary.

Ms. Davis noted that meeting time would be inclusive not only of the actual meeting but preparation and research both before and after.

Ms. Belmonte questioned the issue of indemnification for damages. She felt this needed to be removed.

Mr. Miller suggested that Town Counsel Tom Mullen review the BSC contract.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to accept the BSC Group contract pending review by Town Counsel. Once review is complete, he will sign the contract for the Commission.

Ms. Bouhlal made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed. Mr. Alepidis abstained.

Associate member applications – Mr. Luciani will draft a letter to Town Counsel recommending appointment of the two appointees. He suggested that the Commission ask both to attend the next scheduled Commission meeting to allow for a question and answer session.

Ms. Davis will request that Town Counsel delay appointments until their next meeting after their next meeting to allow time for the introductory meeting.

Mr. Miller suggested that Mr. Luciani contact the applicants to formally invite them to the 10/14/21 meeting.

Ms. Davis noted that the two November Commission meeting fall on holidays. She suggested that one meeting be held on the 18th.

The Commission concurred.

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Bouhlal made a second to the motion.

After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.