

Wakefield Conservation Commission Minutes – February 21, 2023

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Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani, Peter Miller, Ken Alepidis, Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Haley McHatton-Ballou; Paul Wendelgass
Elaine Vreeland, Agent

2/7/23 minutes – Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the 2/7/23 minutes.

Mr. Wendelgass made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed. Mr. Miller and Mr. Alepidis were not present for the vote.

DEP#313-XXX – 10 Broadway Street – New Creek, LLC – Public Hearing: Notice of Intent – this matter was continued to 3/7/23 at the applicant's request.

DEP 313-620 -100 Hemlock Road – Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School – Continued Public Hearing: Notice of Intent for the demolition of existing school, construction of new school, parking lots, athletic fields, utilities, and stormwater management system within Bank, Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), the Buffer Zone, and the Riverfront Area – Dan Wells and Andrea Kendall from LEC Environmental Consultants; David Conway and Paige Blanchard from Nitsch Engineering; Kevin Nigro, Joe DeSantis, Anthony LoPresti and Marco Zappala from PMA Consultants; Julie Barry and Robert Schlein from Prince Lobel Tye, LLP; Vladimir Lyubetsky and Carl Franceschi from DRA Architects, Neil Benner from Gilbane and David Warner and Josh Millonig from Warner Larson were present for the applicants. Also present was Town Engineer Bill Renault. Revised plans were submitted for review this evening.

Ms. Barry stated that the applicants had submitted a building permit application. The permit was denied based on dimensional requirements. An appeal of this decision has been filed and will be heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals 3/21/23. It will be argued that the Dover Amendment waives these requirements.

Mr. Conway stated that revised plans were submitted in response to the Commission's storm water peer reviewer comments. He added that he had not yet met with Town Engineer Bill Renault.

Mr. Renault stated that he would like to ensure that impacts to each wetland resource is reviewed. He added that he would be submitting comments for the Commission's next meeting.

Mr. Conway stated that they are not expanding the footprint of work in any areas.

Mr. Renault stated that is review would include whether recharge is being met in each wetland resource area.

Mr. Romano that salt mitigation on the access road had not been addressed. He asked if a heated driveway had been reviewed.

Mr. Conway stated that the energy toll of a heated driveway would be too great.

Mr. Luciani stated that the Everly Apartments on Audubon Road have successfully used a heated parking area. He added that the applicant would need to prove that the use of salt would not adversely affect the wetland resources.

Mr. Conway stated that they were open to the Commission's suggestions for salt alternatives.

Mr. Nigro stated that they would not entertain a heated driveway as he felt it was impractical. He added that they are working with the Department of Public Works regarding salt use. He noted that they would be amenable to using sand instead. He suggested that the Commission add a special condition to their Order of Conditions (OOC) prohibiting salt use.

Mr. Romano would like to review other options from the applicant prior to issuance of an OOC.

Mr. Nigro stated that they would comply with the Town's standards. He does not feel that it is reasonable to continue the hearing for this reason.

Sasha Savoie – East Highland Ave., Melrose – asked who would follow up to ensure salt is not used.

Mr. Romano stated that a no-salt condition could be included in the OOC. Action could be taken if it is used. He added that given the steep slopes on the site he did not see how the use of salt would be avoided.

Doug Heath – Steadman Street – expressed concern with salt runoff into the wetland. He felt that no salt use was the only safe option. He was concerned that no baseline testing had been conducted.

Ms. Barry contended that the applicant has met all required regulations. She added that if any baseline testing is needed it would be undertaken.

Ms. Belmonte agreed that deicing options need to be reviewed prior to discussion of OOC issuance.

Mr. Heath stated that he had conducted water sampling at the June Circle outflow. He noted that conditions are currently pristine.

Allison Simcox – Steadman Street – does not feel there is any way to preserve the wetland in the current condition. She expressed concern that it would no longer be a high-quality wetland.

Mr. Renault stated that salt is currently applied to the roadway within 100' of the wetland. He added that he felt that the Commission should concentrate on the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) requirements. He felt that the applicant is attempting to minimize impact to the wetlands including increasing infiltration and meeting 80% total suspended solids removal.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou noted that it is the role of the Commission to protect the wetland.

Bob Brooks – June Circle – asked if there would be a water quality test conducted at wetland #1 in order to determine baseline status.

Ms. Barry felt that Mr. Heath's recent letter contained gross blanket statements. She felt that the applicants have complied with the WPA and storm water requirements, to the extent possible. She

contended that Mr. Heath was not given permission to conduct sampling on Northeast Voke property. She would like to ensure the integrity of the sampling.

Mr. Brooks stated that sampling was conducted on at the culvert, on Town property.

Mr. Heath agreed that sampling should be conducted within accepted parameters. He added that he undertook sampling as the issue had not been previously discussed.

Bronwyn Dellavolpe – Cyrus Street – feels that Mr. Heath's information should be given the same value as the applicants.

Ms. Vreeland requested that the applicants provide a written response to Mr. Heath's letter, specifically in relation to the vernal pools and Outstanding Resource Waters.

Ms. Belmonte requested submission of an alternative to salt use for deicing.

Mr. Nigro stated that prior to the next meeting, an updated snow and ice plan would be submitted.

Mr. Miller would like to see plantings within the 25' wetland buffered maximized in order to provide greater canopy.

Mr. Conway stated that the planting plan is included in the previously submitted plans. He noted that tree removal in the road area was carefully reviewed.

Mr. Romano asked for clarification of the invasive removal area at the proposed roundabout site.

Mr. Conway stated that the removal area would be smaller as the roundabout would be placed on a portion of this area.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou asked the height of the proposed culverts.

Mr. Benner stated that the 10' culvert would be 3' in height while the 15' culvert would have a maximum clearance of 4'.

Mr. Wendelgass asked if water would flow through these culverts most of the year.

Mr. Conway stated that they are designed for flow. He added that the size is dictated for wildlife passage.

June Pearson – abutter – feels that impacts could be minimized by building in an alternate location.

Ms. Vreeland asked if permeable pavers were considered for the roadway.

Mr. Conway stated that it would not be possible due to ledge and high ground water.

This matter was continued to 3/7/23.

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Woburn to Wakefield transmission line – Request for Certificate of Compliance Ms. Vreeland walked the line in Fall 2022 with the applicant's representative David Klinch of Epsilon. She has contacted the applicants re: as-built plans. She noted no issues with the wetland resources.

This matter was continued to 3/7/23.

41 Coolidge Park – tree removal request – this matter was continued to 3/7/23.

Heron Pond condominiums – tree removal request – At the applicant's request, this matter was continued to 3/7/23.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Miller made a second to the motion. polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.