

Wakefield Conservation Commission Minutes – November 8, 2023

Wakefield Conservation Commission (Commission) – Minutes – November 8, 2023

Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani; Bob Romano; Peter Miller; Haley McHatton-Ballou; Teresa Belmonte; Paul Wendelgass

Agent: Rebecca Davis

Absent: Mr. Alepidis

10/17/23 minutes – Mr. Luciani made a motion to approve the 10/17/23 minutes.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed. Ms. Belmonte abstained.

520 Water Street – Joshua Arsenault – Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for the construction of an addition and deck within the buffer to bordering vegetated wetland (BVW) – Mr. Arsenault was present for the hearing. The addition will be placed in the location of the existing deck.

Ms. Davis stated that Ms. Vreeland had conducted a site visit. There is a red maple swamp located 30' from the proposed addition. This is 170' from the riverfront.

Mr. Arsenault stated that the only excavation required would be the installation of the piers. Excavated material will be stored in the existing driveway.

Mr. Luciani recommended the installation of a hay bale line.

Mr. Arsenault was amenable to this suggestion.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to issue a negative Determination of Applicability.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-634 – 117 New Salem Street – Carol and Richard Hubbard – public hearing: Notice of Intent for the construction of an addition, replacement of a deck, repave driveway, pave a gravel area and associated grading within the buffer to BVW – Maureen Herald from Norse Environmental was present for the applicants. Ms. Herald stated that the entire lot is within the 100' buffer. The paved gravel area is the closest point of work to the wetland at 14'. The addition would be constructed in the existing driveway. They also require zoning relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals. They have not yet filed for that relief. Ms. Herald will speak with the applicant's attorney to determine a timeframe.

Ms. Belmonte asked the total increase in impervious area.

Ms. Herald stated it was approximately 350 square feet.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou asked if there would be a fence between the paved area and the wetland.

Ms. Herald stated there would not.

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Ms. Davis noted that aerial photography showed the addition of the shed, pool and gravel area occurred in 2018. She did not however note a wetland filing. Trees were also removed from the gravel area. She also requested submission of data sheets.

Ms. Herald stated that she would research whether there had been a wetland filing as well as provide datasheets.

Mr. Miller asked when the garage had been built. He noted that it would no longer be accessible for parking.

Ms. Herald stated that she would report back on the date. She noted that the garage is only used for storage, not parking.

A site visit will be conducted Sunday 11/12/23 at 9:00AM. This matter was continued to 11/21/23.

DEP#313-445 – 600 Salem Street – Request for Certificate of Compliance – Mr. Luciani stated that he had met onsite with the applicant's representative Peter Ogren of Hayes Engineering. No issues were noted.

Mr. Miller made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-XXX – 154 Salem Street – L&L Development LLC – public hearing: Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD) for approximately 410 linear feet of BVW and 751 linear feet corresponding to Mean Annual High Water – Thor Akerley of Williams & Sparages was present for the applicants.

Mr. Akerley stated that an Order of Resource Area Delineation had been issued in 2020. The wetland flags have been refreshed.

A site visit will be conducted Sunday 11/12/23 at 8:15AM. This matter was continued to 11/21/23.

391 Vernon Street – Leigh Montgomery and Chris Hartman – tree removal request.

Ms. Davis stated that Ms. Vreeland had conducted a site visit. She noted that a letter from the arborist at Keith's Tree Service was pending.

Mr. Hartman will follow-up with Keith's and report back.

74 Kendrick Avenue – tree removal request.

Ms. Davis stated that Ms. Vreeland had conducted a site visit. She noted that the proposal calls for the removal of four white pine trees that are either dead or dying.

Ms. Davis suggested that stump grinding not be allowed due to the proximity to the wetland.

Mr. Miller would like snags to remain.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approval the tree removal request. Snags are to remain on the three trees closest to the house.

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

The Commission concurred that snag height should be 6'. Ms. Vreeland will confirm this height requirement.

DEP#313-632 – 60 Farm Street – Town of Wakefield Permanent Building Committee – Continued Public Hearing: Notice of Intent for the construction of a new high school building, track and field, parking and circulation and utilities within Land Under Water, Inland Bank and the buffer to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) – Erin Prestileo, Peter Rebuck and Meghan Collins from SMMA were present for the applicants. Outstanding items from the last meeting were reviewed.

Ms. Prestileo stated that they do not feel that Standard #5 regarding pollutant load was applicable as per Massachusetts Stormwater Standards as pollutant load is based on parked vehicles, not drop-off trips.

Mr. Rebuck reviewed impervious areas and snow storage. He stated that there would be an increase in impervious area in the 100' wetland buffer, but a decrease within 25' of the wetland buffer. He added that impervious area across the entire site would be decreased by an acre. Relative to snow storage, no de-icing chemicals would be used in the area of the pervious pavers. There will also be no snow storage within 50' of wetlands. Diagrams of allowed snow storage areas will be posted in the school as well as delivered to all snow removal staff.

Meghan Collins reviewed lighting concerns. She noted that the only area where light would bleed into the wetland area was at the upper parking lot. A maximum of 3,000 Kelvin would be used in order to minimize light spill in other areas.

Ms. Prestileo noted that there would be a bypass pump used during culvert installation. There will be no direct discharge to the stream. This process will take 8-10 weeks.

Mr. Romano asked if roof runoff would be infiltrated.

Ms. Prestileo stated that there are no opportunities for that due to site constraints since the existing school will be occupied during construction. She added that two infiltration systems are proposed in the lower parking lot. There will not be any at the upper parking lot due to the retaining wall. Comments from Town Engineer Bill Renault were received this week. They have not yet prepared their responses. The team plans to meet with Mr. Renault to discuss.

This matter was continued to 11/21/23.

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New England Power – utility maintenance work – Ms. Davis stated that this would be undertaken at Farm Street and Water Street. A Notice of Intent is not required, however she suggested submission of before and after pictures. A site visit should also be conducted at the conclusion of work.

Ms. Davis noted that there had been a recent increase in flooding in this area. The Department of Public Works will use their drone to view the area to determine the blockage location.

Metro Tech Vocational School – The Department of Environmental Protection has issued a Superseding Order of Conditions. A citizen group plans to appeal this decision.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou felt that the Commission should sign on to this appeal.

Ms. Davis will reach out to the attorney for the citizens group to ask that they keep the Commission posted. The Commission could then decide whether to sign on to the appeal. This decision would need to be discussed and voted on at a public meeting.

Conservation Agent hours – A request to increase the hours from 19 per week to 30 per week was denied by Town Council. It can be revisited during the budget process for fiscal year 2025 which begins 7/1/2024.

Ms. Belmonte will draft a letter to the Town Council and Finance Committee justifying the need for this increase.

Mr. Romano noted that the complexity of projects has greatly increased.

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.