

Wakefield Conservation Commission (Commission) – Minutes – January 16, 2024

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

Absent: Paul Wendelgass

Agent: Rebecca Davis

1/2/24 minutes – Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the 1/2/24 minutes.

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

DEP#313-631 – 94 Butler Avenue – Town of Wakefield – this matter was continued to 2/6/24 at the applicant's request

DEP#313-637 – 4 Biggs Court/0 Davey Lane – Sonia & Sean McDonough – public hearing: Notice of Intent for the demolition and removal of existing structures and the construction of a new dwelling, garage, driveway and associated grading within buffer to bordering vegetated wetland (BVW) – John Ogren of Hayes Engineering and the homeowners were present.

Mr. Ogren stated that the existing home would be demolished. A new house, porch and garage would be constructed. The backyard would be leveled. Stormtech system would be installed with a design to capture the 1-year storm. The existing water line would be used and sewer would be changed to a forced main on Butler Avenue.

Mr. Romano asked if the Stormtech system could be expanded.

Mr. Ogren noted that 98% of storms would be captured with the proposed unit. The difficulty with expanding capacity is the high ground water. He added that the house, porch and garage would all be captured in the one unit.

Ms. Belmonte suggested moving the house closer to the neighbor's in order to move out of the 100' wetland buffer.

Mr. Ogren stated that the location was chosen to ensure space between neighbors. He noted that trees would be removed between the 25' buffer and the limit of work line.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou asked if a landscaping plan had been developed.

Mr. Ogren stated it had not.

Ms. Vreeland stated that she had conducted a site visit with Botanist Libby Wallis from Hayes Engineering. This lot is part of a wildlife corridor that extends to the Saugus River. She noted that the area had been previously graded. She requested submission of a landscaping plan. Several large oak trees will be removed for this construction.

The Commission will conduct a site visit Sunday 1/28/24 at 9:00AM.

Kelly St. Hilaire – 18 Davey Lane – expressed concern with increased flooding and disturbance of existing wildlife habitat. She also inquired about possible contaminants beneath the home.

Mr. Ogren stated that an old cesspool would be removed.

Mr. McDonough stated that per the Fire Department, there is no record of an underground oil tank.

This matter was continued to 2/6/24.

DEP#313-322 – Millbrook Estates condominiums – discussion of status of storm water system – Attorney Brian McGrail and Peter Ogren of Hayes Engineering were present.

Mr. McGrail stated that they propose clean up work to bring the site into compliance with the existing Order of Conditions. They have discussion remediation plans with Ms. Davis and Town Engineer Bill Renault. Abutting neighbors have also been included in this discussion. A pump had been installed at the time of construction to relieve pressure on the detention basins. This pump was not approved as part of the wetland permit. It was subsequently removed. The proposal calls for the reinstallation of the pump to act as a release valve to lower water levels in the basins during large storm events. The water would be pumped to a pipe further in the system, then to the Mill River.

Mr. Ogren noted that there are no natural outlets associated with the basins. He felt that this proposal would be the best solution for all involved. It was noted that only the pump had been removed. The pipe is still present. He felt that reinstallation of the pump would require little site work.

Mr. Miller would like a test run of the pump prior to issuing an approval.

Joe Adragna – abutter – agrees with the reinstallation of the pump.

Mr. Romano asked if the pump would have an alert system that would turn the pump on automatically.

Mr. Ogren stated that use of the pump would be determined based on visual observation. He added that invasive plants also need to be removed from the basins. Maintenance of the basins would be the responsibility of the condominium association. The maintenance schedule will be detailed in the Operations and Maintenance Plan.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to allow work required to bring the pump system to functioning status. The following work would be approved:

- Clean basins.
- Reinstall the pump.
- Submit to the Commission for review and approval an Operations and Maintenance Plan.

Ms. Davis stated that re-sizing the basins was approved under the original Order of Conditions. An as-built plan for the basins will also be submitted. Deviations from the originally approved plan will be noted.

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

DEP#313-634 – Carol and Richard Hubbard – Public Hearing (continued): 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 of Norse Environmental and the homeowners were present. A revised site plan was submitted for review this evening. The following changes were noted:

- 179 square feet of compacted gravel area will be removed and replaced with an infiltration trench.
- Four native shrubs will be installed behind the garage.
- Permanent demarcation of the edge of wetland with installation of a chain link fence.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to close the public hearing.

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

Special condition – hay bale line to be installed aside the proposed chain link fence.

Setback distance in conditions 38, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 49 is 25’.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to issue a standard Order of Conditions with the one above noted special condition.

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

Fiscal year 2025 budget – The requested budget for fiscal year 2025 would increase Rebecca’s hours to 30 per week with Elaine’s hours remaining at 5 per week.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the revised budget request. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

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

Proposed wetland bylaw – This discussion was continued to the 2/6/24 meeting.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan committee will hold a public forum 1/18/24 via Zoom.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Miller made a second to the motion.

After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.