

MINUTES TO CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING – SOMERSWORTH, NH

August 8, 2012 Council Chambers – City Hall

7:00 PM

Attending: Scott Gessis, Imants Millers, Liz Wilson, Dale Smith-Kenyon

1) Approval of meeting minutes. Scott Gessis made a motion to accept the December 2011 minutes as written. Dale Smith-Kenyon seconded the motion. Scott Gessis made a motion to accept the January 2012 minutes as written. Dale Smith-Kenyon seconded the motion. Liz Wilson made a motion to accept the April 2012 minutes as written. Dale Kenyon-Smith seconded the motion. The motions passed unanimously. The draft May 2012 meeting minutes will be revisited during the September 2012 meeting at which time Frank Richardson will be present to provide comments on the May 2012 minutes.

2) OLD BUSINESS

A. Any old business that may come before the Commission. The Commission expressed interest in conducting a site visit to Mast Point Dam during a September workshop to revisit the recreation area concept plan.

3) NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of the City of Somersworth's Standard Dredge and Fill Permit Application to the NHDES Wetlands Bureau for a culvert replacement on Rocky Hill Road. Tom Willis of the Department of Public Works presented a summary of the City's dredge and fill application to replace an existing culvert on Rocky Hill Road. The application was submitted to the NHDES in mid-July 2012. The Commission conducted a site walk of the project site prior to the meeting. The existing culvert is rusting in place and is unable to adequately manage observed stream flows, as it is sized for a 25-year storm. Under current NHDES rules, a culvert must be capable of accommodating a 100-year storm. The City is requesting a waiver from the rules due to financial feasibility. Additionally, 100-year storm conditions cause the Salmon Falls River to back up Tates Brook to Rocky Hill Road, causing flooding. Therefore, flooding in this area is primarily due to flooding along the Salmon Falls, not Tates Brook. As such, the permit application proposes a replacement culvert that accommodates a 50-year storm event instead of a 100-year storm.

The application proposes 1,070 square feet of wetland impacts and an additional 320 square feet of temporary impacts. Following construction, stone will be placed within the culvert to mimic natural streambed conditions. Riprap will be placed on the downstream side of the culvert to provide support to the embankment.

Liz Wilson made a motion to support the application submitted to the NHDES. Dale Smith-Kenyon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Eric Goldfine SERPT is seeking a conditional use permit for grading and to build a structure within the riparian buffer for property located on Old Rochester Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 65, Lot02, CUP #01-2012. Bob Stowell of Tritech Engineering described the development of two proposed house lots on Old Rochester Road. The proposed project includes some impacts within the riparian buffer, specifically some tree cutting within the woodland buffer

(50-100 ft from wetland resource). No impacts, including tree cutting, are proposed within the vegetated buffer (0-50 ft from wetland resource). The proposed work to prepare housing lots includes grading for septic systems. Dale Smith-Kenyon asked how many trees are proposed to be cut within the buffer. Mr. Stowell stated that complete tree clearing will be required within the footprint of proposed houses and the associated work areas.

The applicant seeks a waiver from the tree point count requirement included in the City Riparian and Wetland Buffer Ordinance. Liz Wilson indicated that the ordinance states that the point count requirement applies to trees within the vegetated buffer and not the woodland buffer. The Commission determined that a tree point count within the vegetated buffer, and therefore the request for a waiver from such a count, does not apply in this instance given that no cutting is proposed in the vegetated buffer. Furthermore, the Commission expressed support for the proposal as presented on the July 25, 2012 plans and plan compliance with the Riparian and Wetland Buffer District Ordinance.

- C. Update on Somersworth Sustainability Committee. The Committee is currently working on a traveling display board that provides information on waste reduction, recycling, composting, and committee information. The Committee is also hosting community produce sharing event on Sunday September 9th from 10am to noon. The event is meant to bring gardeners together to share produce. All excess produce at the end of the event will be donated to a local food pantry.
- D. Member Items and Reports. None.
- E. Director of Planning and Community Development's Report. None.
- F. Any other new business that may come before the Commission. None.

4) WORKSHOP BUSINESS

- A. Any workshop business that may come before the Commission. None.

- 5) Adjournment. Dale Smith-Kenyon moved to adjourn. Liz Wilson seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Wilson (interim Secretary)