

MINUTES TO CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING – SOMERSWORTH, NH

February 12, 2014 Council Chambers – City Hall

7:00 PM

Attending: Imants Millers, Liz Wilson, Dale Smith-Kenyon, Emilee Kenyon, Frank Richardson, George Wentworth, Director of Planning and Community Development Dave Sharples

- 1) Approval of meeting minutes. Dale Smith-Kenyon made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the January 8, 2014 workshop as amended. George Wentworth seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 2) OLD BUSINESS
  - A. Twelve Month, LLC is seeking a conditional use permit for a single family residential subdivision with wetland impacts on a property located at 31 Stackpole Road and 301 Green Street. Joe Falzone (Twelve Month, LLC), Scott Cole (Beals Associates), James Long (GZA), and Tracy Tarr (GZA) presented updates to the proposed subdivision since the January 8, 2014 meeting. Scott Cole summarized the three tasks performed since the last meeting: 1) illustrate the buffer areas to be impacted by the project, 2) perform a wildlife/habitat site assessment, 3) provide more information on how to place a portion of the property into conservation.
    - 1) Buffer impacts: 29 parcels contain land within the wetland buffer, 18 with proposed impacts. If conservation efforts proceed, 13 lots would have impacts to the buffer. For planning purposes, these estimates were made using typical house, deck, and tree clearing areas.
    - 2) Wildlife/habitat site assessment: Tracy Tarr of GZA presented the findings of the wildlife/habitat study. There are 3 upland habitats (grassland, upland shrubland, and forest) and 4 wetlands habitats (wet meadow, scrub/shrub wetland, forested wetlands, and 2 streams). There is also a vernal pool on the site. The potential exists for rare species and those of concern to inhabit the property. If properly managed, these habitats could encourage a variety of species to use the site. The Commission was provided with copies of the assessment. Tracy Tarr indicated that if a portion of the property was placed into conservation that the easement would be contiguous with other conservation land as well as land containing the headwaters to Rollins Brook.
    - 3) Conservation Efforts: Frank Richardson inquired about the feasibility of placing a portion of the land into conservation. Joe Falzone informed the Commission that the program in place that could fund a conservation easement on this site has been funded as part of the Farm Bill. He also indicated that until regulations associated with the new bill are finalized that it is unclear how much funding will be available. With a formal agreement with the Commission, and upon approval of all necessary permits, Mr. Falzone expressed his willingness to proceed with only the first phase of subdivision development, leaving the second phase undeveloped until funding for conservation is secured. Scott Cole showed the Commission a site plan with Phase 1 developed and Phase 2 (97 acres) in conservation.

Frank Richardson stated that the Commission will need to perform a site walk to look at the individual lots with proposed impacts. He requested that lots where the Conditional Use Permit applies be marked for the site walk. Dave Sharples indicated that for the next meeting that site plans will need to include a note showing, as applicable, that 50% of the land within the 50-100ft buffer is left in a natural state. Dave Sharples will also provide Twelve Month, LLC with a list of parcels that need to be revised to meet the minimum requirements of the wetlands buffer ordinance.

B. Any old business that may come before the Commission. None.

3) NEW BUSINESS

A. Mast Point Dam Revitalization project update and review of task list. Liz Wilson and George Wentworth continue to work on signage, and received samples of sign materials for consideration. A cost estimate for the chosen materials/design is expected shortly. Dave Sharples said that Strafford Rivers Conservancy might be able to assist with creating a trail map for one of the signs. Dave Sharples has visited a Fish and Game location to look at boat launch designs.

B. Update on the Somersworth Sustainability Committee. Liz Wilson summarized current Committee activities, including a speaker series, a film series, an educational workshop for councilors, the solar farm feasibility study, community garden events for the 2014 season, and the energy prize competition.

C. Member Items and Reports. 1) The Commission received a thank you note from Strafford Rivers Conservancy for the annual membership renewal. 2) The Commission was invited to join the New Hampshire Association of Natural Resource Scientists at an annual fee of \$20. Dale Smith-Kenyon made a motion that the Commission become a member. George Wentworth seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Director of Planning and Community Development's Report. 1) The findings of the solar farm feasibility study will be presented to the City on Tuesday February 18, 2014 at 5:30pm in council chambers. 2) A letter of intent to participate in the Georgetown University sponsored energy prize competition has been submitted.

E. 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 made a motion to adjourn. George Wentworth seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Wilson (Secretary)