

MINUTES TO CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING – SOMERSWORTH, NH

September 12, 2012 Council Chambers – City Hall

7:00 PM

Attending: Scott Gessis, Imants Millers, Liz Wilson, Frank Richardson, Director of Planning and Community Development Dave Sharples

1) Approval of May 9, 2012 and August 8, 2012 meeting minutes. Scott Gessis made a motion to accept the May and August 2012 minutes as written. Imants Millers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2) OLD BUSINESS

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

3) NEW BUSINESS

A. Eric Goldfine SERPT is seeking a conditional use permit for development within the riparian buffer for property located on Old Rochester Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 65, Lot 02, CUP #01-2012. Bob Stowell of TriTech Engineering presented a restoration plan for the referenced parcel. The proposed development was previously presented to the Planning Board; however, alterations to the parcel have been made since the presentation to the Planning Board. The owner of an adjacent parcel, though same as the subject parcel, conducted clearing on the adjacent property within the vegetated buffer without a conditional use permit. The clearing activity crossed onto the subject property and right to boundary of the wetland resource. A tree count was conducted within the vegetated buffer following the inadvertent clearing on the parcel, and the restoration plan therefore includes the planting of trees within the vegetated buffer as well as the wetland buffer. The proposed restoration plan is meant to restore site conditions to those described in the original plan for development so that the criteria of the wetland ordinance are met.

Mr. Stowell indicated that 17 trees will be planted within vegetative buffer, and 6 trees will be planted within the wetland buffer. Additionally, he indicated that a wetland seedmix would be applied to the ground surface to stabilize the ground and re-establish vegetation. Liz Wilson remarked that the planting should take place within the next few weeks so that the vegetation will take root before colder weather sets in. Frank Richardson recommended that the restoration plan should include a conservation seed mix rather than a wetland seed mix because the conservation mix is better suited for the site conditions.

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 164 Old Rochester Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 66, Lot 03, CUP #02-2012. The subject property is a lot of record, meaning that development plans on the property must be designed in accordance with the wetland buffer ordinance to the extent feasible. Bob Stowell of TriTech Engineering presented the application by the property owner to obtain a conditional use permit for the tree clearing within the wetland buffer that had already occurred. No restoration is proposed, and Mr.

Stowell stated that the extent of tree clearing on the subject parcel had been appropriate for the building activity planned for the site.

Liz Wilson made the following motion on both conditional use permit applications:

"The Commission recommends Conditional Use Permits for Lots 2 and 3 with the condition that prior to an issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the proposed restoration plan will be implemented, including tree and shrub planting, seeding, and mulching with a follow-up inspection by the Conservation Commission and the Director of Planning and Community Development to determine if 75% of planted vegetation has been established. In the event that less than 75% of the planted vegetation has been established, the applicant shall re-seed and re-plant as necessary until a minimum of 75% of the vegetation has been established. In addition, a Conservation Seedmix shall replace the originally proposed Wetland Seedmix in the restoration plan."

Imants seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

- C. Update on Somersworth Sustainability Committee. . Liz Wilson gave an update on the Sustainability Committee from the previous month. The Committee continues to work on a traveling display to educate the public on the aspects of waste reduction. The Committee hosted a community produce exchange on September 9th, and approximately six people attended. Participants exchanged home-grown vegetables, and the excess produce was donated to the Somersworth Berwick food pantry. Liz Wilson remarked that the food pantry was eager to accept fresh produce and that the Committee has an opportunity to coordinate "Grow-A-Row" garden plots within the City and donate more food to the pantry in the future.
- D. Member Items and Reports. The Commission received a thank you note from the Strafford Rivers Conservancy for the annual gift of \$100.
- E. Director of Planning and Community Development's Report. Using an EPA screening tool, Dave Sharples began evaluating site conditions at the sanitary landfill for the feasibility of developing a solar farm at the landfill. The landfill is primarily uncapped. Rather, a downgradient chemical wall captures pollutants identified in the groundwater. A project of this type presents some challenges, specifically the potential for waste settlement under a solar installation. However, General Electric is interested in participating in further evaluation of the site for a solar project. Dave Sharples said that he will keep the Commission updated on this potential project.
- 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. The Commission visited the Mast Point Dam area during the September 12, 2012 workshop. Liz Wilson, Frank Richardson, Imants Millers, and Dave Sharples were present. The Commission discussed the clearing of some ground cover and small trees within 50-100 feet of the access road to provide more visibility. A barrier between the access

road and the clearing is needed to delineate a parking area and provide room for picnic tables. The Commission also looked at potential locations for a bridge crossing as well as potential bridge designs.

- 5) Adjournment. Liz Wilson moved to adjourn. Imants Millers seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Wilson (interim Secretary)