

**SOMERSWORTH CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
September 11, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Angela Ficco
Larry Hamilton
Mercedes O'Donohue
Scott Orzechowski
Jeremy Rhodes
Dale Smith-Kenyon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah McGraw

STAFF PRESENT: Shanna B. Saunders, Director of Planning and Community Development.

The meeting was called to order by S Orzechowski at 6:00 p.m.

1) **Approval of meeting minutes**

Conservation Meeting minutes August 14 2019 (Regular)

Following modifications are noted: In conditions, we stipulated that in addition to the wetland buffer being delineated on the final plans, that the total disturbed area be less than 50%

D. Smith-Kenyon moved that we accept the minutes as amended, L. Hamilton seconded. Passed unanimously

Conservation Minutes August 22 2019 (Workshop - Site Walk)

L. Hamilton moves to accept as written, A. Ficco seconded. Passed Unanimously.

2) **Public Comment**

No Public Comments

3) **Continued Business**

A) Steven E Brown is seeking an after-the-fact conditional use permit to allow earthwork activities within the 100' wetland buffer on properties located at Commercial and Willand Drive, in the commercial and Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map, 43 Lots 1-G, 1-I, and 1-K, CUP #05-2019

The applicant's engineer presents; the applicant's wetland scientist was also in attendance; the applicant is not. Newly submitted maps indicate the position of the loam piles that were not mapped in previous submitted materials. Con Com Members raised concerns regarding the area and extent of disturbance, erosion and rilling, breaching of silt fence, use of questionable fill (construction debris) in erosion berm, and presence of invasive species.

The Commission discussed remediation options, recognizing that because the native soil has been covered for some months there will be significant erosion concerns with a complete restoration. A more in-depth restoration plan will be required.

J.Rhodes moved that the applicant be required to return at the November Con Com Meeting with a remediation plan addressing 100% of the 0-50 foot and 50% of the 50-100 foot buffer, as permitted by statute, and to repair the breached silt fence (or replace with silt sock, at the applicant's preference) immediately.

D. Smith-Kenyon seconded. Approved unanimously

4) **New Business (noted in order of presentation)**

A) Somersworth Falls LLC is seeking a Conditional Use Permit for the expansion of the existing parking lot within the 50' and 100' Wetland Buffers on a property located at 267 Route 108 in the Commercial Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map 46 Lot 4F, CUP#07-2019

The Applicant's engineer presented, and noted that the building in question is currently occupied by Eyesight, a large Optometry/Ophthalmology practice. The applicant is seeking to add an additional 7 parking spaces to the property in order to improve the current parking situation at the practice.

The disturbance would amount to 27.4% disturbance of the buffer, but largely comes through regrading of a current detention basin, amendment of soil to include rain garden on the current detention basin site, and addition of further drainage improvements (swales and a rain garden) near the spaces to be added in buffer. No impervious surface is added within the 75' structure line. The current detention basin is functioning well; the intent is to improve it to ensure that it continues to do so when faced with increased flow from additional impervious surface.

Any trees to be impacted by additional paving will be relocated on site, and additional plantings (of native species) are to be added during this work.

J Rhodes moves that the request from Somersworth Falls LLC is seeking a Conditional Use Permit for the expansion of the existing parking lot within the 50' and 100' Wetland Buffers on a property located at 267 Route 108 in the Commercial Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map 46 Lot 4F, CUP#07-2019 be forwarded to the planning board with a recommendation to replace the silt fence noted on the plan with a mulch-filled silt sock; the applicant's representative assenting to this recommendation.

A. Ficco seconds. Approved unanimously

B) Report from the Mayor's Commission on Preserve Somersworth

The Commission met, and Mayor Hilliard addressed the group. Planned next steps are to assess the current state of the city, with the intent to develop a baseline prior to any recommendations. The Commission currently has 5 members and is looking for more.

C) Any new business that may come before the commission

None

5) **Old Business**

A) Member Items, Sub-Committee Items and Reports

The state of the Sunningdale easement was discussed; the deed for the conservation property at the site was transferred to the city by 12 Month LLC, and it is now a city-owned, conserved property. M. O'Donohue will coordinate monitoring with S. McGraw.

B) Update Regarding 53 Coles Pond Road Property

The next step in the Drinking Water grant application (Funding Application) is due Friday, September 13, and the Commission discussed the letter of support to be included with this stage of the application. Several edits were suggested and provided to S. Saunders. The Commission also discussed the need for a waiver for the city's appraiser of choice due to limited experience with this specific appraisal type, and the potential need to move forward with a different appraiser if undue delay would result.

J. Rhodes moved that we approve the letter as edited and authorize S.Saunders or city staff at her discretion to proceed with the application and appraisal.

D. Smith-Kenyon seconded. Approved unanimously.

C) Signage for Frank Richardson Trail

We have been provided with a proof, and the Commission and S. Saunders agree it's a fitting dedication.

D. Smith-Kenyon moves that we authorize S. Saunders to move forward with acquiring two copies of the sign and to arrange installation at the Mast Point trails, up to \$500 to be drawn from commission funds.

J. Rhodes seconds; approved unanimously (A. Ficco abstaining due to a momentary absence)

D) Malley Farm Cottontail Habitat

The City Council expressed some reservations, particularly from one member. The commission members agreed to talk to councilors from their respective wards/at large to express support and educate on the minimal impact and lack of expense to the city.

E) Japanese Knotweed Control

Quotes are being sought for the Noble Pines patch, and the school district has been directed to consider doing the same for the Idlehurst patch. The Commission will discuss possible removal of the Malley Farm patch, including the possibility of biological (goat) control.

F) Any Other Member/Sub-Committee Reports

The Sustainability Committee will be hosting a screening of "From Paris to Pittsburgh" September 26, 6PM, in the CTC black box theatre, with a panel discussion following; this is the first session of a speaker series on climate change.

G) Any Other Old Business That May Come Before the Commission

None

6) Treasurer's Report

No report this session.

J Rhodes moved to adjourn; M Donhue seconded. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeremy Rhodes
Conservation Commission Secretary