

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – CONSERVATION COMMISSION

July 12, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Doug Bryar
Jeremy Degler
Kevin Dodds
Scott Orzechowski
Jeremy Rhodes
Dale Smith-Kenyon

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Dana Crossley

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

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

Corrections: A. Ficco had left the commission as of the meeting date and should not have been listed.

D. Smith-Kenyon moves to accept as amended; J. Degler seconds. Motion carries 5-0-1 (K. Dodds)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (five minutes per person and subject to closure in interest of time)

None

3. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REQUESTS

A. Packy's Investment LLC is seeking a conditional use permit for 12,235 SF impact to the Riparian and Wetland Buffer as part of a commercial development on a property located at 363 Route 108, in the Commercial Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map 48 Lot 22B, CUP#14-2022.

The applicant has requested a continuance to the next meeting. The Commission discussed the number of continuances for this application, and has made the following requests of the applicant:

- An estimate of their readiness date
- A new packet reflecting their changes for the plan.
- A site walk to be scheduled when the plan is complete.

J. Rhodes moves to continue the application to the meeting of August 9; D. Smith-Kenyon seconds. Motion carries 6-0-0

B. Michael Davis is seeking a conditional use permit for after the fact excavation and alterations within the Riparian and Wetland Buffer on a property located at 25 Otis Road, in the Residential/Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 31, Lot 49, CUP#03-2023.

A mitigation plan is in progress. Code Compliance has history reports for 2011 and 2022 violation notices; this applicant has histories with NH DES, Code Compliance, NH Attorney General, and Somersworth DPW. Court orders that were issued in 2011 and 2022. Commission to review mitigation plan. The applicant has requested a continuance to allow for time to provide additional information.

J. Rhodes moves to continue to the meeting of August 9th; J. Degler seconds. Motion carries 6-0-0.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Any new correspondence

A draft solar ordinance has been provided by Planning Director Mears; feedback is requested.

B. Any new business to come before the Commission

The Commission discussed the draft solar ordinance; vegetation management and water runoff were major topics. Concerns focused on large-scale vegetation removal and concentration of rainwater from large ground-mount arrays. Specific items are:

- Pg3, item G: Concerns were raised about large-scale forest clearance for installation of solar arrays, particularly as it applies to leased city-owned land.
- Pg 6, note 3: The commission expressed a desire to clarify that no placement or disturbance of either the vegetated or wooded buffer is permitted.
- Height limits: Would applicants be permitted to exceed the 20 ft maximum with a CUP?
- 19.33.F.2: Clearance requirements should include maintenance access as well.
- Notation that solar arrays are, in fact, permanent structures, particularly in cases with poured concrete footings.
- The Commission discussed potential incentives for placement on disturbed land/disincentives for installations on undisturbed land.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Easement monitoring

No Updates at this time; a new lead person is required with the departure of Sarah Childs.

B. Community Wildlife Habitat item for City newsletter

This item was included in the July City newsletter.

C. Any Correspondence regarding old business

See below.

D. MEMBER ITEMS, SUB-COMMITTEE ITEMS, AND REPORTS

i. **Wildlife management plan for Lily Pond parcel** (Scott Orzechowski)

No update at this time.

ii. **Invasives plan sub-committee report** (Dale Smith-Kenyon)

Grant possibilities are being explored with UNH. There is potentially professional support available here as well.

Contact is being made with the DPW regarding invasives being spread through city compost/mulch originating from Malley Farm; strategies will be discussed to control them.

iii. **Malley Farm trail subcommittee report** (Kevin Dodds)

ConservationWorks has been contacted and they believe that the approved amounts will be sufficient to obtain a written report.

Rollinsford may be a potential partner here, both due to some unclear boundary lines along the property as well as for interconnection with conserved parcels. The section of trail in question may not be ADA workable.

iv. **Exploration of formal conservation of Malley Farm City parcel**

S. Orzechowski has found an attorney to assist with this; no funding needed at this time will continue to investigate.

v. **City tree GPS inventory project**

D. Bryar spoke to SRPC (Jackson Rand, GIS Planner) and expressed interest. They discussed Dover's implementation as an example. A map is created using existing GIS data, and trees can then be tagged and evaluated using a phone/tablet app. This app dumps data to GIS, allowing it to be accessed from a central location. Tagging can be done by SRPC staff, volunteers, the City, or any combination thereof. Cost for SRPC staff is approximately \$120/day; each tree requires about 20 minutes to categorize and evaluate. Core database cost would likely be \$1,000-\$2,000. Approvals required for this are not known, although we could fund. Suggested sites are street trees, cemeteries, schools, and parks. We could potentially leverage groups, clubs, or scouting organizations as potential assists.

Potential uses could be suggested plantings for both residential and commercial projects, care guides, management plans, and 'Treeage' plans for DPW/School/other department management.

E. Any other old business that may come before the Commission

J. Degler discusses the cutting planned at The Oaks; this does not appear to have occurred yet. A yearly site visit to check timber management was discussed as well.

A site walk on Ruel St to check on the ad-hoc trail clearance is needed. S. Orzechowski will check on status and schedule.

D. Crossley informs the commission that wetland buffer signs have been ordered. These have not arrived but should shortly. Applicants will be required to purchase these signs at cost and mark the boundaries of wetlands on their property.

S. Orzechowski will check on the list of easements requiring signage.

6. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

No report this month.

J. Degler moves to adjourn; D. Smith-Kenyon seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeremy Rhodes
Conservation Commission Secretary