



## MINUTES

October 23, 2014

**PRESENT:** John Hall (Chair), Liz Craig, Nick Lee, Dan Falta

**ALSO PRESENT:** Patricia Sesto, Director, Environmental Affairs; Liz Larkin, Recording Secretary; Pete Romano, LandTech; Richard Gibbons, Esq.; Robert Fuller, Esq.; Ann Day, Ann Day Architects; Michael Yeager, Homeowner

**ABSENT:** Tom Burgess (notified of intended absence)

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

### **II. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None**

### **III. APPLICATIONS READY TO BE REVIEWED**

- A. WET#2267(I) – RYAN – 20 Thunder Lake Road** – “after-the-fact” installation of a permeable gravel driveway along the southern border of the property 16 feet from wetlands (cont.)

Ms. Sesto noted that the applicant has requested an extension on their application.

Mr. Lee MOVED to EXTEND the application per the applicant’s request, SECONDED by Mr. Falta and CARRIED 4-0-0.

- B. WET#2275(I) – ABOU-SABH – 78 Spoonwood Road** – “corrective action” for clearing of trees and shrubs in and around a watercourse

The commission skipped this application as there was nobody present to review the corrective action proposal.

- C. WET#2280(I) – MONTANARO – Wampum Hill Road** – proposed driveway across a wetland

Mr. Romano introduced himself and the two Attorneys representing the property, which straddles the Weston and Wilton town line, with 97% of the wetland crossing being in

Weston. There is an existing gravel right-of-way adjacent to the Honey Hill Open Space. The owners hold two building lots in Wilton that will be served by this proposed driveway. Mr. Romano indicated that the Aspetuck Land Trust has agreed to the driveway proposal and that the application is before this commission for the upland review area. He also confirmed that they already received their approval from the Wetlands Commission in Weston.

Mr. Romano confirmed that the existing wood road bisects the wetland and can only provide access to a Jeep or persons on foot. The proposed driveway will be widened to 12 feet, with some fill and piping needed. The driveway area is fairly flat and the pipes they propose will keep the continuity with the upper and the lower wetlands. Compacted processed aggregate will be used for 80% of the driveway surface. Mr. Romano confirmed there is one steep area, 300 or 400 feet in, that will be paved to avoid erosion or rutting issue. In lieu of headwalls, 2 small parapet field stone walls with fill placed over the pipes. The existing pipe will be replaced with 2 new pipes.

Mr. Romano confirmed the construction sequence whereas the two short walls will be constructed on both sides of the driveway for about 100 feet, then they would mimic the current driveway while widening with a turnoff every 200 feet for vehicle encounters.

Driveway maintenance will be the responsibility of the property owners. The driveway proposal includes two rain gardens on the uphill side of the driveway for runoff to help with water quality concerns. The planting plans for these are included in the application documents.

Ms. Sesto noted that there are some housekeeping items she would like to clean up for this application, such as authorization from the Aspetuck Land Trust and the town of Wilton for the work that is being done on their properties. Ms. Sesto questioned the long term viability of a gravel driveway. Mr. Romano stated that Weston required limited pavement. Ms. Sesto asked if this is being deed restricted and Mr. Romano confirmed it was not. Mr. Romano also confirmed that the Aspetuck Land Trust requested to keep the area as natural as possible.

Atty. Fuller explained the history of Old Two Rod Highway in that it is an old wood road that provides access to the property. He confirmed that Aspetuck LT asked them to abandon this accessway and that any potential buyer would need to go through the wetlands commission for their building permit. Atty. Fuller added that Weston approved the culvert and other proposed improvements on the Weston side.

Ms. Sesto asked if the rain gardens get water from the paved portion of the driveway. Mr. Romano stated the driveway would be compacted and not very pervious which is why they suggest the rain gardens. Ms. Sesto asked if any trees are being removed for this project. Mr. Romano confirmed that no trees are to be removed. Ms. Craig inquired about how wide the road is now compared to what they are requesting. Mr. Romano responded it is currently 8 – 10 feet wide and will be 12 feet. Ms. Craig suggested a ribbon driveway with grass in the center. Mr. Lee countered that the area is too shady for this to work. Ms. Craig suggested pervious pavers in and around the wetlands crossing and asked for the dimensions of the rain gardens. The rain gardens will be 35 ft. x 10 ft. which is sized for the runoff. There is a slope to the top of the ridge and some existing vegetation and only 500 feet ± needs to be regraded.

Mr. Gibbons provided confirmation that Two Rod Highway is a public road per a recent court proceeding. Mr. Lee asked where the terminus is of this road as the right of way seems to stop at the south end. Mr. Romano confirmed it follows the driveway and there is no right-of-way associated with it. Ms. Craig asked about winter maintenance at the crossing as she was concerned it may ice over and require salt. Mr. Romano stated that it should not ice because it is graded to drain.

With no further questions or comments, the application will be held open until the next regularly scheduled meeting on November 13, 2014.

**D. WET#2281(I) – YEAGER – 134 Ridgefield Road** – build accessory dwelling using the existing garage footprint and new concrete foundation and slab, including new septic

Ms. Craig and Mr. Lee indicated they visited the site.

Ms. Day described the project, first noting the septic plan has changed since the application was submitted, and handed out the revised plan. The owners would like to rebuild the garage, adding an apartment above it to house their aging parents. The footprint of the new garage will not change. The Comstock Brook is adjacent to the project which is why they are before this commission.

The concrete walkways surrounding the current home will be replaced. The addition will be a second story with a one foot overhang with a gable roof, instead of the current flat roof. With the increase in pitch, gutters will be installed to push the water to the gravel drive.

A new foundation for the slab will be poured and the replaced concrete surrounds will be a solid surface of concrete and bluestone. The garage elevation will be raised by 2 feet to keep water away from the structure. Mr. Yeager confirmed he would be amenable to use something more natural than concrete. Ms. Sesto suggested moving the addition east, away from the top of the stream bank. Ms. Day countered that the septic tanks cause her to place the structure closer to the house and their intent was to keep the existing footprint and location.

Ms. Sesto described the value to the stream bank provided by the trees slated to be removed. Mr. Hall added that these trees provide a canopy for the watercourse. Ms. Day stated that they hired an arborist who indicated the removal of trees would not have an impact on the brook. Mr. Yeager confirmed that the twin-trunked tree on the bank has one trunk leaning over the garage and should be removed for safety reasons. Mr. Lee confirmed that this half should be removed and will not jeopardize the other trunk, but questioned why the other two trees would need to be removed.

Mr. Hall reiterated the suggestion that the garage be moved. Ms. Day explained the reason they chose that area was to maintain their privacy and moving the addition would compromise this. She added that the proposal retains existing parking spaces. Ms. Day stated that they would like to add an underground propane tank location to this application and that there are already lines under the patio which would make it difficult to move.

Ms. Sesto conveyed when wetlands applications are reviewed by the commission, there is sometimes an opportunity to improve the health of the wetland. She indicated that the home

as it sits now, would not have been approved under current regulations and since the garage is being completely demolished, the applicant should investigate improving the current situation. Ms. Day stated they would investigate shifting the addition towards the house. Ms. Sesto added that this would also bring the structure farther from the flood zone. She stated that compensation for tree removal should be considered such as planting on the bank. Mr. Lee stated that a construction fence would be more appropriate than a silt fence in this location to confine construction activities.

Ms. Day confirmed that deep test holes were evaluated and the septic system is being shortened. She will add the propane tank to the application and the shed as well. Ms. Craig suggested a rain garden and Ms. Day was amenable. Mr. Lee asked that the construction fence be placed on the plan as well.

With no further questions or comments, the application will be held over to the next regularly scheduled meeting on November 13, 2014.

#### **IV. APPLICATIONS TO BE ACCEPTED**

##### **A. WET#2282(S) – QUINN – 269 Millstone Road – “emergency” septic repair**

Mr. Falta MOVED to ACCEPT this new application, SECONDED by Ms. Craig and CARRIED 4-0-0.

#### **V. APPROVED MINOR ACTIVITIES**

**A. WET#2278(M) – KOTONSKI – 302 Sturges Ridge Road – install pool 70 ft. from a wetland**

**B. WET#2279(M) – NAIR – 8 Middlebrook Farm Road – install generator and in-ground propane tank 20 feet from a wetland**

**C. WET#2283(M) – SMITH – 45 Quail Ridge Road – installation of a pool 85 feet from a wetland**

Ms. Sesto provided a brief summary of the approved minor activities.

#### **VI. CORRESPONDENCE - None**

#### **VII. OTHER APPROPRIATE BUSINESS**

##### **A. VIOLATIONS**

- 1. DeVito – 40 Honey Hill**
- 2. Leska – 50 Sunset Pass**

Ms. Sesto confirmed that Honey Hill is not due back in court until February and the Leska corrective action should be submitted by the next meeting. She indicated that there are new violations on 46 and 48 Freshwater Lane that will be coming through.

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 9, 2014**

Mr. Lee MOVED to APPROVE the minutes, as drafted, SECONDED by Mr. Hall and CARRIED 4-0-0.

**VIII. ADJOURN**

Mr. Lee MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:36 p.m., SECONDED by Mr. Falta, and CARRIED 4-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Liz Larkin  
Recording Secretary