



MINUTES

November 13, 2014

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

ALSO PRESENT: Patricia Sesto, Director, Environmental Affairs; Liz Larkin, Recording Secretary; Doug DiVesta, DiVesta Civil Engineering Associates; Otto Theall, Soil & Wetland Science; Kate Throckmorton, Environmental Land Solutions; Ann Day, Ann Day Architects; Michael Yeager, Homeowner; Susan DiLoreto, Conservation Commissioner

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. WET#2277(S) – DNA GROUP, LLC – 19 Lee Allen Lane – raze existing dwelling and construct new residence

Mr. Hall, Ms. Craig, and Mr. Burgess indicated they visited the site. Ms. Sesto read the list of documents into the record.

Mr. DiVesta explained the property as being 2 acres on the southeast end of Lee Allen Lane. There is an existing home to the northwest of the property served by a paved driveway with a well in front and the septic in the back. The wetlands flow from the northern portion of the property to the southeast portion with about ½ acre of wetlands. He confirmed the proposal includes razing the existing structure and constructing a new home in its place utilizing the existing driveway.

Mr. DiVesta showed the proposed L-shaped home and noted that there is a pool location noted on the plan, but will not be built at this time. The best soils for the septic were found in the southern end of the property and this location was approved by the Health Department. There is also a proposed stormwater management system with a tie into the subsurface drainage which Mr. DiVesta confirmed would create a better post-development situation than what's existing.

Mr. DiVesta confirmed they are keeping the development within the already disturbed area with a double row of silt fence with hay bales. There will also be a demarcation with sunken boulders and a planting area along the embankment with the septic.

Mr. DiVesta confirmed there are some alternates they considered including the same configuration of the house and septic with the pool pushed north. This would push the drainage eastward, closer to the wetlands. Another alternative was to move the garage to the south, but this will create more impervious surfaces. Mr. DiVesta stated that he did not want to move the pool to the side of the house per the staff report for safety reasons as the parents would not be able to see children in the pool from the house.

Mr. Theall explained the soil types he found when performing the soils report. He specifically wanted to respond to the staff report asking to confirm the wetland boundary mid-slope. Mr. Theall reported that the Woodbridge Soil is a glacial till soil with a compact layer which is hard for water to get through which affects the water table. He confirmed that he checked the test pits and the northwest portion of the property has the most hard pan layer and it gets closer as you go southeast, although the elevation is higher.

Mr. Lee confirmed that the staff report requests a planting plan. Mr. Hall suggested that the galleries be pulled back from the wetlands and the driveway be constructed with permeable materials. Mr. DiVesta confirmed the proposed septic is the smallest system that can be allowed. Mr. Hall stated that they should pull the house farther from the wetlands by re-shaping or re-sizing and improving the condition of the lot. Mr. DiVesta stated that they can plant an increased lawn area. Ms. Sesto stated that the description of the boulders do not make sense with the planting discussion. Mr. Hall stated that the house is a huge new commitment to structures and a pool deck that do not exist now. He added that the L-shape of the house and the large courtyard and garage brings more activity to the land and they are doing nothing to mitigate.

Ms. Sesto stated that the new home is 30 feet closer to the wetlands and wondered why they need a 75 ft. x 75 ft. courtyard and added that clearing out to the silt fence is not okay. Mr. Hall added that the structure takes up a lot of space and this development is pushing everything out farther than what exists. Ms. Craig pointed out that no trees were on the plan and wanted to know what would happen to the Hemlock and Maple trees. She stated that adding a tremendous lawn does not reflect well on their attitude of development. She added that low shrubs and ornamental grasses are not enough of a demarcation and could get mowed.

Mr. Lee stated that the area below the pool is too steep for the lawn as proposed. Ms. Craig asked if the stockpile area could be smaller and Mr. DiVesta agreed. Ms. Sesto stated that she sees pools in side yards so this option would not be an odd request. Mr. Hall asked if there is a deck around the pool and stated they could use hardscape on two of the sides. Mr. Hall added that a pool to the side of the house would get more sunlight. Mr. Lee stated that boulders could be placed for demarcation before the pool fence is installed.

Ms. Sesto provided an example of a home that was built on Sturges Ridge where the builder promised that the lawn would not be extended but several homeowners later, the lawn has been extended. Mr. Falta summarized the movement of the boulders but asked how the commission can project what future owners will do. Mr. Lee suggested planting trees on the slope as these are not as easily removed.

With no further questions or comments, the public hearing was continued until the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 11, 2014.

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

Ms. Sesto read the list of documents into the record. She confirmed the temporary permit was issued with some special conditions noted and asked the commission if there were any other items they would like to address per the comments from SNEW.

Mr. Lee recused himself from this application.

The commission discussed the lawn issue and confirmed this needs to be revised as the eroded areas could use some vegetation and the debris needs to be removed. Ms. Sesto confirmed that moving the pump would require digging up the driveway which would cause further disturbance. She added that the new system is in a much better location than the failing system and noted that there was a mistake on the temporary permit special condition #3 which needs clarification regarding the mowing.

With no further questions or comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

Ms. Craig MOVED to APPROVE the application reinforcing the temporary permit conditions and the clarification about mowing, SECONDED by Mr. Falta and CARRIED 4-0-0.

III. APPLICATIONS READY TO BE REVIEWED

Mr. Lee was reseated.

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 reminded the commission that this applicant was before the commission several meetings ago with their vehicle storage area proposal.

Ms. Throckmorton confirmed a new plan was created to relocate the parking pad to be 60 feet from the wetland rather than the current 16 foot distance. Ms. Throckmorton stated that there was an erosion concern with the previous proposal so she has added 4 sets of water bars, 3 feet on center to alleviate erosion issues.

The parking pad will be 22 ft. by 35 ft. and made of gravel. The low end will include a gravel berm to reinforce erosion controls and create a point discharge where the runoff will go back into the ground immediately. The existing parking pad will be replanted with shadblow and silver birch, and spicebush will be planted at the top end. Ms. Throckmorton confirmed a silt fence will be installed below the work area and no significant trees are to be removed.

One alternative provided was to move the parking pad to the west of the wall which is not as level but farther from the wetland. This alternative is not favored by the applicant as it would require removal of a large tree.

Ms. Throckmorton explained that waterbars are considered speed bumps for water flow. She confirmed that the area will remain tree covered so no erosion will take place in the future. Ms. Sesto asked if the plantings meant to restore the old parking area go off the property. Ms. Throckmorton stated contrary to what the plan depicts, they will not.

Mr. Lee MOVED to APPROVE the application with the General Conditions and normal Special Conditions, including that the plantings in the existing parking area be planted by May 1, 2015, SECONDED by Ms. Craig and CARRIED 5-0-0.

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

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

Ms. Throckmorton stated she was hired by the homeowner to assist with this corrective action application for a violation that was discovered in July. She explained there is an intermittent watercourse parallel to the driveway where vegetation was cleared.

The proposal is to re-plant the area with mid-story trees and create a 5-foot no-mow meadow buffer between the top of the bank and lawn. This will be marked with boulders. The area around the watercourse has several large trees that will continue to provide shade. Ms. Throckmorton stated that the vegetation that was cleared were invasive shrubs. Ms. Craig inquired whether the remaining invasives will be removed and mitigated. Ms. Throckmorton stated that the bank is their primary focus and no additional shrubs will be removed.

Mr. Lee MOVED to APPROVE the application with the General Conditions and normal Special Conditions, including that the plantings will be installed by May 1, 2015, SECONDED by Mr. Falta and CARRIED 5-0-0.

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

Ms. Sesto confirmed a new plan was provided to each commissioner and that the applicant has requested an extension on the hearing.

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

Ms. Day confirmed that the addition has been shifted to the northeast as discussed at the last meeting. The structure is now five more feet to the east and six feet to the north. She explained this shift enables the owners to have their existing walkway to the patio for their main entrance. This also makes the structure further from the stream and limits the disturbance of trees where only half of a dead tree will be removed.

A rain garden has been added with native plants to collect stormwater and avoid erosion. A propane tank and generator have been added to the plan outside of the regulated area.

Ms. Sesto asked if the in-law apartment would include garage space. Mr. Yeager confirmed they would not. Mr. Lee noted his appreciation for the concession of the placement of the dwelling. Mr. Hall asked if the path around the house could be permeable. This was agreeable to Ms. Day and Mr. Yeager. Ms. Sesto asked that the erosion and sedimentation plan be formalized. Mr. Lee stated silt fence and construction fence will be required.

Mr. Falta MOVED to APPROVE the application with the General Conditions and the normal

Special Conditions and additional Special Condition that only one half of a tree may be removed, the rain garden will be formalized on the plan, and the E&S plan will include with the silt fence backed up by and construction fence, SECONDED by Ms. Craig and CARRIED 5-0-0.

IV. APPLICATIONS TO BE ACCEPTED

- A. WET#2289(I) – KERNER – 358 Belden Hill Road** – proposed addition to existing house
- B. WET#2290(S) – STEPHENSON – 109 Highfield Road** – installation of a pool, patio, and a B100a within an upland review area

Mr. Lee MOVED to ACCEPT these new applications, SECONDED by Mr. Falta and CARRIED 5-0-0.

V. APPROVED MINOR ACTIVITIES

- A. WET#2284(M) – WITZKE – 257 Catalpa Road** – “after-the-fact” shed installation 87 ft. from a watercourse
- B. WET#2286(M) – HUNTER – 27 Marvin Ridge Place** – construction a one-car garage addition
- C. WET#2285(M) – CHANDRASHEKAR – 539 Belden Hill Road** – install generator 20 ft. from a watercourse

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 the Leska’s are overdue and there is a new violation she found on Freshwater Lane.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 23, 2014

Mr. Falta MOVED to APPROVE the minutes, as drafted, SECONDED by Ms. Craig and CARRIED 5-0-0.

VIII. ADJOURN

Mr. Falta MOVED to ADJOURN at 8:50 p.m., SECONDED by Mr. Lee, and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Liz Larkin
Recording Secretary