

Lincoln Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes - April 10, 2019

Start – 7:00 pm
End – 10:20 pm

Commissioners Present: Peter von Mertens, Larry Buell, Ari Kurtz, Christine Dugan (arrived at 7:30), Jim Henderson

Staff Present: Jennifer Curtin, Tom Gumbart

WETLANDS

7:00 – Request for Determination of Applicability: Dooley. 31 Old Concord Road (140-12-0). The project is for the periodic mowing up to the 100 foot buffer zone resource area.

Attendees: Dave Burke, Rozanne Miller, Diana Acheson, Stacy Osur, Susan Mygatt, Kerry Hoffman, Jud Crawford, Curt Risley, Jean Risley

Mr. von Mertens opened the hearing. Mr. Burke, the wetland specialist for the project, presented. Mr. Dooley passed away in February. They are looking to sell the lot. The buffer zone resource area was reflagged in the field 2-3 weeks ago. The intent is to mow as close as possible to the 100 ft. line without having to file a Notice of Intent for work within the 100 ft. buffer zone resource area. There will be no work within 15 ft. of the side lot lines as a part of this project per the Planning Board stipulations. This will be mostly hand work done with chainsaws, a chipper, and a walk-behind mower. The Commission also requested that all debris be chipped on site. Mr. Henderson asked when they plan to start cutting? Mr. Burke said they plan to do the work before the leaves come out but as soon as the ground is less soft. Mr. von Mertens said that the Commission wants to protect the sides since it is good wildlife habitat. Mr. Burke agreed and said they will leave a 15 ft. strip uncut. Ms. Miller, the realtor, said that the lot is 3.3 acres with most of it in a wetland or buffer zone resource area. Mr. Kurtz asked if there was a plan for herbicide application. Mr. Burke said there will be no herbicide use as it is unnecessary. Mr. Henderson asked if when the property is shown for sale they will show the restrictions on site development? Ms. Miller said that the limitations of the site are made clear to all prospective buyers.

Mr. Crawford, an abutter to the property, asked who re-determined the wetland line and how much it moved as the wetland had been delineated many years ago. Mr. Gumbart gave a rundown on the history of the property. In the past the Commission only used wetland plants as indicators of wetlands and this method has shown varying accuracy. Now the Commission used MA DEP delineation protocol that looks at plants, soils, and hydrology. Mr. Burke was hired to do the delineation in 2014. Then it was peer-reviewed by Arthur Allen, a wetland soils specialist hired by the Commission, who mostly agreed with the line but moved it slightly toward the road in some spots. Mr. Gumbart said that the job of the Commission is to base decisions on the best available science and sometimes that science changes. Mr. Burke said that, at this time, hydric soils is the best indication of long term hydrology. He said that he has looked at this site a number of times. In the 1980s the wetlands delineation was based on vegetation analysis, not on hydric soils and this showed the line much closer to the street. During the 2014 delineation, Mr. Burke drilled hundreds of holes on the property to accurately determine the soil properties of the site. Mr. Kurtz asked if the definition changed in that time from the 1980s. Mr. Burke said the indicators of hydrology changed and that the state moved from vegetation to soils as indicators of hydrology. Massachusetts is most concerned with Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, or wetlands that border a waterbody. This wetland is bordering the intermittent stream on the property that then connects to the large wetland on the east side of Concord Road.

Jean Risley, another abutter, said that years ago there was discussion of a 30 ft. setback for wildlife corridor. Mr. Gumbart said it was a requirement set by the Commission for a proposed large home that would have been built close to the wetland. That house was never built so those plans are not applicable. Ms. Risley then showed pictures she had taken of the site with standing water. She said that this is an indication that the wetland extends further. Mr. Gumbart said that soil will hold water and can have pools after heavy rains. He also said that almost every property in Town has a degree of standing water after storm events. In many situations this water infiltrates quickly enough that hydric soils do not develop.

Kerry Hoffman asked to how hydric soils are determined and if they need to drill holes during growing season. Mr. Burke said that the indications of hydric soils can only form during the growing season. Ms. Hoffman said that there was determination by the Commission 15 years ago that there had been overcutting on the property which would require more native plantings. Mr. Gumbart said there were native plantings done at that time and that the Commission can add that into a future filing. Mr. Burke said that he will put ribbon every 10 ft. to ensure the buffer line is clear. Ms. Hoffman also expressed concern that cutting will upset the wildlife value to the land. Mr. Burke said that birds will still have the large wetland and buffer area.

Susan Mygatt asked about the 30 foot wildlife corridor on the right side of property. Mr. Gumbart said that the Commission had concerns with the proposal of a large house on the property which is why they required the addition of a 30 ft. corridor as a form of mitigation. The project did not go through as it was denied under the bylaw. He added that the jurisdiction of the Commission does not extend beyond the 100-foot buffer zone resource area. Mr. von Mertens suggested 30 ft. off the lot line for cutting near the wetland buffer. Mr. Burke said that they could leave more of the corner uncut.

Stacy Osur was wondering if they plan to cut the large trees in the field. Mr. Burke said the two apples and the pine will be left in the field. He added that he planned to leave mature trees if they are in the planned cutting area.

Conditions: delineation flagging to be placed every 10 feet, no heavy equipment use in wet conditions, no chipper in low spots, chippings to be left on site.

The Commission voted 4-0 to issue a negative Determination of Applicability to allow cutting up to the 100 ft. buffer line.

7:30 – Notice of Intent: Orgel. 237 Old Concord Road (139-1-0). The project is for the restoration of the buffer zone resource area at the property. Continued from February 27.

Mr. von Mertens opened the hearing. Ms. Curtin read a letter from the Orgels requesting a continuance as they had other commitments. Mr. von Mertens said that a letter should be sent with their continued hearing date and time that requests materials due by the Thursday prior to the next public hearing for Commissioners to review. This will include a vegetation management plan, species list, planting plan, and a detailed discussion of the planting methodology because of the site constraints

The Commission voted 5-0 to continue the hearing to May 1 at 8:30 p.m.

7:45 - Request to Control Invasive Species: Town of Lincoln Conservation Department – Earth Day Cleanup of Invasive Species and Trash at the School Campus at Ballfield Rd.

Mr. Gumbart presented the project. This project is for invasive species management in and near isolated wetlands and streams on the School's property on April 16. Conservation staff will work with the students to do invasive plant cleanup and trash cleanup. This will help to decide how to use areas for storm water mitigation associated with the school reconstruction project. Mr. von Mertens said he will help out.

CONSERVATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Work is continuing at Umbrello Field.

There will be a Conservation Coffee tomorrow at Drumlin Farm's new Environmental Learning Center

Earth Day trash pickup will be oriented toward streams and catch basin cleanup to keep trash out of wetlands and waterways. Conservation will offer bags and gloves and trash grabbing tools.

There was a site visit last Friday at Ricci Field with representatives from Mass DEP, Mass DOT, ACOE, and BSC consultants. They collectively decided on two sites to investigate further and to install 5 wells to determine water levels.

8:15 –Request for Determination of Applicability: Bibring, 168 Bedford Road (113-65-0). The project is for a new septic system with work in the 100 ft. buffer zone resource area

Attendee: Steve Sears

Mr. von Mertens opened the hearing. Steve Sears, the engineer for the project, presented. The project is for the replacement of the current septic system. The wetland delineation was done on the property on December 20, 2018. A sewer pipe connection will be located in the outer buffer zone and the leach field will be located outside of the buffer zone resource area with minimal grading and work within the 100-foot buffer. Electric will be installed within the existing trench. There will be a total of less than 300 square feet disturbance in buffer zone. Mr. von Mertens said that the plan appeared well-designed and seems to be as considerate as possible of the wetlands constraints. Mr. Henderson asked where the waste piled will be located. Mr. Sears said that it will be in the corner of the property outside of the buffer closer to the street but not close to the bike path. Erosion control will keep all runoff onsite and contained.

The Commission voted 5-0 to close the hearing and issue a Negative Determination of applicability with the following special conditions:

- Any changes required by the Board of Health will require Conservation approval
- Soils will be staged outside of the buffer zone and they will be properly contained while on site.

8:30 – Request for Amended Order of Conditions: Minuteman Vocational Technical High School, Mill Street (115-10-0) – This request is regarding the change of the site plan of the original Order of Conditions (DEP File #203-0907) with stormwater infrastructure in the buffer zone resource area.

Attendees: Curt Busto, Sy Nguyen, Larry Trim, Eric Roise, Michelle Kayserman

Mr. von Mertens opened the hearing. Ms. Kayserman presented the project. These proposed changes are to the Athletic Complex only; there will be no changes to the school building plan. This modified plan shows the newly proposed tennis courts outside of the 100-foot buffer to the vernal pool. Additional changes to the original plan include synthetic turf

fields instead of grass fields and additional concrete for the tennis courts and walkways. The synthetic turf will be pervious and will allow for more infiltration than a grass field as well as year round playability. There will be a reduction of impervious area within 100-foot buffer (from 1088 to 956 sf) and the tennis courts will have runoff sheeting to trench drain and be piped into the system underneath the field. There will also be a natural grass strip between the discharge point and the vernal pool. Mr. Henderson asked what the understory is in that area. Mr. Gumbart said that it is mainly invasive plants. Mr. von Mertens said that the Commission would like to see a long-term plan for invasive plant control. Ms. Kayserman said that will be a part of the program for the students at the school. Mr. Henderson said he would like to see better and healthier vegetation in the 100-foot buffer area. Mr. Henderson asked about the landscape treatment around the vernal pool. Mr. Roise said that it will be mowed twice a year but otherwise left alone. Mr. Henderson asked what considerations they have made for large rain events and what changes have been made to the water cycle because that could cause the dry off period to be shorter. Ms. Kayserman said that stormwater currently just sheets but with the new system it will infiltrate faster. Mr. Gumbart asked if they planned to do additional soil test pits. Ms. Kayserman said that they plan to do them next week during school vacation. Mr. Busto asked that they notify the Commission of the locations of these pits. Mr. von Mertens mentioned the possibility of channeling flow away from the vernal pool. Mr. Busto said that he doesn't like that idea as it will cause scouring and the vernal pool also requires rain volume to not dry out. He added that the current plan looks good conceptually but will require test pits to determine groundwater elevations. This information is crucial to understanding the stormwater storage capacity below the field.

Mr. Gumbart asked about the issue of water quality runoff from the synthetic turf field. Mr. Roise gave a presentation on the materials that are to be used in this turf field. The most concerning part is the crumb rubber used to fill the fields. Most use an uncoated crumb rubber; however this application will utilize a coated crumb rubber as well as sand. The food-grade acrylic coating keeps the field cooler, keeps dust and static electricity down, and it also encapsulate rubber crumbs to minimize leaching into runoff. The main leaching problem is high levels of zinc in first few wash outs; this coated crumb rubber reduces that leach out. Mr. Henderson raised concerns about the mobility of these particles into the water system.

The Commission voted 5-0 to continue the hearing to May 1 at 8:00

9:00 – Notice of Intent: Muir. 1 Meadowbrook Road (172-25-0). The project is for the demolition of an existing garage, construction of a new larger garage/ studio, and associated driveway alterations within the buffer zone resource area of an intermittent stream on the property. Continued from March 20.

Attendees: Ayr Muir

The hearing was opened at 9:30 by Mr. von Mertens. Mr. Muir gave an update and showed that a delineation was done and exploratory digging was done this morning, during which the engineer said that the proposed structure is buildable. Groundwater was at 3feet 4 inches. The proposed garage has been reduced in size 39 feet to 32 feet long. This results in less impervious from roof and improved ability to site garage elsewhere. Mr. Muir consulted with a landscape architect who determined that gravel would be a good choice for the driveway to help reduce impervious surface area further. Mr. Muir also said he spent some more time on alternative siting but they have some substantial trees on the other parts of the property which would need to be cut down to site the garage there. Considering these concerns, they want to improve on current garage in its current general location. Mr. von Mertens said that mitigation for the project could include cleanup behind the current garage where there are invasive plants and old construction debris. Mr. Muir said that it is part of the plan to clean that area up while it is open for construction.

Mr. von Mertens said that the Commission needs to see the soils report prior to the next meeting. This report will need to answer whether or not this is a suitable area to build a structure of this size.

The Commission voted 4-0 to continue the hearing to May 1 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Kurtz abstained from this vote and hearing.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Sub-Committee & Liaison Reports

ACTION ITEMS

- Meeting minutes from April 20th and Executive Session Minutes from October 24th approved.
- Bills paid & payroll signed

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Curtin
Conservation Assistant