



Williamsburg Conservation Commission
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Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2022
via Zoom

Commissioners present – Marci Caplis, Mary Dudek, Andrew MacLachlan, Melinda McCall, and Joe Rogers

Members of the public present –Jeff Squire, The Berkshire Design Group; Bill Sayre and Jean O’Neil, Public Safety Complex Building Committee; Steve Smith, Planning Board; Dick Guzowski, Energy Committee.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Continuation of NOI, Public Safety Complex, Berkshire Design Group/Town of Williamsburg:

The Berkshire Design Group (BDG) submitted a revised NOI for the demolition of the old Helen E. James school, site work, and construction of the new Public Safety Complex at 16 Main Street.

Jeff Squire shared the final changes that were made to the plans in response to requests from the Commissioners at last month’s meeting.

- The large Norway Maple is marked for removal due to its poor health.
- The old playground is left as is.
- A planting plan for restoring a ten-foot strip along the river on the southeast side of the property for riverfront area improvement.

BDG’s responses to DEP comments were shared. See attached document.

No changes were requested from the joint Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board meeting. The Planning Board will meet on 1/10/2022 to make its recommendations to the ZBA. The Order of Conditions does not have to be finalized before that meeting.

Though the idea of volunteers doing the riverside plantings was considered, some

commissioners were opposed to the idea. Mr. Squire said that the plantings are now part of the planning budget.

Installation of erosion controls is a line-item on the construction task list but not the demolition one. However, the Order of Conditions will require its installation before any work begins.

A motion was made and accepted unanimously to close the hearing.

A motion was made and accepted unanimously to accept the plans dated 12-17-2021 as presented with added special conditions from the Conservation Commission.

Discussion of a complaint about work in the wetlands at 10B Eastern Avenue:

Mr. MacLachlan had driven by the site after receiving the complaint and saw a great deal of disturbance. Ms. Caplis sent the owner a cease and desist letter, along with an information sheet about correct protocols for working in wetlands but the owner did not respond. In fact, a pile of stone, which the owner was told not to do anything with has been spread into the wetlands and is being used for parking vehicles. The next step is an enforcement order which states that the work is out of compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act. It will outline the Commission's request for a time frame for restoration, and for the owner to hire a consultant for delineating the wetlands and creating a restoration plan. Once the Enforcement order is executed, commissioners can legally visit the site. If the owner does not comply with the order, legal council will be sought.

Discussion of the ProTtech Hatfield Street solar array:

Mr. Guzowski and another member of the Energy Committee have concerns about piles of fill at the site that have the potential for erosion and runoff. Commissioners agreed to visit the site, review the SWPPP reports, and review aerial photos.

Preview of upcoming hearing for an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation, ANRAD for Mitch Cichy, Main Street:

The ANRAD is asking the Commission to approve certain resource areas that are shown on the plan. The DEP reviewer has made comments on the file. Identifying the top of the bank could be difficult because because the bank is armored with large blocks. After the site visit, commissioners can decide if outside help is needed.

Depot Road culvert replacement:

Mr. Rogers has walked by the site and seen an open violation. The secondary dewatering basin has failed, washing out the bank and sending sand into the wetlands. The contractor needs to re-do the basin and remediate the wetland by gently scraping the sand out. Town Administrator Nick Caccamo and engineer Jim Hyslip will be asked to join the site visit.

Research Opportunity:

A Master's Student from UMass is doing a thesis on dam removal and is looking for study sites. There are at least two candidates in Williamsburg: a tiny dam on Depot Road that is in bad shape, and a larger one behind the Brassworks building. Commissioners agreed to encourage the use of Williamsburg dams for the study.

Minutes from December 9 were approved as amended.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:09.

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda McCall
Secretary - Williamsburg Conservation Commission