



Williamsburg Conservation Commission  
141 Main Street, P.O. Box 447  
Haydenville, Massachusetts 01039-0447  
Phone: 413-268-8416 Fax: 413-268-8409  
conservation@burgy.org

**Meeting Minutes  
October 14 , 2021  
via Zoom**

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

**Members of the public present –Bob Sherlock, Charlotte Meryman, Andrew Morehouse, Jim Hyslip, Brenda Lessard, Denise Banister, Corteny Morehouse, and Podge Thomas.**

**Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm**

**RDA for 44 Village Hill, new house construction, Bob Sherlock:**

**Mr. Sherlock plans to build a house toward the back of a small field. A driveway would run along the eastern side of the lot. A site visit performed on a rainy day showed no evidence of wetlands, wet spots or indicator plants. There is an existing well located at a good distance from the house site in a larger hay field, but the plan is to trench a water pipe across the field, then continue haying the field. Commissioners issued a Negative 1 determination.**

**RDA for 34 South Street, new house construction, Andrew Morehouse:**

**Mr. Morehouse proposes to create another lot from a larger property. This lot is more than 50 feet from the buffer zone of wetlands to the south. A site visit determined that an intermittent stream runs off of Petticoat Hill and empties into the wetlands. Any driveway access to the proposed lot would cross that intermittent stream. If there is any evidence of sediment movement during construction, Mr. Morehouse should contact the Commission for advice on adding erosion controls. Any soil excavated during construction is to be stored away from the wetland. Commissioners issued a Negative 2 determination. Mr. Morehouse is now free to submit his plans to the Building Department.**

**Invasive plant removal, 18 Williams Street, Corteny Morehouse and Podge Thomas:**

Morehouse and Thomas recently moved to 18 Williams Street which is adjacent to the West Branch of the Mill River. Ms. Morehouse works for Berkshire Regional planning and is very familiar with regulations about removing invasive plants. She said that there are two classes of invasives on the property. There are large ones near the house such as honeysuckle and bittersweet which they would like to cut and paint with a non-surfactant herbicide. All along the bank are spreaders such as bittersweet, porcelain berry and knotweed. One consideration is to hire some goats to work the bank, but there is concern about feces entering the water. The favored option is to have just a few goats, twice a year for two to three years to kill the invasives, then to replant with native species. Another idea is to cut and cover or cut and burn the existing plants. Commissioners responded that it is unlikely that a burn permit would be issued. There was concern about the goats passing porcelain berry seeds, so it would be important to time the treatment before seeds are developed. Disturbed soil should be planted with fast germinators such as river bank rye. An RDA and site visit are the next steps.

**RDA for Village Hill Cemetery, stump removal and grading, Jim Hyslip:**

The town is enlarging the Village Hill Cemetery, which requires removing some stumps and grading a hillside. There is a small spring and a small, seasonal isolated wetland with no outlet channel. This wetland is not under the jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act. The entire cemetery has a high water table. The Cemetery Commission plans to add a french drain to to direct water flow to the southwest towards the West Branch of the Mill River. Commissioners issued a Negative 1 determination. Paper work should be sent to Brenda Lessard, who will then pass it to Denise Banister.

**Consultation about Japanese Knotweed at the Haydenville Library:**

Knotweed is popping up in the lawn and between the retaining wall blocks along the river. The Library Board is concerned that the knotweed will get into the building foundation, destabilizing it, as well as destabilizing the retaining wall. The Commission will assist the library with potential permitting options.

**Update on 75 Petticoat Hill Road, house contruction, Susannah Zucker:**

Work has already begun on the driveway. A site visit revealed that the site is fairly wet, and has a high water table. Down slope of the driveway, to the south, wetland plants, saturated ground, and standing water can be found. (it's about 100 feet

from a large wetland based on OLIVER) If the site has a small isolated wetland, it may be too small to be jurisdictional. Ms. Caplis will write to Ms. Zucker stating that wet areas were observed, to install erosion controls, and to be prepared to move the the septic system, with a reminder that a percolation test is required.

#### **Report on Geotechnical borings on Rte 9:**

Gabby Imerman passed on information that the borings are one of the first steps for beginning the Greenway project.

#### **Paving at Family Vets:**

In 2014, Family Vets submitted and RDA for driveway improvements. During that meeting, they were told that no parking was allowed in the back, and that a planting strip along the driveway would mediate storm water drainage. That permit has since expired, and no permit was applied for the paving. The paving may not even have been permissible, so we would need a DEP review.

#### **Update on the Depot Road culvert replacement:**

Town Administrator Caccamo sent pictures of the water control process. The water control could not be done as proposed in the NOI. The contractor is being responsive, and encouraged a site visit. Commissioners will schedule one.

#### **Beaver Brook Golf Course:**

Jeff Smith of Prime Engineering has still not responded to our enquiries about Beaver Brook or the bridge abatement. Beaver Brook has also mowed a large field on the Northampton side of the golf course, with some extension into Williamsburg. The Commission did not receive an Order of Conditions. Mr. Rogers will check with the Northampton Conservation agent about any filing or response.

#### **Update on the Public Safety Complex:**

A NOI has been filed by The Berkshire Design Group for the town. It will be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Brief follow ups:**

- Someone is still dumping grass clippings at the Meekins Library.
- Commissioners did a site visit to review finished work at Barbara Bricker's house at 3 North Main. The work looks good, and was through a RDA.
- Ms. Caplis wrote to Dan Banister at the Highway Department to notify him

**of town mowing into the wetlands on Mountain Street. He replied with apologies.**

- Mr. MacLachlan reached out to Boy Scout leader Roger Alcroft about the vandalism at Devil's Den, but got no response.**
- The new Chair of the Planning Department, Steve Smith, reached out to promote better communication between Planning and Conservation.**

**Minutes from September 9 were accepted as amended.**

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:23.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Melinda McCall**

**Secretary - Williamsburg Conservation Commission**