



Williamsburg Conservation Commission
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Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2022
via Zoom

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

Members of the public present – Apostol Hoda, Ryan Stanley

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

NOI, River Road repaving, Agalitas Energy:

The NOI, prepared by Bob Fournier of SK Design, is for the second phase of the solar project planned for River Road. Access to the site is via a 750-foot section of public road. In anticipation of damage to the road from heavy equipment used during construction, Agalitas Energy plans to repave the road with approval of the town Highway Department. The road is within the riverfront and floodplain of the Mill River, and is therefore in riverfront, flood plain, and buffer zone. DEP had made a few comments on the original NOI about mislabeled maps which were addressed by SK Design. It is also listed as a priority site with Natural Heritage, who approved the project as proposed.

The project is a gift to will improve a town, road, but will remain owned and maintained by the town. It is considered a limited project. The land is flat, all work will be done on existing on the existing road, all excavated material will be removed immediately, and straw wattles will be installed along both sides of the road. Commissioners approved the project, with with the condition that they be notified when work begins.

RDA, 11 East Main Street, Hoda and Stanley:

The owners shared a planting plan for reclaiming and re-wilding the river bank by eliminating invasive plants and planting native species. The area is approximately 120'

along the river, and 40 feet up the bank. There are three distinct sections: a rocky river bank; a wider, flat, but still rocky section; then a steep bank up to the house. No spraying or use of heavy equipment is planned. In the fall, existing tall plants will be mowed and a wetland conservation mix will be sown, then protected with straw. The steep sections will be worked by hand. Owners will continue cutting and digging out knotweed. Commissioners issued a Negative 2 determination.

RDA, 126 Nash Hill Road, Deb Watrous:

Ms. Watrous submitted a plan for adding a carport that will support a solar system on its roof. Behind the driveway is a lawn and then an intermittent stream and bordering vegetated wetland. The work zone is in the buffer zone, but within the existing driveway where there is no slope and no excavation necessary, therefore no erosion controls are necessary. The currently porous surface will not be converted to an impervious one. Commissioners issued a Negative 3 determination.

Update on Beaver Brook golf course:

Due to a correspondence issue, no site visit was made. An apology was sent to Chris Duval, and another site visit will be requested with the presence of a wetland consultant.

Violation, 18 Old Goshen Road, Stephen St. Clair

Mr. St Clair hired consultant Emily Stockman to help him respond to the Commission's Cease and Desist letter. She reported that he has ceased all activity. The violation was the clearing of brush and vines with a brush cutter in an attempt to open the area up. It was reported that some of the cutting was done outside of jurisdiction, some was in the buffer zone, and some in wetlands. There may be a vernal pool in the southerly portion of the property. The brush hog widened an existing walking path but did not rut the ground. Ms. Stockman will continue to be the consultant and will be present when the Commission makes a site visit at the end of July or in August.

Discussion of Commission projects:

Boundary marking at the Gere Hill and Briar Hill Conservation Areas: Abutters have been notified and asked for information about boundaries. Woodsmith Forestry will be notified of boundary information we received and asked to submit a proposal.

Matt Verson submitted a proposal for clearing invasive plants at 50 Chesterfield. Commissioners accepted the proposal. Abutters will be notified. A RDA is required. The Town will be the applicant, and Commissioner McCall will be the representative.

Review of RDA for Adams Road paving, Williamsburg Highway Department:

The Highway Department submitted a draft RDA, but after looking at the wetlands map, Commissioners discussed whether the proposal should be submitted as a NOI. The road runs along wetlands and a stream, and abuts Audubon property. Commissioner Caplis will write the town with this information.

Discussion of first refusal on Chapter 61 property on Old Goshen Road:

Commissioners looked at the DEP wetlands map of the site. The Commission will advise the representative for the seller that there are a lot of wetlands on the site that will need to be considered if any construction activity is planned.

Discussion of planning assistance for Jack McGill , 16 South Street:

Mr. McGill asked Commissioner MacLachlan for advice about altering a small lot that he has the opportunity to buy that borders the back of his property. There is a stream a few hundred feet back that has an artificial berm along it and a large rectangular pit that appears to hold water at some times of the year. This low area is bounded by Sunset Ave, an elevated road. He would like to clear out the pit and fill it with fill from the Helen E James site to have a larger play area for his grandchildren. Commissioners agreed that this is a very tricky site, and that Mr. McGill should hire a consultant to delineate the lot. Any work done on the site would have to be part of a restoration plan.

Updates:

A site visit was made to the Hyde Hill driveway project. The driveway is built, and there is a new culvert under the driveway, but there were a few questions/concerns. It was not clear where the mitigation work is planned. Commissioners did not observe a pile of stored wetlands soil and there appears to be slash left in the wetlands along the driveway. Commissioner Caplis will send a letter with the questions, and ask about getting a site visit with the consultant, Jeff Smith.

Minutes from June 23 were approved as amended.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda McCall
Secretary - Williamsburg Conservation Commission