

# Conservation Commission



19 WASHINGTON STREET  
SHERBORN, MASSACHUSETTS 01770

August 31, 2015  
Sherborn Town Hall

7:00 P.M.

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting

**Commission Members Present:** Steve Gaskin (SG), Michael Lesser (ML), Carol McGarry (CM), Jessica Pettit (JP), Andrea Stiller (AS), Neil Kessler (NK) (Associate Member)

**Commission Members Absent:** Alex Dowse (AD), Kelly McClintock (KM)

**Office Staff Present:** Bridget Graziano (Conservation Agent/ Administrator),

SG called the meeting to order at 7:22 pm.

There were no items not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours of the meeting.

**Application for Certificate of Compliance for 59 Whitney Street.**

Motion to grant certificate of compliance, SG. Second, ML. vote 5-0.

## **Discussions**

### **Office Staffing**

Administrative Assistant process - JP reviewed references and an interview is set up for September 3, 2015. The Commission will get questions ready for the assistant interview. Allary will begin September 8, 2015.

## **Public Hearings**

### **Public Hearing #1-The Fields at Sherborn**

SG opened the public hearing at 7:30. Ben Stevens of Trask, Inc. presented the project. Currently, there are 12,500 square feet of disturbed buffer area. The applicant reviewed the amount of disturbed area. Desheng Wang reviewed the number of trees to be cut in the buffer zone:

- There were about 104 trees total with approximately:
- Area #1 - Buffer zone permanent disturbance is about 12-14 trees
- Area #2- more than 45 trees to be removed though try to limit the cutting
- Area #3 – about 6 trees will be removed

Desheng Wang also stated that Area 3 will be irrigated from June to September and planted with a mix of 60% grass and 40% landscaping. Water will increase 33% to about 20 acre-ft., most of which will drain into recharge areas and dry wells. The system is designed for 1.5-2 year storms, not 100 year storms.

Altogether there is a half-acre of buffer zone disturbance, according to the applicant, and a 30% increase in water flow into the wetlands and dry wells..

Desheng Wang proposed the use of wells and said that there is potential for 30% mitigation; this would follow the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Lenore White of Wetlands Strategies (peer reviewer for Conservation Commission) asked if there is an opportunity to reduce the size and impacts. Ms. White is also concerned about the functionality of the wetlands post-development (BVW to protect groundwater, functions for wildlife habitat). SG asked for the impacts to the wetlands. She noted that while the fields had been used for grazing, they were still valuable to the interests of the Act.

Ms. White stated that the applicant should explain how the functioning of the wetlands currently functions and how it will remain after development. The applicant should analyze the functions of the wetlands now and demonstrate how the proposed changes will maintain the BVW's role protecting the ground water, minimizing storm damage, minimizing impact on public and private water supplies and retaining the wetland's functions for wildlife habitat.

In addition, she had concerns about the planting plan because it focuses on upland areas rather than wetlands, about the species of plants and the density of planting. She commented that the level spreader is part of the stormwater management system, not a resource area, so it does not contribute to mitigation.

Neil Kessler asked about the recharge rates based on the increase of impervious surfaces by 2 acres. Phil Paradis stated that a 30% increase in recharge needs to be reviewed by the BOH. NK also mentioned that there is a change in hydrology due to wells.

To calculate the increase of 30% more water, the following figures were used: 4 acre-feet per year divided by 365 days across 10 acres.

Phil Paradis commented that there is a 30% increase in ground water. However, he felt there would not be an impact on the wetlands because it was evenly spread out throughout the year. Also, on sites with less permeable soil, the increase might be a problem, but this site has highly permeable soils (although until testing is done, there is no way to know about infiltration rates). In the big picture, he said that the infiltration is in the same watershed from where the water is being removed.

The applicant noted that permeable pavement was added to the plan.

CM is concerned about seasonality and drought conditions given the fact that water will be released from the site in a continuous, even volume throughout the year. She asked if this would impact the functioning of the wetlands in the dry season.

Rob Johnson, of 272 Western Ave commented that his concern is that he does not want to run out of water because the 36 units are drawing down the well. He would like his well to be

measured and he is encouraging shallow wells. SG noted that if there is a draw from a shallow well, the recharge should be better.

In response to a comment about gray water, Peter Liffiton stated that the BOH does not recognize irrigation versus potable water wells.

Ben Stevens had concerns regarding a detailed limit of work, shade tree planting and fill analysis.

ML is concerned about additional impervious areas (2 acres) and the considerable amount of disturbance.

Bridget read the buffer zone portion of the WPA regulations (310 CMR 10.53 (1)).

Addie Mae Weiss of Jackson Road is concerned that there is not a single board reviewing the project and asked why there are 36 units proposed with no yards.

Lenore asked about avoiding, minimizing and mitigating. Ben Stevens stated that this is the layout because of the well and other factors. He stated that he will not be providing an alternatives analysis.

CM asked about watershed impacts and intermittent stream impacts due to removal of trees in the buffer zone.

ML discussed the interests of the Act and stated that proposed impacts should not be directly tied to hydrology arguments.

Motion to continue to September 17 at 7:30, SG. Second, AS. Vote, 5-0.

**10:25 PM** Motion to adjourn, SG. Second, CM. Vote, 5-0.