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Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2023

By KWilber/Assistant Town Clerk at 1:34 pm, Jan 09, 2024



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Conservation Commission

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Conservation Commission

Zoom Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2023

Approved January 8, 2024

Members (Remotely): Greg Young (Chair), Dan Clark, Justin Dufresne, Diane Guldner, Todd Helwig

Members Absent: Tom Beals

Staff (Remotely): Vincent Vignaly (Conservation Agent), Owen Jones

The Chair opened the remote meeting at 6:00 p.m. and announced that the meeting of the Northborough Conservation Commission is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Healy's Executive Order of March 29, 2023, an Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. All members of the Northborough Conservation Commission are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. This Order allows the Conservation Commission to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda unless the Chair notes otherwise. Members of the public who wish to view the live stream of this meeting can do so by going to Northborough remote meetings on YouTube via the link listed on the agenda. Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will feature public comment. The process was explained.

Member & Staff Roll Call: Dan Clark, Justin Dufresne, Diane Guldner, Todd Helwig, Greg Young; Staff: Vincent Vignaly (Conservation Agent), Owen Jones (Northborough Cable)

Review November 13, 2023, Meeting Minutes

The minutes for the November 13, 2023, meeting of the Conservation Commission were reviewed. Mr. Helwig made a motion that the minutes for November 13, 2023, be accepted and Ms. Guldner seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Public Hearings

Continued Stormwater Management and Land Disturbance Permit: 311 Crawford Street (Map 57, Parcel 14) Permit # 2023-04

Applicant: Bandi Chiranjivee & Manaswini Kokkula

Request: Land alteration to construct a new single-family home, well, and septic system, with associated site work.

Jurisdiction: Part of a Common Plan of Development

Mr. Vignaly received a request from the applicants for a continuance to the next meeting. They are making adjustments.

Ms. Guldner made a motion to continue the hearing for a Stormwater Management and Land Disturbance Permit for 311 Crawford Street to January 8, 2024; seconded by Mr. Dufresne. Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Continued Notice of Intent: 15 Prospect Street (Map 62, Parcel 61) DEP#247-1238

Applicant: Kyla and Steven White

Request: Replace an existing single-family home, retain the septic system, and raze a shed.

Jurisdiction: 25' No Disturb Zone, 35' No Structure Zone, 100' Buffer Zone.

Mr. Vignaly received a request from the applicants for a continuance to the next meeting. They need to revise the septic design. The revised building should be outside the 35' No Build zone.

Mr. Helwig made a motion to continue the hearing for the Notice of Intent for 15 Prospect Street to January 8, 2024, seconded by Ms. Guldner. Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Continued Notice of Intent and Stormwater Management and Land Disturbance Permit: 0 Boundary Street, Town Dog Park (Map 31, Parcel 9) LD Permit # 2023-09, DEP# 247-1242

Applicant: Town of Northborough Planning Director

Request: Construct a 2-acre ADA-accessible dog park with parking, utilities, and stormwater management infrastructure

Jurisdiction: 100' Buffer Zone

Ms. Young indicated that a request was received to continue this matter. Mr. Vignaly stated that the DEP number was received. The Committee discussed the reasons for the continuance. Ms. Guldner asked about the location of the park.

Mr. Helwig motioned to continue the Notice of Intent and Stormwater Management and Land Disturbance hearings for 0 Boundary Street, to January 8, 2024, seconded by Ms. Guldner. Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Continued Notice of Intent: 405 Howard Street (Map 13, Parcel 1) DEP#247-1241

Applicant: Sarah Hopkins

Request: Construct a pool and patio

Jurisdiction: 100' Buffer Zone

Ms. Vignaly indicated that the DEP number has been received so this matter can be closed, and the Order of Conditions issued. No one from the public requested to comment.

Mr. Helwig made a motion to close the hearing for the Notice of Intent for 405 Howard Street; seconded by Ms. Guldner. Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Mr. Vignaly indicated there is one condition, as suggested by Mr. Dufresne at the last meeting, which was that the applicant set up a system so the pool water drains away from the wetlands and out to the front yard.

Mr. Helwig made a motion to issue an Order of Conditions for 405 Howard Street with the standard conditions plus the one noted; seconded by Dan Clark. Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner-yes; Helwig-yes; Young- yes; motion approved.

Informal Discussion:

Mosquito Control Work – Mr. Helwig indicated that last year the owners of 405 Howard Street received a citation for working in the buffer zone. Two weeks ago, he discovered that Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Program (“CMMCP”) was working at the property and destroyed vegetation on both sides of the stream without a permit. Mr. Vignaly verified that CMMCP is exempt from notification as Northborough is a member of the program. He has spoken to CMMCP, and they will notify the Commission going forward. Mr. Vignaly informed the Board about how CMMCP removes vegetation to prevent standing water from being a site for mosquito reproduction. CMMCP has gone out to this site many times to clear the vegetation. The Committee discussed how CMMCP is paid by the Town through the Commonwealth Cherry Sheets. Mr. Vignaly verified that CMMCP is still spraying for mosquitos in town. The Commission also discussed the pros and cons of mosquito control and notification.

Forestry Contract – Mr. Vignaly indicated that he spoke with Ms. Wigmore, the forester, and she is working on the contract. He hopes to get the contract ready for approval by the end of the year. He discussed what needs to be done by the forester and that Ms. Wigmore will meet with the Trails Committee in January.

Jeanne Cahill of 1 Thayer Street with Sustainable Northborough. She presented information to the Committee regarding the MA EEA program, ‘Forests as Climate Solutions’ and listed the group’s concerns. She asked the Commission to postpone the signing of the contract until the State finalizes their guidelines.

The Committee discussed the process underway for the new state guidelines. Mr. Clark was familiar with the process and said that hiring a professional forester, knowledgeable of the guidelines, will insure that the Commission will incorporate the appropriate processes from the beginning. He recommended moving ahead with finalizing the contract.

Ginny Lemmerman of 176 Howard Street with the Trails Committee. She listed to the webinar from the State regarding the State Energy Administration Forest Meeting. She agreed with Jeanne Cahill’s position. Ms. Lemmerman was concerned that Ms. Wigmore doesn’t have any knowledge about invasives and suggested that we get more information before the contract is signed.

The Committee discussed the comments from the residents. Mr. Young felt that the Town should keep moving ahead with the contract with Mary Wigmore and if there is an issue, the Commission can stop the work until it is resolved, or can make any changes that are needed. Jeanne Cahill returned to the meeting and discussed her concerns with the forestry contract. She questioned a sentence in section 3.1 about confidential information in the scope of services.

Mr. Dufresne left the meeting at 6:39 pm.

432 Whitney Street (SA Farms 23.77 acres)

Mr. Vignaly indicated that there is a Certified Purchase and Sale Agreement for the sale of the property and the Town was notified pursuant to MGL Chapter 61A. The Town has 120 days to decide whether they want to acquire the property. Mr. Young received a copy of an email sent to the Open Space Committee.

Lots 1 and 2 Buena Vista Street

Mr. Vignaly spoke to the owner, and he has implemented the necessary recommendations. The paperwork needs to be completed.

West Street

Mr. Vignaly stated that the project is mainly complete, but the area needs to be stabilized. The final paving work will need to be done in the spring.

75 West Street

Mr. Vignaly indicated that the new driveway access was too close to the wetlands. It will be restored, and new plantings made in the spring. The rip rap swale will be removed, and the area regraded to return it to preconditions.

Bartlett Pond

Mr. Vignaly indicated that he has been trying to get a contract for treatment of Bartlett Pond. He will be discussing a 5 year contract with the new Town Administrator. The Town will be using CPC Funds for this expense. Mr. Vignaly could not get a contract from Solitude to get work completed this year. Since the contract is over \$50,000.00 the Town will need to advertise. Mr. Vignaly knows of 4 available contractors, and it was suggested that the Town could get bids from them.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday January 8, 2024

Ms. Guldner motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Clark. Roll Call Vote: Clark-yes; Dufresne-yes; Guldner – yes; Helwig-yes; Young-yes; motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda M. DiCelie Commission Secretary