



Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

Community Development Department

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Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION

February 16, 2017

MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was held on Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Merrimack Memorial Conference Room. This meeting was postponed due to weather from Monday February 13, 2017.

Chairman Gage Perry presided:

Members of the Commission Present: Michael Boisvert
Cynthia Glenn
Tim Tenhave, Alternate Member
Gina Rosati, Alternate Member
Councilor Thomas Mahon (left at 6:48 pm to attend Town Council meeting)

Members of the Commission Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Dawn Tuomala, Deputy Director Merrimack DPW/ Town Engineer

Adele Fiorillo, Normandeau Associates, Inc.
David Cedarholm, Tighe & Bond Engineers
John Boisvert, Pennichuck Water Works

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

APPOINTMENTS - None

STATUTORY/ADVISORY BUSINESS

1. **Wetlands Permit review for the Town of Merrimack** — Commission to review and potentially provide comments to NH DES for a Wetlands Permit filed by the Town of Merrimack related to the reconstruction of Bedford Road over Baboosic Brook.

Dawn Tuomala, Deputy Director Merrimack DPW/Town Engineer presented the plan. Mrs. Tuomala explained that, Quantum Construction Consultants, LLC is doing the work including pre-meetings with State agencies. After extensive meetings with NH Fish and Game, NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and other New Hampshire agencies; the proposed plan to remove the Darrah Bridge and to build a bridge with a span of 90 feet is the best option.

The Darrah Bridge is eligible for the National Register. However, it creates a constriction in the waterway upstream of the new bridge and has to be removed in order to create the proper waterway opening. A section 106 process is underway for adverse impacts.

There will be 5,700 sq. ft. of temporary wetlands impact and 1,500 sq. ft. permanent wetlands impact. The series of events for this project will be as follows. Step 1: The Darrah Bridge will be removed to allow the hydraulic capacity of the river to comply with the 100 year storm. Step 2: A new temporary bridge will be constructed to continue one way traffic flow. Step 3: Existing Bedford Road Bridge is removed and work on new bridge is started. Mrs. Tuomala stated that some of the materials that are removed will be saved and used for a natural bottom.

Commissioner Caron expressed his concern about a tree on the bank that is quite large and looks as if it is stabilizing the bank. Commissioner Caron wanted to make sure that this tree was not removed. Mrs. Tuomala stated that she cannot speak to the trees at this time. The Commission wants the contractor to be aware.

Chairman Perry stated that he felt this project looks very similar to other bridge projects in town and he does not see any new issues. The Commission will send a letter to the NH Department of Environmental Services.

Councilor Mahon left the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

2. **Wetlands Permit review for Pennichuck Water Works Inc.,** — Commission to review and potentially provide comments to NH DES for a Wetlands Permit filed by Pennichuck Water Works Inc., related to installation of Water Main and replacement of raw water intake structure.

Adele Fiorillo, Normandeau Associates, Inc., David Cedarholm, Tighe & Bond Engineers and John Boisvert, Pennichuck Water Works presented the project. The project is located in Merrimack and Litchfield, and involves installing an intake raw water pipe in the Merrimack River and a finished water pipe from Merrimack to Litchfield.

Ms. Fiorillo stated that Mr. Boisvert would explain the need for the project, and Mr. Cedarholm would follow with the technical details.

Mr. Boisvert explained that there are two main reasons for the project: to change the current intake, and to support expansion of water service to Litchfield.

Mr. Boisvert explained that the current intake has been permitted since 1985 by the Army Corps of Engineers and NH DES. The permit allows Pennichuck Water Works to draw water from the Merrimack River and pump it to Bowers Pond for amounts from 12-30 million gallons per day (mgd), depending on the time of year and river elevation. He further explained that the current intake is a 'run of bank' intake, which is not viable for winter. The run of bank intake also creates a scour effect.

Mr. Boisvert gave a background on the customer base on the east side of the Merrimack River. He stated that currently nearly 2000 customers in Litchfield are fed by wells owned by Hudson. The well-based supply is insufficient for summer and poses a risk if, for example, one of the existing wells went down for some reason. He also explained that a seasonal connection across the river currently exists, by which Pennichuck Water Works can supply water to Pennichuck East Utilities. Adding the roughly 400 additional Litchfield customers whose wells are affected by PFOA contamination approaches the limits of the current system.

Mr. Boisvert explained that the project had been in Pennichuck's plans, but has been accelerated due to the PFOA contamination issue. The process for implementing the project started in February of 2016 when the well contamination issue started becoming apparent. The hope is to get the work both permitted and completed in the summer of 2017 after the fish have migrated, and any work prior to the end of fish migration will be onshore work only.

Mr. Cedarholm then took the floor to explain the technical aspects of the project. He showed a picture of a bathymetric survey and discussed the rationale for the selected crossing location.

Mr. Cedarholm then displayed a cross-section view of the project and explained the process for installing the finished water pipe across the river. The finished water pipe will be an 18" high density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe. Directional drilling will take place, from the existing building to the river. A portion of the

pipe will run under the river bed, a portion of the pipe will rest on the river bed secured by submer mats, and a portion of the pipe will be installed in a trench. He explained that his firm is working with a firm that specializes in directional drilling and difficult drilling projects. In answer to Commissioner Boisvert's question; the physical impact on the Merrimack River will be a pipe about 2' above the bottom, however, this will be in 15' of water. When asked about the existing intake pipe, Mr. Boisvert explained that it will be left in place and gated.

Mr. Boisvert stated that the end visual result on the Merrimack side will be minimal they are using an existing building as the pump station and after 2018 there will be what looks like a manhole visible 3 or 4' above the ground.

Mr. Cedarholm then explained the process for installing the raw water intake pipe. The pipe will include an intake screen, held in place by four rock anchors. He also explained that the screen will be a very fine mesh, and the system is designed to have a velocity of less than a half-foot per second. This should prevent fish from being sucked against the screen.

The Commission asked about fish and wildlife habitat, and invasive species that will be affected. There will be no trees cut so there will be no impact to birds. The milkweed survey needs to be done later, because the results would be inconclusive. Commissioner Caron asked with the steep slopes do they think there would be any impact on bats. Mr. Boisvert stated that one of the banks has already been ripped and there are no rock outcroppings.

Chairman Perry asked the Commission if there were any other questions. There being none Chairman Perry thanked everyone for their flexibility in attending the meeting. The explanation regarding the Wetlands Permit Application has been very informative.

OLD BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2017 Maintenance Plan Renewal Beaver Solutions

Chairman Perry went over the maintenance plan renewal invoice for Beaver Solutions. He explained that this is for the maintenance of the four (4) flow devices installed on Conservation Property. The Commission has been pleased with the service provided by Beaver Solutions.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO EXPEND \$930 TO CONTINUE THE MAINTENANCE FOR OUR FOUR (4) BEAVER SOLUTION STRUCTURES. FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE IN FUND 53
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0

OTHER BUSINESS

- NRPC: Maps

Commissioner Tenhave met with NRPC for a progress update; they are looking for final input regarding the Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP) Map and Brochure. Commissioner Tenhave stated that NRPC is able to provide a blown up version of the HHNP and Wasserman Conservation Area maps for display at the upcoming Winter Carnival.

Wasserman Conservation Area map has no trail descriptions like the HHNP map does. Commissioner Tenhave asked, when the map is printed in brochure form, does the Commission want the information from the website put in that space or can a member create trail descriptions. Commissioner Caron will see what trail information we have in our files and create some descriptions to keep all of the brochures as consistent as possible. Commissioner Tenhave noted that the Field Loop trail shown on the map is not Merrimack Conservation property and suggests a boundary line be added with the statement "private

property maintained by others". That section is owned by the adjacent homeowner's association; however, it is not posted as private property. Commission Tenhave mentioned the parking lots should show resident and non-resident parking open dawn to dusk. Commission Caron suggested depicting the rockwall between the conservation area and parking lot as a boundary line.

The subcommittee for Wildcat falls met and spoke about that map. The subcommittee feels that only the trails shown on the current map should be on the NRPC map. The subcommittee wants to keep the data, but many of the trails by the river have erosion issues and should not be promoted. Commissioner Tenhave gave this feedback to NRPC and is expecting the draft map shortly.

The Horse Hill Nature Preserve subcommittee (HHNP) would like to see topographical lines and streams on the map. The consensus of the Commission is that adding these lines would make the map too busy. There are many mobile applications available to anyone who wants to access that information.

Commission Caron and Chairman Perry will be in contact with NRPC regarding the Grater Woods map. All the draft maps should be done by the end of April.

- Duck Boxes

Commission Boisvert has been able to check a few boxes and found some hatched eggs. Commissioner Caron is hoping to go out on Saturday February 18, 2017 to clear out the boxes and refill with shavings. Commissioner Caron stated there are extra boxes available should more be put out? Discussion ensued where current boxes are and where a good place would be for more. Chairman Perry will put two boxes out in the Mitchell Wood Conservation area. The main concern is that with the warm weather coming, the boxes need to be cleaned out before they are inaccessible

- Invasive Study: Gilmore Hill – The Commission will bring this up again in April
- Update on Grater Road Bypass road design & construction – Deputy Director Tuomala said there is nothing new to report
- Website Upgrade:

Commissioner Tenhave is working with Wendy from Wetherbee Creative regarding the maintenance contract and has that for Chairman Perry to sign. The idea is to start the contract April 1, 2017 and the Commission will be billed quarterly.

As an aside Chairman Perry brought up the idea of the Commission allowing project leaders to sign contracts that have been discussed at meetings. Commissioner Tenhave stated he did not see an issue with that as long as the Commission voted on it. As far as financial forms were concerned the Commission would need to research their By-laws. Chairman Perry's hope is to reduce delays simply because something needs to be signed by him when he out of town. This item will be put on the March 6, 2017 agenda for the Commission to discuss more.

- Monthly Events- No update
- Sub-Committee updates

Horse Hill Nature Preserve (HHNP): Commissioner Glenn stated that the subcommittee wants to revisit the issue of putting a Beaver flow device where the trail is being flooded off of Palmieri Drive. Chairman Perry stated that a device can be put in, but the comment from Mike Callahan at Beaver Solutions LLC, was the beavers will just move up a few feet and rebuild. Discussion ensued regarding cleaning out the debris, re-routing the trail, or closing the trail for a few years until the beavers have moved on. Beaver

habitats are cylindrical once the food source is depleted the beaver move on, however, you cannot really put a time frame on how long this will take. The consensus of the Commission is to look at this again in the spring.

Grater Woods: Vice Chairman Caron stated that there will be a meeting on Tuesday February 21, 2016.

Wildcat Falls: Commissioner Tenhave stated that the subcommittee met and discussed the NRPC map, and events. There is still a question in regards to participants needing to sign waivers before each event.

- Seedling Give-Away:

Chairman Perry stated that Currier Orchards will be able to host the Give-Away again this year. The date of the Give-Away will be Saturday May 13, 2017. Jon Nute the county forester retired. The Commission will have to make arrangements to pick up the seedlings when they are available.

PRESENTATION OF THE MINUTES

Merrimack Conservation Commission. January 23, 2017

The following amendments were offered:

Page 5, Line 13; remove "an" before the word asterisks

Page 5, Line 43; replace "no" with "not"

Page 6, Line 31; capitalize "o" in outdoors

Page 7, Line 9; remove second "which"

Page 7, Line 10; replace "necessarily" with "necessary"

Page 7, Line 19; replace "them" with "then"

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO ACCEPT AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BOISVERT

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-1

Chairman Perry abstained

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS -None

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE THAT THE COMMISSION ENTER NON-PUBLIC SESSION
PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3, II(d) CONSIDERATION OF THE ACQUISITION, SALE OR LEASE OF
REAL OR PERSONAL PROPERTY WHICH, IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY BENEFIT A
PARTY OF PARTIES WHOSE INTERESTS ARE ADVERSE TO THOSE OF THE GENERAL
COMMUNITY**

MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN

A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: (6) Cynthia Glenn, Matt Caron, Tim Tenhave, Gina Rosati, Mike Boisvert, Gage Perry

Nay: (0)

MOTION CARRIED

The Commission entered non-public session at 8:58 p.m.

The Commission reconvened at 9:57 p.m.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2017 NON-PUBLIC SESSION BE SEALED UNTIL LAND NEGOTIATIONS ARE COMPLETE. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GLENN

A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: (6) Cynthia Glenn, Matt Caron, Tim Tenhave, Gina Rosati, Mike Boisvert, Gage Perry

Nay: (0)

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER TENHAVE TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARON
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0**

The February 16, 2017 meeting of the Merrimack Conservation Commission was adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Submitted by Amy Casparius