

Conservation Commission Meeting
Virtual Meeting
June 25, 2020

Roll Call of Attendance: Peg Arguimbau, Chair, Jon Wasserman, Keevin Geller, Stephen Cremer and Colin Barbera, were the members participating. Conservation Administrator John Thomas as well as Clerk, Linda Callan were also on the zoom meeting. Meredith Avery and Alan Westman not present

Potential speakers this evening: John McGowan

The remote meeting started at 7:30pm

Arguimbau opened the meeting by reading Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020. Per guidance from the State, Arguimbau noted that all votes would be taken by roll call.

7:30 P.M - Hearing: Request for Determination – 127 Beach Street

Proposed grade-level deck/platform on lakefront parcel

John McGowan, property owner. He built house in 2018-2019 and his family has been living there since last fall. At the time of purchase, the property was in rough shape. The beach front was a collection point for junk and debris. He has been cleaning up and at this time would like to construct a platform deck which would be approximately six inches off the ground. He understands that at the May meeting there was some concern with the deck covering up vegetation. McGowan explained the deck would be over an existing lawn (if you could call it that) as it is mostly crab grass and weeds. Additionally, the deck will be built allowing for drainage between the planks. There will be no footings and no excavation. Wasserman asked if there were any pictures of the proposed layout at the location. Thomas put up a picture of the project location showing the markings where the proposed deck will be placed. Arguimbau asked about the materials to be used in building of the deck. McGowan explained he planned on using pressure treated wood along with grey composite decking.

Cremer asked what pressure treated wood is treated with. McGowan said that if there was concern with him using pressure treated wood, he would instead use non treated wood. Arguimbau asked if the deck would remain in place year round. McGowan explained that heavy duty caster wheels would be used on the bottom and screws instead of nails would be used in order to disassemble the deck if needed. However, he would like to be able to use the deck year-round and is not sure why he would need to remove.

Arguimbau asked for clarification on the statement McGowan made about junk on the beach. McGowan explained he has found lots of old motor parts as well as plastic bottles and such. Arguimbau also noted that McGowan may wish to speak with Building Inspector about building the platform from property line to property line. It might be better to leave a bit of room on each side. Abutters were asked if they had any question.

Motion: to close hearing and issue negative determination with condition underlying wood used would not be pressure treated. Applicant shall phone the office prior to beginning the project.

Wasserman, Geller 5-0-0 (motion passes)

Roll call vote: Arguimbau– Aye; Barbera–Aye; Geller–Aye; Wasserman – Aye; Cremer - Aye

7:40 P.M - Hearing: Request for Determination – 26 Laurel Road

Proposed deck extension

Amir Rashid, property owner. Rashid gave a brief description of what he is proposing to do. Rashid explained that he moved into house 15 years ago. When he purchased the house, there was an existing deck, but it is only 9.5 feet wide. He has a family of five and the existing deck area is too small for a table and chairs that would fit his family. He would like to extend the deck approximately 10 feet. The proposed area is currently an existing lawn. Rashid met with Conservation Administrator John Thomas who believed that Rashid would be able to extend his deck. Erosion control would need to be put in place and no removal of vegetation would be allowed. Thomas suggested that Rashid file a Request for Determination. (RDA)

Arguimbau asked Rashid if he had hired a builder. Rashid responded that he is currently receiving estimates from builders. It was Rashid's understanding that he first needed clearance from the Commission to build his project, then he would need to apply for a building permit.

Arguimbau had questions regarding the footings of the deck. Rashid explained that there would be four footings, located approximately ten feet from the existing footings. Pressure treated footings would be used, similar to what is currently there. The deck will be open and not enclosed.

Arguimbau asked about the vegetation growth along the existing fence. Rashid explained that is where he was told to install the erosion control. The wetlands are located about fifty feet from this fence.

Arguimbau would like a more definitive plan once a builder has been hired. She would like for the plan to include location of the erosion control and signed by the builder. Rashid indicated that the red line on the plan is where the erosion control will be placed.

Motion: to close hearing with negative determination pending submittal of specific plan to include erosion control along with some measurements. Upon receipt of new plan, hearing will be closed, and project will proceed per plan. Office should be notified prior to any work beginning.

Geller, Cremer 5-0-0 (motion passes)

Roll Call vote: Arguimbau – Aye; Geller-Aye; Cremer-Aye; Barbera - Aye, Wasserman-Aye

7:50 P.M - Hearing: Notice of Intent, Sharon Galleries, 144 Old Post Road

Proposed construction of a shopping center with associated utility and site work in the buffer to a BVW

Applicant has requested a continuance. Next meeting date either July 9 or July 16. Will confirm date at end of this meeting. No other notice will be sent to abutters. For information on hearing for Sharon Galleries, please check website.

8:00 P.M - Continuance: Sharon High School Turf Field

Motion: to continue hearing until Commission hears from applicant on whether they wish to return or if they wish to close the hearing.

Wasserman, Geller 5-0-0 (motion passes)

Roll call vote: Wasserman-Aye; Barbera-Aye; Cremer-Aye, Geller - Aye, Arguimbau-Aye

Conservation Administrator Update

Hans Van Lingen, Eversource

Van Lingen is here this evening to discuss the switching station on Canton Street. He has been with Eversource for only a year so does not have prior history. The project is coming to a close.

They are currently working through the wetland restoration process. Van Lingen explained to Commission members that they have been having difficulty re-establishing grade within the wetland where transmission poles are placed due to a unique groundwater condition that has caused change in design. There is a sloped wetland where new transmission poles are located. Van Lingen explained the reason for sloped wetland is due to a natural artesian condition which causes an upwelling of groundwater in the area. They found this out the hard way when they were excavating to put in the transmission poles.

Van Lingen explained that when excavating began to install the transmission poles, water was hit between four to six feet. This water level was higher than what was anticipated. The water upwelled and caused a cave in which caused significant issues with the design of the project. The up-well of the water and pressure was extreme.

As Van Lingen worked to try to redesign the underground conduits to connect to the transfer station, he was given assurance by the engineers that there was sufficient cover on top of conduits to reestablish wetlands. Van Lingen had a consultant on site to oversee the project. What was realized was that they were unable to reestablish grades and though they may be able to reestablish the area as a wetland, they are not 100 percent sure. As a conservative measure Van Lingen is asking to off-set any grades which are higher by expanding or relocating the wetland replication. One reason not sure wetland replication will occur is that one of the conduit locations is too shallow and runs beneath an area approved for wetland replication.

A survey of the area has not yet been done to know depth grades. Van Lingen has taken the 200 square foot buffer into account for an expansion of the replication area. He also noted that the replication may re-establish because of the slope, however, he is not sure and would like to mitigate however possible.

Arguimbau appreciates the heads up as to what is happening. She explained that the applicant will need to apply for an Amendment to the Order of Conditions. She would like for Van Lingen to return to a future meeting to provide more specific information on how the area will be remediated.

Thomas explained that originally the replication design was along Canton Street. What has been determined however is that this area is not conducive to mitigation as the conduit will be running through that area. The applicant is proposing to keep as is, and if the replication takes it takes, but to be safe, they are also proposing to replicate at another area which is contiguous to an existing wetland. They will be creating a wetland out of upland.

Arguimbau explained that the Commission would need to receive a planting plan. Thomas noted that he would be working with Van Lingen to determine what needs to be done. Then will figure out the next steps. Van Lingen is presenting this evening as a courtesy to the

Commission, and is informal in nature. He will be working with the Conservation Administrator and come back with a more formal plan.

46 Longmeadow. Thomas met with the property owner, Brian Benson, earlier today. He had originally wanted to put in a pool, but for now, he is putting that project on hold. At this time, he would like to replace his existing fence. The existing fence is a four foot high chain link fence. Benson would like to replace the existing chain link fence with a 6 foot vinyl fence. In order to put in the new fence, he will need to trim some vegetation. He has no plans to disturb any existing trees or shrubs. He will be removing dead debris and cleaning up the area. The buffer extends onto the lawn area, but proposed work is along the fringe of the lawn and woodlands. A Request for Determination will need to be filed for this project.

Other Business

The next Commission meeting date is scheduled for July 9 at 7:30pm. The August meeting will be determined at the July 9 meeting.

Arguimbau informed Commission members that she has asked Town Manager Turkington if it would be possible to meet in the ballroom at the Community Center. She has not yet heard back. She is hopeful that we will be able to meet in person.

Lake update.

The lake is currently below 10 feet. Thomas noted that he is hoping for some rain over the next couple of weeks. Testing for the lake water quality has begun. First weeks testing came back high at Community Center Beach. The beach was retested and came back within limits. Memorial Beach came back fine.

Motion to adjourn

Cremer, Wasserman 5-0-0 (motion passes)

Roll Call Vote: Wasserman-Aye, Cremer-Aye, Barbera- Aye, Geller-Aye, Arguimbau-Aye

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm