

**Stow Conservation Commission
Minutes
November 4, 2020**

A meeting of the Stow Conservation Commission was held on November 4, 2020 at 7:30 pm in the evening by remote Meeting VIA Zoom Videoconferencing in accordance with the Governors' Executive Order on Remote Meeting participation.

There were present: Jeff Saunders, Chair
Serena Furman, Vice-Chair *(late)*
Andy Snow
Ingeborg Hegemann Clark *(late)*
Matt Styckiewicz
Doug Morse
comprising a quorum of the Commission

Absent: Andy Bass

Also present: Kathy Sferra, Conservation Coordinator
Tom Porcher, Associate Member

Jeff Saunders called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Minutes:

Andy Snow made a motion to approve the minutes of October 6, 2020 as amended. Matt Styckiewicz seconded the motion and it passed 4-0 on a roll call vote with Matt, Andy, Doug and Jeff voting in favor.

Public Hearing – 76 North Shore Drive – Request for Determination of Applicability

Jeff Saunders read the public hearing notice. Present were property owners Laura Diamond and Carolyn McDonald. Laura explained the proposed project which includes a drywell, retaining walls near the house, a walkway and tree removal, all within the 100' buffer. She noted that they were still trying to decide between two drywell options. Doug Morse did a site visit and displayed photographs of the site. He said that he felt that the proposed dry wells would take care of 70-80% of the runoff down the hill and with the addition of the wall, it would be even greater. He thought these were an excellent idea. He mentioned that of the two drywell systems, he likes the plastic dome system, but that the choice was up to the applicant. Doug noted that erosion was evident on the slope, with some of the lawn irrigation piping exposed. The Commission discussed the trees proposed for removal. There are 12 trees, of which 7 are within the 35' buffer. Several are dead or dying. All are white pines and many of them have damaged tops. Laura feels that they pose a threat to the house. There was discussion of keeping a group of the trees so that they would support each other. It was also noted that there are maples, birches and other trees that will remain. Laura mentioned that she was talking with landscape designer Isabel Wheat. Laura is trying to decide between two locations for the retaining wall – depending on which side of the stumps it get puts on. Both locations are well outside of the 35' buffer. The height of the wall will vary depending on the location. Laura will need to see if a building permit is required. The Commission discussed erosion controls and asked to see straw bales near the top of the slope outside of the stone wall.

Serena Furman arrived.

The Commission agreed to allow the applicant to remove up to 12 trees, with replacement of the trees in the 35' buffer with native plantings. At least three trees should be planted; the other trees can be mitigated with two shrubs each.

There were no questions from abutters.

Andy Snow made a motion to close, Doug Morse seconded. The motion was approved 4-0-1 with Andy S., Matt, Doug and Jeff voting in favor on a roll call vote and Serena abstaining.

Public Hearings – Notices of Intent – Joanne Drive – Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4

Jeff Saunders read the hearing notice. Present for the applicant was Paul Kirchner of Stamski and McNary. Paul presented the site plans for Lot 1-4, noting that the subdivision road and drainage had already been approved in a previous Order of Conditions by the Conservation Commission. He noted the erosion controls that were provided for on the original plans. Silt sacks are incorporated in the catch basins. Sferra noted that she and Tom Porcher did an erosion control inspection last week and also looked at the work proposed on the lots. The Commission confirmed that these are the final locations of the house and not just a "house box." If there are any changes they would need to come to the Commission.

All of the lots have work in the Commission's jurisdiction including clearing and grading, Lots 1 and 2 also have portions of the houses in the buffer zone. Lots 3 and 4 have work in the Riverfront Area; however alteration of these areas was already approved as part of the subdivision approval. Paul summarized the work proposed on each lot one at a time. He said the tree clearing areas had been staked out. The Commission requested details on walkways and other hardscaping within their jurisdiction on Lots 1 and 2 as this had not been provided. Sferra asked about installation of some sort of field delineation at the back of Lot 1 to ensure that trees in the easement would not be cut. She noted that this is outside of the Commission's jurisdiction but that it was a concern.

Scott Bracci of 48 Forest Road spoke, noting that the tree clearing had already started. It was clarified that this was work that had been approved in the Order of Conditions for the subdivision.

Ingeborg Hegemann Clark arrived.

The Commission requested the installation of erosion controls – likely straw wattles – along the front lot lines in the area of Lots 3 and 4 to help minimize the potential for erosion and sedimentation. Paul will submit a revised plan showing this. He asked that there be flexibility to allow the erosion controls to be moved as needed during construction so as not to interfere with construction. Sferra thought that would be fine as they do not serve as a limit of work.

Mark Segien from 35 Sudbury Road asked about drainage down the road near Lot 1, across from his driveway. Paul Kirchner provided detail on the grading in this area.

It was noted that DEP file numbers have not yet been received. The Commission discussed possible continuation dates. Doug Morse moved to continue the public hearing to November 17th, Serena Furman seconded. The motion was approved 5-0-1 with Andy S., Matt, Doug, Serena and Jeff voting in favor on a roll call vote and Ingeborg abstaining.

Lake Boon Drawdown Decision

Present were Kris Krablin and Dan Barstow from the Lake Boon Commission. The Commission reviewed a draft decision that had been prepared by staff in Stow working with staff in Hudson. Several minor revisions were made. It was noted that Hudson will be voting tomorrow night. Ingeborg Hegemann Clark made a motion to approve the decision as amended. Serena Furman seconded and the motion was approved 4-0-2 with Serena, Matt, Doug and Ingeborg voting in favor on a roll vote and Jeff and Andy abstaining. Kathy Sferra said that she would get in touch with Hudson and let them know about the edits. Dan thanked the Commission and staff for their work on this.

Request for Certificate of Compliance - 168 Barton Road – Ron Ham – Portside Realty Trust

The applicant has requested a Certificate of Compliance. Kathy Sferra did a site visit and reviewed the as-built and photos provided by Scott Hayes. There was a question about a fence in the 35' buffer, however Scott provided documentation of the previous fence in this location. The bank seems reasonably well stabilized. The stairs were built as shown in the amended Order. Sferra recommended issuance. Ingeborg Hegemann Clark moved to issue the Certificate of Compliance and Andy Snow seconded. The motion was approved 6-0 on a roll call vote with all present voting in favor.

Request to Consider Acceptance of Open Land for Spring Hill Estates

Sferra noted that this offer of land is in connection with the subdivision that was approved on Walcott Street on the former Cushing land. It was expected that the land would go to Stow Conservation Trust. SCT had asked for a stewardship contribution which the developer was unwilling to pay. Rather than create a homeowners association it was suggested they approach the Town. Sferra noted that the land is adjacent to Hale/Corzine. She and Andy walked the property yesterday. A portion is high and dry with nice views over a wetland marsh; the lower elevations are heavily infested with Japanese barberry. Sferra said that she wasn't sure about developing trails in the short term, but that there is the potential to add adjacent land on Spring Hill. There is an access easement from the driveway to the top of the hill; the other point of access would be from Hale/Corzine and would likely be difficult due to wetlands and rocky terrain. The Commission was agreeable to further considering a gift of the land. The potential for connection to Hemenway Farm, Athens Lane and other potential open lands in the area was noted.

Determination of Applicability – 76 North Shore Drive

The Commission discussed the decision and agreed to attach conditions including replanting as discussed at the hearing, and installation of erosion controls (straw wattle) on the lakeward side of the retaining walls. Up to 12 trees could be removed and limited to those shown on the plan and the plan will be appended to the Determination. A planting plan should be required. Doug Morse moved to issue a Negative 3 Determination. Matt Styckiewicz seconded and the motion was approved 4-0-2 on a roll call vote with Jeff, Matt, Doug and Andy voting in favor and Ingeborg and Serena abstaining.

Coordinator & Commission Member Reports:

- Sferra noted that Red Aylward would like to make changes to the design at 33 Hale. He is talking with his engineer. After discussion the Commission agreed that this should be submitted as a modification even though it may be better from a resource standpoint.
- Sferra updated the Commission on the PFAS clean up at the Fire Training Academy, noting that a further filing will likely be needed.
- Sferra shared the Covid sign design for conservation land. The signs have been made and revised to reflect the Governor's revised mask order this week.

- Sferra asked what the Commission wanted to do with regard to the annual New Year Walk at Town Forest. After discussion, members agreed to move forward with advertising the walk and have smaller groups, multiple leaders, and reservations as needed to comply with gathering requirements.
- Andy Snow noted that she will be leaving the Commission as she is moving from Stow. Tom Porcher indicated he would be interested in applying for the seat. Andy will submit a letter of resignation.
- Sferra also indicated that Conservation Assistant Jacquie Goring would like to modify her schedule when she returns to work in December due to Covid-related issues and child care. Sferra is working with the Town Administrator to develop a staffing plan for this time.

Adjournment – *Ingeborg Hegemann Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 PM. Doug Morse seconded the motion and it passed 5-0 on a roll call vote: Matt Styckiewicz - aye, Serena Furman - aye, Andy Bass – aye, Andy Snow – aye, Doug Morse – aye.*

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Sferra
Conservation Coordinator

Materials Used during the November 4, 2020 Conservation Commission Meeting:

Draft decision for Lake Boon drawdown

Application, Plans and Photographs for 76 North Shore Drive and Joanne Drive Lots

Request for COC and plans for 168 North Shore Drive

Covid sign design

Draft Minutes of October 20, 2020 Meeting