

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
DOREEN A. CEDRONE

Meeting Minutes February 05, 2020

Justin Arbuckle, Justine Carroll, Barbara McNamee, and Cindy Campbell were present. Rich Chiras was absent. Barbara Kinney, Conservation Commission (NCC) Administrative Assistant, and David Pickart, NCC Agent, were also present. There are two (2) open vacancies on the NCC.

Ms. McNamee opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

Citizen's Forum

None

(248-676) Q143/R144 Transmission Tap Line, 160-222 Douglas Road (Map 3, Parcel 24)

Proposed geotechnical soil borings at one location within a Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW). The applicant is New England Power d/b/a National Grid represented by BSC Group, 33 Waldo Street, Worcester, MA 01608.

The legal requirements have been satisfied including notification to abutters and publishing of the legal ad.

Keith Hannon of BSC Group explained that he received the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) file number at 5:30PM this evening. They are testing the soil because they will be ultimately replacing the structures that are there now. That will be done under a separate filing in the future. There are two wood pole structures that are connected by a cross beam in the resource area. They will either use mats or a low ground pressure (LGP) vehicle in the resource area. The area will be seeded once the soil borings are complete. They will follow the Best Management Practices (BMP) guidebook. They have permission and produced the documentation to cross over the town owned land to access their site. Mr. Pickart has notified the Town Manager of this project and that they will be crossing over town owned land. The special conditions should include that the NCC is notified before they do the soil borings, the erosion controls should be removed once the area is stabilized and the area should be rechecked six (6) months after completion to make sure the seeds are growing.

Motion made by Ms. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 4-0 to close the Public Hearing.

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Carroll. The NCC voted 4-0 to accept the plan included in the Notice of Intent (NOI) dated January 09, 2020 and issue the Order of Conditions (OOC).

Old / New Business

Invasive Species Presentation – Conservation Agent

Mr. Pickart gave the NCC a presentation on algal blooms and aquatic plant infestations. Algal blooms occur when excessive loadings of nutrients (phosphorus) enter the ponds, lakes and impounded waterbodies from the surrounding watershed. Decaying aquatic plant matter (a food source) can lead to increased algal population. Algae consumes dissolved oxygen which can lead to fish kills. Blooms can contain forms of algae (cyanobacteria) that are harmful to humans and dogs.

He then explained that eutrophication is a natural occurrence that happens over a 100 years and not 10-20 years which is what is happening from aquatic infestations. The lakes, ponds, rivers, etc. are turning into wetlands. Many aquatic species are non-native and highly invasive. This severely limits recreational uses (swimming, boating, etc.).

Blooms and/or plant outbreaks are occurring in almost all of Northbridge's water bodies. Riley Pond has had a prolonged bloom of cyanobacteria and has been closed. There was a small bloom observed in the Carpenter Reservoir this year. A variety of remedies can be utilized to control the blooms and infestations. Most need to be repeated multiple times and will not completely eradicate the problem. Source reduction/control should be considered as well. Remedies include weed harvesting (least costly), herbicides / algaecides, drawdowns, and dredging (most costly).

There are several grant programs that can be pursued and most require some kind of match from the Town. Some possible next steps include that the BOS spearhead setting up a committee to oversee the research, grant pursuit, any actions taken, educational outreach, etc. and the NCC will assist them. The initial focus should be on the Mumford River. Target mailings should be sent to provide educational outreach to the residents. Mr. Pickart also gave this presentation to the Board of Selectmen BOS). For more information see the hardcopy of the presentation.

Mr. Pickart also mentioned that a chapter on watershed resources will be included in the open space and recreation plan to help spark interest.

Enforcement Actions

None

Minutes

November 06, 2019

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Campbell. The NCC voted 3-0-1 (Ms. Carroll abstained) to accept the minutes of November 06, 2019 as written.

Executive Session

None

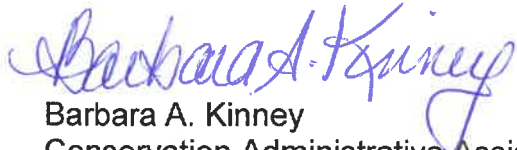
Other

The NCC members present performed administrative tasks (signed Orders, etc.) that were needed.

Motion made by Ms. Campbell and seconded by Mr. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting about 8:21PM.

Respectfully submitted,

DATE APPROVED:


Barbara A. Kinney
Conservation Administrative Assistant

February 19, 2020

February 05, 2020

CONSERVATION MAIL LIST

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WEEKLY REPORTS

- Report ending January 17, 2020
- Report ending February 02, 2020

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT MEETING