



**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
DOREEN A. CEDRONE

**Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2020**

Justin Arbuckle, Justine Carroll, and Barbara McNamee were present. Cindy Campbell was late. 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

Cindy Campbell arrived at 7:03PM.

(248-675) Retail Marijuana Dispensary, 1096-1110 Main Street (Map 1, Parcels 114 & 115)

Proposed construction of a retail marijuana dispensary with parking, utilities, stormwater management & earthwork with a portion of the site within the riverfront area of Steamburg Brook. The applicant for this project is True Nature's Wellness represented by Allen Engineering & Associates, Inc. (AEA), 1 Charlesview Road, Suite 2, Hopedale, MA 01747.

Eric Bazzett, AEA, explained that they have already met with the Planning Board and the Safety Committee and those Boards / Committees have concerns with proposed parking. Per Mr. Bazzett, the Safety Committee will approve the plan if they can provide five (5) to seven (7) more parking spaces. He suggested maybe doing some fill of the wetland and doing replication elsewhere. Mr. Pickart explained that if they are going to pursue that avenue then they will need to submit a new Notice of Intent (NOI) [that will go to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)] and start the process over again. He believes that DEP is no longer allowing filling for buildings or parking.

Another idea, per Mr. Bazzett, is to have two access driveways to the site and eliminate the access drive in front of the building. By doing this they will gain +/- seven (7) parking spaces for 45 parking spaces in total. The dumpster pad will be moved closer to the wetland. One of the access drives (closest to Walmart) could be closed off (gated for emergency access) due to site line difficulties and those parking spaces farthest from the entrance would be used for the employees.

Parking may also be extended over the utility easement but not over the gas line itself. It is a tedious process, per Mr. Bazzett, but they are looking into it now. The applicant is

looking to do the Riverfront restoration on the other side of the utility easement. It will consist of shrubs only (no trees) and some top soil may need to be brought in.

The roof runoff will be captured underground and then flow to the above ground basin on the east side. Parking drainage will flow the catch basins and then to the wetland to the north.

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Campbell. The NCC voted 4-0 to continue the Public Hearing to March 04, 2020 at 7:05PM.

Old / New Business

None

Enforcement Actions

None

Minutes

Note: These minutes approvals were taken at the beginning of the meeting before Cindy Campbell arrived.

December 04, 2019

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Carroll. The NCC voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of December 04, 2019 as written.

December 18, 2019

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Carroll. The NCC vote 3-0 to approve the minutes of December 18, 2019 as written.

February 05, 2020

Motion made by Mr. Arbuckle and seconded by Ms. Carroll. The NCC vote 3-0 to approve the minutes of February 05, 2020 as written.

Executive Session

None

Other

Beavers at Riley Pond – The NCC discussed the activity of the beavers at Riley Pond. There have been many trees chewed down. Mr. Pickart is concerned with one side of the pond as the soils are very sandy and as vegetation dies, there will be not much to hold the bank in place. Ms. Campbell visited the site today and is very much in favor of letting the beavers be. Ms. McNamee has also visited the site. The lodge is to the left of the pond when standing at the spillway.

Ms. McNamee has spoken to a knowledgeable person on beavers and explained that the area will house only one family of beaver because any other will be kicked out. Beaver babies are allowed to stay only for about two years then they are kicked out. Once the good food source is gone then they will move on. The NCC could just keep an eye on them as they may not stay.

Mr. Pickart is concerned that someone will notice and contact the Town Manager who will in turn look to us for input. Maybe the NCC should be proactive and notify the Town Manager now. The NCC cannot authorize or do anything unless the beaver are breaching the spillway by taking it down or blocking it up to raise the water level. The pros and cons need to be weighed on whether this is enough of an environmental impact to warrant action. Mr. Pickart will send an email to the Town Manager explaining that beaver activity was noticed and the NCC will monitor this activity for now. Should the Town request, the NCC will look into this further and offer options. Mr. Pickart knows someone who is very knowledgeable about beavers called the "beaver whisperer" and he could invite him to come to a future meeting and explain what the NCC should look for at a small cost of +/- \$100.00 (the NCC would need to find the funds or approach the Town Manager for funds, if needed). It is difficult to manage beavers.

Stone Hill Condos – Mr. Pickart visited the site after complaints were received in the Planning and NCC offices. He did not confirm dimensions, but it appears that the contractors followed the plan. On the side where there are no wetlands it appears they need to do grading and then plant trees for the buffer from other properties. An Email has been sent to the owner representative and the engineer encouraging them to document and measure to make sure they have not gone beyond the limit of clearing per approval on the plan. Mr. Pickart told them they need to install the erosion controls ASAP since the stumping and grubbing has begun. They stated they would be installing the erosion controls on February 20 and / or February 21, 2020. The replication will be done in the spring.

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

Steve Gniadek – Attended the meeting tonight and is interested in joining the Conservation Commission. The NCC answered his questions and he gave a brief summary of himself. He will need to fill out a Talent Bank Form and be appointed by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

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

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara A. Kinney
Conservation Administrative Assistant

DATE APPROVED:

