



**TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
LINDA B. ZYWIEN

**Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2022**

Justine Carroll, Steve Gniadek, Chloe Mawn, Cindee Cummiskey, Justin Arbuckle and Barbara McNamee were present. Rich Chiras was absent. David Pickart, Conservation Commission (NCC) Agent, was present. Barbara Kinney, NCC Administrative Assistant was absent.

J. Carroll opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

Attendees: Robert Duff, Guerriere & Halnon, Inc. (G & H); and Brian Fitzgerald.

Citizen's Forum

None

(248-XXX), 693 Fowler Road (Map 17, Parcel 34)

Proposed septic system replacement with clearing, excavating, filling, grading, loaming and seeding. A portion of the work will be located within the 100 foot Buffer Zone of a Bordering Vegetated Wetland (BVW). The applicant for this project is Daniel & Amanda Foster represented by Shea Engineering, 76 Uxbridge Road, Mendon, MA 01756.

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) file number (248-690) was received yesterday and there were no technical comments listed.

Motion made by B. McNamee and seconded by S. Gniadek. The NCC voted 6-0 by roll call vote of J. Carroll – Yes; S. Gniadek – Yes; J. Arbuckle – Yes; C. Cummiskey – Yes; C. Mawn – Yes; and B. McNamee – Yes to close the Public Hearing.

Motion made by B. McNamee and seconded by S. Gniadek. The NCC voted 6-0 by roll call vote of J. Carroll – Yes; S. Gniadek – Yes; J. Arbuckle – Yes; C. Cummiskey – Yes; C. Mawn – Yes; and B. McNamee – Yes to issue the Order of Conditions (OOC).

(248-687) Winston Woods (Off Spring Street) (Map 15A, Parcels 224-232)

Proposed construction of a nine (9)-lot residential subdivision with associated infrastructure. The applicant for this project is B. Fitzgerald represented by G & H, 1029 Providence Road, Whitinsville, MA 01588.

J. Carroll abstained from this Public Hearing. Revisions have been made and submitted to the Planning Board for review at their meeting on February 22, 2022.

Instead of swales directing the runoff to the wetlands, the project will pipe the runoff down Spring Street to Cottage Street. Betterments to the road (Spring Street) and a new sewer

line will be required. Drainage in the large basin will connect into the street drainage system and be piped down Spring Street by a new line to Cottage Street. The smaller basin near the wetland will connect to the street system too instead of going to the wetland. It is a large watershed with most of it off this property that feeds this location. So a delicate balance is not needed as some other wetlands may require and that is very important. The impact should be improved.

The water line will have a crossing under the wetlands and connect to Pine Street. This crossing is mandated by the town as the Fire Department wants to increase the looping of the water line. The water line will be +/-200 to 280 feet long, but only 50 feet will actually be in the wetlands. The installation will need to be done during the driest time of the year so there may be no water in the stream at that time.

Several trees came down and were blocking the outlet of the wetland. They have been removed. That should restore the flow to what it was designed for, per R. Duff. Also, an inlet flow control structure with cage and top plate should be installed so if the inlet is blocked, water can flow through it.

They are looking to cut off the edge of the wall and reinstall it along the new roadway at a 30 degree angle. The town owns part of the wall. There are actually granite pieces channeling the water through there. D. Pickart (speaking for himself) is still uncomfortable with nothing being done to the wall given its age and that it leaks now. It may still back up during certain storm events. Once a section is cut off, the potential to have further deterioration of the wall is greater. A structural engineer should look at this. B. Fitzgerald has not had this done because the wall is not to hold the water back, but was doing so because of the blockage/debris. He doesn't think this will be seen again. The drill holes can be seen. D. Pickart explained the concern is if the project gets built and the wall still has problems, then the town owns those problems. The NCC wants some kind of analysis/statement from someone who deals with walls and the safety of them to document that the wall is not going to deteriorate and fail. B. Fitzgerald may have a problem getting an engineer to do the certification, but will explore it. R. Duff stated that the wall was very well built and in fairly decent shape. No sections of the wall is in failure or looks like it is going to fail. The wall has been there over 100 years. The top of the structure will be about four (4) feet below the top of the wall. So if it tops the structure, the water will go down through the top of the system and not over the wall. He anticipates a quick turnaround in terms of this being built and will give the town some history of how it will affect the wall. D. Pickart wanted to know if he is willing to provide a stamped statement that the wall is no danger of collapsing in the foreseeable future and the that applicant will post a bond to hold in escrow for at least five (5) years to see how the wall is doing (Planning Board may be involved too). Deadlines are approaching, per R. Duff.

D. Pickart recommends not closing the Public Hearing tonight at least until they have their first meeting with the Planning Board. The NCC agrees. The NCC is tired of dealing with drainage problems after a project has been completed and even after it's been approved and construction starts. They are seeing more and more basins that are not functioning as intended and/or seeing inadequacies in the drainage system down gradient of where the project goes forward. The Town is put in a situation where the public is very upset, they want to know why the town approved the project, the developer says the town approved the project which means you are all set with it and the developer is not going to change anything now, or the town has to dig into its own pocket/resources to address these

concerns. The NCC can appreciate all the new improvements, but from the NCC perspective, we don't care about sidewalks or utilities. The NCC cares about the wetlands and the water. Anything that can be done up front or have as close to as 100% certainty as possible on this project for no problems is important. D. Pickart is not an engineer, but gave several options such as maybe drive sheeting upslope of that wall. Driving the sheeting into one (1) or two (2) feet may make it go away. There is serious under footing there per B. Fitzgerald. Not just the wall; there are large pieces of granite too that has been exposed. The NCC asked if R. Duff can model how much water will back up during various storm events under existing conditions and how the changes to the drainage system will effect it. R. Duff stated that a study was done on the drainage back in 2008-2009. That should be reviewed. As proposed, they will be taking a portion away from the system so it will be reducing stress on the system. He will forward that information to the NCC. There is an 18 inch pipe at the bottom and a four (4) foot by two (2) foot channel higher up. The water is picked up from the south of Marston Road.

The Planning Board has concerns with the wall so a bond should be posted, and a structural engineer should review it, per D. Pickart. The NCC wants to hear what the Planning Board says before the NCC closes their Public Hearing.

Motion made by C. Cummiskey and seconded by S. Gniadek. The NCC voted 5-0-1 by roll call vote of J. Arbuckle – Yes; S. Gniadek – Yes; B. McNamee – Yes; C. Cummiskey – Yes; C. Mawn – Yes and J. Carroll – Abstain to continue the Public Hearing to March 02, 2022 at 7:05PM.

Old/New Business

Review 2021 Annual Report

The NCC reviewed the draft annual report. C. Mawn and S. Gniadek received their Certificates for completing Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissioners (MACC) units and this should be added to the report.

Motion made by B. McNamee and seconded by C. Cummiskey. The NCC voted 6-0 by roll call vote of J. Arbuckle – Yes; S. Gniadek – Yes; B. McNamee – Yes; C. Cummiskey – Yes; C. Mawn – Yes and J. Carroll – Yes to accept the 2021 annual report with the change noted above.

Other

MACC Conference – D. Pickart is not sure how to get the registrations submitted. He doesn't know what each member has taken or what they still need to take. He suggests that if anyone is going to the conference, they pay for it and then submit the payment for reimbursement.

Spotted Lanternfly – S. Gniadek created a video and will provide it to all the members. He wants everyone to spread the word and start looking for this invasive species. DEP will not be addressing the infestation, but another state agency will be.

Open Space Committee – A survey will be coming soon. Everyone should fill out a survey as the Open Space Committee wants to get as many opinions as possible. C. Mawn stated that the Q/R code for the survey should be ready for use within a day or two and she can link it. The Open Space Committee and the NCC will be sharing a table at the Home and Business Expo on Saturday, March 12, 2022. There will be information on the

Conservation Fund too. A simple bullet list can be created of what the conservation funds will be used for and there will be a box if someone would like to make a donation. D. Pickart wants to know if anyone has any ideas on what to include on the table. He has a poster board display that was used at the fireworks event. It has an overview of what the NCC does.

Remote Meetings – The deadline to conduct remote meetings has been extended to July 15, 2022. D. Pickart would like to avoid a hybrid meeting as it is difficult to handle.

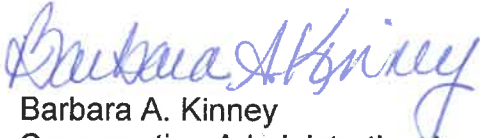
The NCC members present performed administrative tasks (signed Orders, etc.) that were needed.

Adjournment

Motion made by J. Arbuckle and seconded by B. McNamee. The NCC voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting about 8:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

DATE APPROVED:



Barbara A. Kinney
Conservation Administrative Assistant

