



TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
LINDA G. ZYWIEN

Meeting Minutes August 02, 2023

Justin Arbuckle, Justine Carroll, Rich Chiras, and Barbara McNamee were present. Chloe Mawn was late. Cindee Cummiskey was absent. Barbara Kinney, Conservation Commission (NCC) Administrative Assistant and David Pickart, NCC Agent, were present. The NCC has one (1) vacancy.

J. Carroll opened the meeting at 7:03PM.

Citizen's Forum None

(248-XXX) Douglas Road Contractors Yard (Map 3, Parcels 115, 116, 117 & 118)

Proposed three (3) metal buildings, paved storage areas with associated parking and utilities. The applicant is TJJ Development Corp. represented by CMG Environmental and Engineering Services, 67 Hall Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566.

The applicant/engineer has requested a continuance.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 4-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 16, 2023.

(248-XXX) Lot 44 Rebecca Road (The Camelot) (Map 16, Parcel 259)

Proposed construction of a single-family dwelling and associated appurtenances within the buffer zone of a wetland resource(s) area. The applicant is J & F Marinella Development Corp., 26 Tia Place, Franklin, MA 02038.

C. Mawn arrived at 7:05PM.

The applicant/engineer was not present at this meeting, so this Notice of Intent (NOI) has been tabled to the next meeting. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) number is also needed.

(248-XXX) 315 Main Street Contractor Yard (Map 2, Parcel 36)

Proposed construction of a storage building and a separate accessory office building with associated parking utilities, and stormwater infrastructure with a portion of the project within the 100-foot buffer zone and within land subject to flooding. The applicant is KEE Properties, LLC represented by Allen Engineering & Associates, Inc. (AEA), 140 Hartford Avenue East, Hopedale, MA 01747.

The applicant/engineer has requested a continuance.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 16, 2023.

(248-XXX) Linwood Avenue Bridge (Maps 5 and 24)

Proposed repair of the existing steel stringer bridge which has concrete spalling at the bridge beams, voids at the bridge seats, and voids on the northern wingwalls that crosses over Linwood Pond. The proposed repairs include concrete encasement repairs. The applicant is Northbridge Department of Public Works (DPW) represented by Howard Stein Hudson (HSH), 370 Main Street, Suite 972, Worcester, MA 01608.

The applicant/engineer has requested a continuance.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 16, 2023.

(248-XXX) Church Street (Extension) Bridges (Map 28)

Proposed repair to the existing masonry arch bridge over the Blackston River and the existing concrete slab bridge over the Blackstone Canal. The applicant is Northbridge DPW represented by HSH, 370 Main Street, Suite 972, Worcester, MA 01608.

The applicant/engineer has requested a continuance.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 16, 2023.

(248-XXX) Castle Hill Farms Conservation Land (Map 3, Parcel 1 & Map 4, Parcel 33)

Proposed construction/rehabilitation of several trails including the installation of three (3) boardwalks). The applicant is the Northbridge Land/Trail Stewardship Committee, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588.

The DEP file number has not been received. The legal requirements have been satisfied including publication of the legal ad. There will be three (3) crossings on the trails and once the trails are completed, it will be a 2.5-mile loop. The intermittent stream on the eastern part of the property will have a 12-foot-long span with planks and rails because the bank is bedrock. There will be no vegetation to remove, just some woody debris to be moved. The shading of the crossing will have no adverse effect to the stream. The central area of the property will have a crossing over the wet meadow that is stream fed with a plank boardwalk 80 feet long and 35 inches wide and a drop off of four (4) inches. No rails will be needed. The calculations state that there will be 48 square feet of wetland alteration and to compensate for that there will be a hand-dug replication area of +/-80 square feet. Seeds from the area will be collected and covered with straw to vegetate the replication area. The western side of the property has an existing trail with a stream that runs to Riley Pond. The area needs a crossing because the stream can get fairly wide and the land around the stream is swampy/muddy. There will be no direct impacts to the resource area.

The project is time-sensitive because on August 18, 2023 we will have volunteers to transport lumber and build the boardwalks. The property has some stunning glacial erratics, pristine hardwood forests, and a wet meadow.

Residents were concerned with parking, and it was explained that parking is at Riley Pond now, but in the future, there will be an additional parking lot at the end of Castle Hill Road with a kiosk and cameras after the last house. The DPW will need to fix the road. The beavers were discussed, they have been removed and the area is now being monitored. There was a discussion about making the water quality of Riley Pond better. The DPW will remove the box spring, mattress, etc. that was dumped there. The lower pond has an impoundment dam that is an engineering marvel. The dam could be repaired or removed, and something could be done to the pond as well.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 16, 2023.

It was noted that the summer intern did her first solo wetland delineation and D. Pickart checked her work. He had her add one (1) flag.

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC vote 5-0 to approve the purchase of lumber from the Castle Hill Fund to build the crossings.

Old/New Business

Elsa Mason Conservation Area – Capstone Project Presentation

Macey Poitras-Cote (summer intern) gave a presentation on her Capstone Project of the Elsa Mason Conservation Area. She is studying geology and is working on an environmental science degree at Wheaton College. She recently was able to make a trip to Iceland. The Capstone Projects are for those in the Honors Program. She mapped out the existing trails that need to be maintained and there will be an added trail at the Elsa Mason property(s). The idea is to connect the community and schools to this open space. People need to feel comfortable hiking by themselves or with children there. She has flagged the wetlands and the bank and met with Carol Brouwer regarding the history of Northbridge and why Northbridge obtained this parcel(s) of land. This conservation area is near the elementary school and a designated slum and blight area. The school would be involved for nature walks, scavenger hunts, etc. One obstacle is that the property must be kept in its natural state. The trails that are there will be enhanced. There can be no big areas for congregation, but there can be small areas for enrichment around cool features. M. Poitras-Cote will be returning to college on August 18, 2023 but hopes to still do a few things from there. She wanted to meet with S. DeJong regarding the community gardens and find out more information regarding what they have and need and whether vandalism is a problem. Access is from Hill Street through private land, from Maple Street but it needs to be determined whether it is through private or public land, and from Conservation Drive which is public access to the property. She wants to investigate the possibility of the school growing vegetables, etc. for science and learning and the crop could be donated to the food bank. The monument at the Conservation Drive entrance has graffiti that needs to be cleaned up. Some screening may be needed from the apartments at Lake Terrace. There are 100+ bird feeders cut from Clorox bottles in a relatively small area that is not very appealing looking. Access to the trails should be provided for the seniors at the two (2) housing developments that abut the Elsa Mason property(s). The Maple Street access has yard waste dumped at the entrance. Since a sign was installed, it is better, but it is still going on. M. Poitras-Cote wanted to know what would need to be filed for the boardwalk crossing. The NCC discussed whether a NOI or Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) would need to be filed for this project and since it is an intermittent stream the NCC feels that a RDA is fine.

Other

Watson Farm – A complaint was sent to DEP and DEP contacted the NCC regarding work at Watson Farm. D. Pickart met with Vincent Osterman (owner) and some work has been done. Debris has been cleaned up as structures have imploded. The barn will be repaired and most of the work is outside the 100-foot buffer zone, but some clean-up was done in the 50-foot buffer. The site is all stable. V. Osterman trimmed vegetation along the trail/road. D. Pickart's opinion is that nothing needs to be done and noted the work is repair/maintenance. V. Osterman said that his children will decide the future use of the property. He will research placing some Conservation Restrictions on some of his land in town. D. Pickart found a violation while he was on this site on the abutting property that has a sawmill/tree clearing company. They are being too aggressive with storing lots of gravel and the staging areas are too close to the resource areas. D. Pickart will contact the owner concerning this violation and this violation was not part of the complaint to DEP.

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

Adjournment

Motion made by R. Chiras and seconded by J. Arbuckle. The NCC voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at about 8:18PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara A. Kinney
Conservation Administrative Assistant

DATE APPROVED:

December 29, 2023

August 02, 2023

CONSERVATION MAIL LIST

FROM	DATE	SUBJECT
Conservation Agent	07/31/2023	Memo NOI Review for Church St Bridges
Conservation Agent	07/31/2023	Memo NOI Review for Linwood Avenue Bridge

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT MEETING

- Elsa Whittin Mason Conservation Land Document by Macey Poitras Cote