



Town of Wales Conservation Commission

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Virtual Meeting

Minutes

January 21, 2021

Members Present: Norma Thompson (Clerk / Chair), Hugh Brower (Member), Robert Herbert (Member)

Presenters/Public: Danelle Laflower, James Martin, Sam Dionne, Jennifer Ohop, Liz/Doug Dickenson, Dave (no last name), Steve Herzog (Wood Engineering), Drew Vardakis, Sam Robinson (Robinson Tree Service).

6:00 pm Public Meeting opened
Public Hearing re-opened on 39/41 Stafford Drive

39 and 41 Stafford Drive, Wales MA. Review of RDA for Tree cutting on 39 and 41 Stafford Drive. Public hearing was continued from last month in order to get some additional information for the RDA forms. Sam Robinson present to represent the two applicants. Signatures for the applications as well as other info was provided. The public hearing was closed on each application. The Commission voted to allow the tree cutting to proceed.

A negative determination (Reason 2) was made for 39 Stafford RD with no conditions.

A negative determination (Reason 3) was made for 41 Stafford RD.

A condition was imposed to not bring and heavy equipment near the shoreline. Clean up of limbs and debris will be conducted and all removed from property. Robert Herbert suggested that applicants consider planting some additional trees to replace the ones that are removed.

Public hearing on NOI for 40 Sizer Drive was reopened.

It was noted that the necessary files and plans to support the NOI were not received by the Commission until 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting which did not allow the commission and public time to review the plans. Commission had stated before and requires that all plans and drawings must be received at least 2 weeks prior to the Public Hearing date.

Hugh Brower asked that Commission allow the applicant to present the materials that were submitted but that because of the late receipt no determination could be made. The Commission is also looking for approval from owners to conduct a site visit on the

property. Commission has permission that is several years old and wants to renew that written permission. Steven Herzog (Wood Engineering) indicated that he believed that an unaccompanied visit was not proper but would be willing to go with the Commission. He and Hugh will coordinate a time for a hosted visit next week.

Steve Herzog provided a summary of the addendum letter that provided SunPin responses to the questions and comments made by Mark Stinson and Mass DEP in response to the original submission of the NOI. The new submission includes a letter with responses to DEP questions, updated project drawings, shade analysis and updated storm water plans.

Commission Questions: Norma Thompson (NT) Hugh Brower (HB) Robert Herbert (RH) Doug Dickenson (DD) Danelle LaFlower(DL)

(NT) Was there logging in the area?? Mr. Herzog indicated that there is evidence of logging (thinning not clear-cut) in the area though it is not recent.

(NT) The commission is aware that the access RD is believed to be a Town Road even though there is a gate across it. --- Sunpin believes that the Town RD ends at the current property gate- But they will research this further.

(HB) Is the location of the Stream crossing changing? --The location of the stream crossing has not changed.

(RH) Have any changes been made it the boundary markings of the wetlands? --No changes have been made.

(HB) How techniques were used or would be used in this area to determine wetlands? Primarily vegetation but some soil analysis would be used also.

(HB) how many mature trees would need to be cut down in the buffer zone? – May be 10-20 % of the trees might need to be removed according to the plans. This should be looked at during a site visit.

(HB) What would be the financial impact to use alternate access route not involving a stream crossing? --This would be hard to determine and also involves getting permission/easement from a different landowner.

(HB) What are impacts of using an open span bridge vs the culvert? --The bridge would be significant more expensive with small benefit to the Resource area. The culvert needs to put in footings on the bank and these could be done in dry times to minimize the impact.

(HB) How are you going to accomplish the wetlands replication? ---Excavate the area and replace with soil with organic soil. Steps are in the plans.

Public Comments: Steven was asked to answer public questions directly. Elizabeth Dickenson (ED), Danielle Laflower (DL)

(ED) She feels that the meeting is waste since the Addendum and plans were not available for Public scrutiny. She did not have any time for her experts to look at anything. She urged the commission to continue the meeting until suitable time was available to examine the plans.

(ED) The current wetland delineation does not take into account that the brook being crossed rook is part of the Cold-Water Fisheries. It is not an intermittent stream.

(ED) Did Sunpin take into account the soil had acid parent materials and have any deep hole test pits been dug? -- The previous delineation was reviewed, and it is based on soils, vegetation and hydrology. He does not believe the parent materials have much bearing on the determination. Materials can become hydric by being subjected to long periods of anaerobic conditions.

(ED) She believes that Sizer drive as a public road continues past the location of the houses.

(DL) She is a member of the Wales Planning Board and reviewed Town Maps etc. and she states that Sizer Drive does continue past the current gate and goes past the two buildings. --The retention basin has been moved from location in original plans- it no longer is in the middle of the access road. Retention Basin 2

(DL) How wide is the buffer area from the Fence line to the tree line? -- It varies throughout the area-but average maybe 50 feet,

(DD) Needs to see large copies of the plans, so that he can see what is being discussed.

(HB) The Commission will post all of the Documents on the Conservation Commission Web site.

Public Comments for the meeting today closed.

(HB) We can not take any decision tonight. The new submission is a significant change to the NOI, and the Commission should hire an outside firm to conduct a Peer Review. Motion made and seconded— Approved 3 votes to 0.

(ED) Asked if the Public could go on site visit? –Not at this time.

(HB) The applicant and landowners will have to respond to this request.

Public Hearing on Sizer Drive to be continued until 18 February.

The commission then discussed the need to adopt electronic signatures for official documents, to avoid the need for all commissioners to come to Town Hall just to sign the paperwork. The clerk has consulted with DEP about the proper procedures for handling approvals this way. This process is allowed under state law (M.G.L. c110G). Hugh Brower as the agent will apply the electronic signatures to approved documents.

Motion made by Hugh Brower and seconded to allow either electronic or wet ink signatures to be used on commission documents as specified under state law. Motion was approved by a unanimous vote of all 3 commissioners.

Next regular meeting Feb 18, 2021, virtual at 6 PM. Closed meeting at 7 :45 PM

