



TOWN OF PELHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Pelham, Massachusetts

Minutes for June 24, 2021

Present in person: David Gross, Janice Gifford, Dana MacDonald, Tilman Lukas

Present via Zoom: Richard Seelig

Also present in person: Nathaniel Bruursema

Also present via Zoom: Jeff Eiseman (Pelham Zoning Board of Appeals), Martin Silberberg

The meeting was held in person at the Rhodes building and simultaneously online via Zoom. The link to the Zoom meeting was published as part of the regular Commission agenda. The meeting was held under guidelines from the Attorney General and the Governor.

The meeting was brought to order at 7:02 pm.

Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent (NOI) Submitted by Home City Development, Inc.

The public hearing was continued from a previous meeting. Chair MacDonald noted that Commissioner Lukas has recused himself from the discussion. This Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent submitted by Home City Development, Inc. for a Riverfront Re-development project from an existing commercial building and single-family home to affordable housing units located at 18 to 22 Amherst Road (Map 3 Parcel 30 and 32) has DEP File #258-0096.

It was moved to continue the public hearing for this NOI until the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) finalizes its Orders of Conditions (OoCs). Second. Approved 4-0-1 (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – abstain, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

Subsequent to the vote, Jeff Eiseman, Chair of the ZBA, noted that the ZBA intends to include in its OoC the regulation of herbicides and pesticides within 100 feet of wetlands and the Chair MacDonald replied that the Commission was intending to put similar conditions into the operations and maintenance (O&M) plan for the project. He noted that fertilizers and de-icing agents also should be addressed in the O&M plan. He said that the Commission recognizes that pesticide use may be necessary inside the building. He pointed out that a copy of the lighting plan should be sent to Todd Richards at Fisheries and Wildlife for their input. Chair Eiseman said that the lighting plan is not yet finalized, and that it may be ready after the next ZBA meeting on Tuesday, June 29.

Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent (NOI) submitted by Hank Brakeley c/o SWCA Environmental Consultants for a Driveway/Wetland Crossing for a Single-Family Home (Map 8 Parcel 29.A)

The hearing was continued from a previous meeting. Commissioner Seelig noted that he has recused himself. Chair MacDonald reported that he received a formal request via email from Val Miller that the Commission continue the hearing to the July 8 Commission meeting.

It was moved to continue the public hearing to July 8. Second. Approved 4-0-1 (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – abstain).

Commissioner Lukas noted that the property was purchased by Mr. Brakeley as per the Daily Hampshire Gazette. Commissioner Seelig said that he noticed a well drilling sign along the road abutting the property. Chair MacDonald said that there has not yet been a filing for a house or a well and that he would contact the applicant to confirm that no work on the property has commenced.

Public Meeting for a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) at 75 Arnold Road

The Public Meeting for the RDA submitted by Lynda and Mike Grybko for tree clearing in the 100-foot Buffer Zone located at 75 Arnold Road was continued from a previous meeting. Chair MacDonald said that the mowing plan for the field behind the house is complete and that Agent Borenstein has a copy of it. He summarized the plan. He suggested that the Commission continue the Public Meeting to a subsequent Commission meeting in order that that the Grybkos can provide input on the mowing plan before the Commission finalizes it.

It was moved to continue the Public Meeting for the RDA to July 8. Second. Approved 5-0 (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

Public Meeting for a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) Submitted by Nathaniel Bruursema at 57 South Valley Road

The RDA is for vegetation management on an existing leach field along with driveway improvements in the 100-foot Buffer Zone located at 57 South Valley Road. The Commission reviewed the RDA document as submitted.

Chair MacDonald opened the public meeting by reading the boilerplate statement. He noted that the fee of \$50 for the RDA submission has been received. He asked the applicant to describe the scope of work.

Mr. Bruursema said that the aim is to keep the septic system area managed in order to keep tree roots out of it to improve its functional lifetime. Chair MacDonald noted that the original septic replacement installation was within the buffer zone. He reviewed the essentials of the proposed work, which includes reseeding grass over the septic field once it is cleared of tree roots, creating a driveway turnaround, and installing a culvert across the drive with trap rock for a level spreader on the outlet to produce sheet flow. He noted that the shed location on the plan may be too close to the property line and suggested that the applicant meet with the Zoning Board of Appeals about this point. He said that he would like to move the proposed shed location outside of the buffer zone. He said that any construction should start after end of May and end before the beginning of November. To the extent possible, the applicant should retain the natural vegetation downhill from the driveway. He pointed out that maintaining the septic field as cleared and grassed will increase its lifetime and will reduce nutrient outflow to the resource area. Commissioner Lukas said that any change in plans that

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brings the work area closer to the wetland resource area should be brought back before the Commission prior to the commencement of any work.

The Commission discussed the Orders of Conditions (OoC) for the project:

1. Construction shall be done during dry season (June 1-November 1).
2. The new driveway turnaround shall be stabilized with a rock erosion embankment and the foot of the embankment shall be no less than 14 feet from the property line.
3. New driveway construction will be of permeable materials.
4. The culvert should be as large as practicable – 10-12 inches diameter would be ideal.
5. The downgradient opening of the culvert should be directed into a V-shaped spreader made of trap rock, approximately three times the width of the culvert at its terminus.
6. All cut should be repurposed as fill under the new turnaround.
7. The Commission expects regular mowing and maintenance of the septic field.
8. The Commission expects that no pesticides, herbicides or synthetic fertilizers will be used within in the vicinity of or in the buffer zone.

It was moved that the Commission issue on WPA Form 3 a negative 3 determination that the work will be performed within the wetland buffer but that the work will not adversely affect the resource area subject to the set of Orders of Conditions above. Second Approved 5-0. (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

Discussion of the Upcoming Town-wide Meetings Regarding Dog Walking on Town Property

Chair MacDonald said that Kestrel Trust will produce a large format GIS map of Town Lands that the Commission can use at the two meetings. He suggested that in-person attendees make comments on sticky notes of problems that they have had or positive things that they have to say about these areas. The Commission will stick these notes on the map to help identify where problems exist. Given that information, comments from the audience can be taken and discussion of any necessary enforcement and be had. Commissioner Gross noted that he can set up the audio-visual Zoom meeting infrastructure for both upcoming meetings.

Charlie Thompson Discussion of Forestry Practices

Chair MacDonald noted that Mr. Thompson could not attend the meeting.

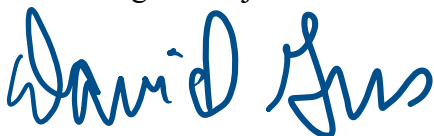
Future In-person Meetings

There was discussion about resuming fully in-person meetings in July.

Minutes from June 10, 2021

It was moved to approve the draft minutes for the June 10, 2021 meeting. Second. Approved 5-0 (Gifford – yes, Gross – yes, Lukas – yes, MacDonald – yes, Seelig – yes).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.



Respectfully submitted by David Gross