

HAMILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 11, 2018
Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall

Members Present: Virginia Cookson, Richard Luongo (Chairman), Tom Myers, and George Tarr.

Coordinator: Jim Hankin

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with a quorum established.

Certificate of Compliance. Hamilton Landfill Capping.

Virginia Cookson moved that the Commission continue the Certificate of Compliance for the Hamilton Landfill until the August 15, 2018 meeting.

Tom Myers seconded.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Request for Determination 26 Rock Maple Avenue. In-ground pool, patio, and fence.

Dennis and Kelly Cunningham, the property owns and applicants for the project were present.

Jim Hankin met Kelly Cunningham at the site a few days prior to the meeting to review the project area. He reported that the house was constructed in the early 90's and that the construction project created a slope to the wetlands. The site plan for the house construction showed the 1992 wetland lines. Mr Hankin confirmed that these lines appear to be accurate. The RDA plan shows the pool fence, patio, sauna and pool, are all more than 50' from the wetlands. Mr. Hankin confirmed this to be the case from his site visit. Mr. Hankin distributed photos of the site.

Lawn will be converted to the recreational area. An erosion control barrier can be placed at the end of the lawn as sufficient protection for the resource area. Mr. Hankin would inspect the site and barrier before work began. Soil from the pool excavation would be removed from the site.

Tom Myers made motion to issue a negative determination at 26 Rock Maple Ave. on the condition that an erosion control barrier be installed prior to the start of work.

Virginia Cookson seconded.

Virginia Cookson noted that the erosion control barrier should be shown on the plan. Jim Hankin said he would add it to the plan.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Notice of Intent 408 Bridge St. Ecological restoration project.

Richard Luongo opened the public hearing. Staff from DeRosa Environmental represented Jeremy and Jessica Styles. The project included invasive species removal, native species planting, and a pond management plan.

Evin Guvendiren and Abby Manzi of DeRosa Environment Consulting presented the Ecological Restoration project. Ms. Guvendiren noted the types of invasive species present which will be removed as described in the NOI narrative. After invasive species removal, the proposal is to plant native species in four different areas, A-D. Types of vegetation to be planted and their locations within these areas are all described in the NOI and plans filed with it. Photos were provided.

The pond management plan included hydro-raking to remove algae, which had clogged the outlet. A trash rack would be installed to allow water to flow but not trash. Six diffusers, to help with aeration, would be installed in the pond and herbicides might be used in the future if necessary. The open field would become forested wetlands. Invasive plants would be managed by monitoring the site for two to three years until the native plants established themselves.

Jim Hankin noted that the local bylaw permit was only valid for one year. Since monitoring of the project area is proposed to continue past the one year mark the Commission should consider issuing a bylaw permit to run concurrently with the state Order of Conditions which is three years.

Jim Hankin noted that a file number had not been provided and that DEP may have comments as the proposal was for a significant restoration in the resource. The project would need to be continued until the meeting of July 25, 2018, which would allow for the applicants to respond to any comments. If DEP did not make any comments, the applicants did not need to appear on July 25. Evin Guvendiren from DeRosa Environmental gave permission to continue the hearing.

George Tarr commented that if the Notice of Intent was to remove specific species, what might occur if the applicant found other species on site, such as greenbrier, which had not been listed on their proposal. Jim Hankin responded that the applicant would need to return to the Commission and request a minor modification of the Order and permit.

Virginia Cookson moved to continue the public hearing for the Notice of Intent until the next meeting July 25, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Memorial Room.

Seconded by George Tarr.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Discussion Items.

Responding to complaints about land use at Donovan Field.

Virginia Cookson wished to discuss a topic dealt with by the Commission previously this year. When the Donovan Fields parcel was conveyed to the Town, the Hamilton –Wenham Recreation Department was given authority over the athletic playing fields located there. The Commission was given authority over other areas used as “passive recreation” such as the existing trails for hiking, biking and equestrians. Heavy rain earlier this year made a mess of the trails and some of the passive users spilled onto the playing fields which caused some damage. After this happened, the Recreation Department asked for the Commission’s support for a sign to be installed asking the trail users to stay off the playing fields. The Commission authorized the Coordinator to write a letter to the Recreation Department supporting the sign which was done. Since the Commission has authority over the trails, Ms. Cookson suggested developing a formal policy concerning the use of the trails. She suggested that part of such a policy could be a statement that users not create new trails. Discussion ensued regarding why the users diverted off the trails onto the fields, including the condition of the trails after heavy rains. It was decided that the Commission place the trail on the agenda for the September site walk and then discuss their site walk findings at the meeting on September 12.

Protection of Certified Vernal pools in town.

Virginia Cookson stated that she had certified three pools on Chebacco Road, two of which were along the paved portion of the road and one of which was along the unpaved area. Ms. Cookson remarked that the Town needed to grade the road and that as a result of this type of work over time the road had widened. The first vernal pool, opposite Round Pond, by Villa Road had not been affected by Town road maintenance. The second one is located at the base of the hill, past the State boat ramp, and before the dirt portion of the road begins. The nearby house had been pushing material onto the road, which was then pushed back by DPW road work to clog the site. The third vernal pool is a triangular pond located at the Manchester Town line near the gravel driveway for the Manchester Water Treatment Plant. Ms. Cookson recalled the distance between the edge of the dirt road and the closest point of the vernal pool was previously between 10’ to 16’ and was currently 18”. Ms. Cookson said that these resource areas are slowly filled as water and debris are washed into them.

Ms. Cookson commented that the Commission should be protecting vernal pools as it was written into the Bylaw Regulations. Ms. Cookson said she wished the Commission would look at what could be done to protect them given the need for road maintenance in the area. Ms. Cookson suggested looking into what other towns were doing. Jim Hankin suggested a barrier such as a berm be installed to hold back the DPW maintenance material. Ms. Cookson said a granite curb would stop amphibians from being able to cross the road but an asphalt one would work. The Commission would schedule a site walk with the DPW to determine a solution.

Stormwater Management Plans in or accompany Orders of Conditions.

Topic moved to the Commission's next meeting.

Require Notice of Intent submissions to only include what is in our jurisdiction.

Topic moved to the Commission's next meeting.

Coordinator's Report.

Jim Hankin displayed a preliminary survey plan for the Central Avenue parcel, which showed lots 84 and 85 from Map 47. The preliminary plan showed the area of Town ownership to be substantially less than originally thought. Peter Kane would contact Town Counsel to determine what to do next.

The Land Management Committee would be a topic for discussion on of the Commission at their July 25 meeting.

Jim Hankin noted that FEMA had undertaken revision of the flood plain maps and were focusing on only inland mapping. The maps will now include base elevations for the Miles River, which had never been done in the past. Public comment would be requested in months to come, but Town officials were allowed to comment currently.

Minutes

Virginia Cookson made motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2018.

Tom Myers seconded.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

George Tarr reported on the 9.1 acres at the Patton site and noted the dozens of leopard frogs on the site.

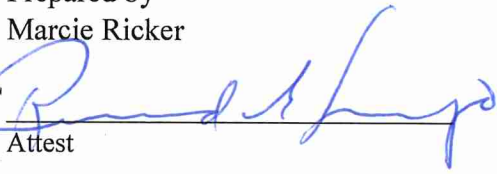
Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Virginia Cookson.

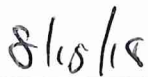
Seconded by Tom Myers.

Vote: Unanimous to adjourn at 8:00 pm.

Prepared by
Marcie Ricker



Attest



Date