

Topsfield Conservation Commission

Minutes of August 10, 2011

Topsfield Library Meeting Room

Present: Commissioners George Hall, Chair, Holger Luther, Vice-Chair, Jim MacDougall, Mark Erickson, and Cheryl Jolley, and Lisa-Marie Cashman, Minutes Secretary

Absent: Commissioner Jennie Merrill and Lana Spillman, Administrator

Also Present: Larry Beals, Greg St. Louis, Alan Berry, Lucille and George Annis

Note: These minutes were written from the audio recording.

Hall called the meeting to order with a quorum present at ~7:00 p.m.

HEARING:

Continuation NoI 307-0676: 20 Hickory Lane, (Map 50, Lot 21), Annis/Beals Associates Larry Beals and Greg St. Louis represented the owners, Lucille and George Annis. The project is proposed construction of a new house on a newly created lot (2006), with activities including removal of trees and grading for the septic system in the Buffer Zone. St. Louis explained the revised plan; they have supplemented the proposed shrub layer with grey dogwood, red maple, and bayberry. A New England Conservation Seed Mix is to be hand-planted among the shrubs. In the BZ they are proposing to remove a couple of beech trees along the northern side of the development area as well as some trees that are dead. He located the trees to be saved and described the plantings proposed as mitigation.

Luther moved to close the hearing. MacDougall seconded the motion which passed with a unanimous vote.

Luther discussed the need for a finding relative to the Bylaw Regulations, R:10-04. Hall discussed a need to revise the Regulations. He does not think the project meets the takings standard in the Regulations and has questions about the adequacy of the mitigation proposed for this project. Referring to a relevant Trustees of Reservations document (authored by Russ Hopping) he interpreted that the applicable resource area would be a forested stream and the important feature to preserve would be the tree canopy. One might conclude that the proposal adequately mitigates because it replaces the trees one for one. MacDougall agreed that the Resource Area is the Intermittent Stream. He feels that the plan is a nice landscape plan and would be a reminder that there is very nice habitat beyond that zone.

Luther moved that the proposed plan before the TCC, Plan to Accompany the NOI for a 5-bedroom dwelling at 20 Hickory Lane revised through August 10, 2011, adequately mitigates the impact to the portion of the BZ that is being altered by the plan, and, therefore, to approve the proposed project and issue an Order of Conditions. MacDougall seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

In response to Erickson's question about the tree wells, St. Louis explained that the tree wells will be filled with field stones obtained onsite, about three feet off the trunks, with slopes sides. MacDougall commented that he is impressed by this property in that it has some of the nicest wildlife habitat in the Town and is not very impacted by invasive plants. Any onsite invasives could be eliminated in short order; it is very manageable at this point.

Special Conditions were discussed:

1. Existing markers from the original subdivision are to be relocated to the limit of work.
2. The tree wells are to be maintained to prevent them from filling up and to keep the trees from being girdled, e.g. by regularly removing leaves and fill.
3. The owners are encouraged to remove invasives on the property per the protocols provided by the TCC office.
4. Any trees or shrubs that die within two years of being planted are to be replaced with similar plants.

Luther moved to add those four Special Conditions. The motion was seconded and passed with a unanimous vote.

REQUEST:

RDNI 2011-09: 250 Perkins Row, (Map 35, Lot 4), Krom

Luther showed photos from his site visit and discussed the project. The proposal is to dig a hole to replace a valve that is deteriorated and accumulated calcium carbonate deposits at the Perkins Row Town well field. The hole will be filled and the area above reseeded. A condition will be that any soil dug and stored for more than 24 hours is to be covered with a tarp. The area is Buffer Zone and Riverfront Area of Mile Brook.

Luther moved to issue a Determination of Negligible Impact letter. The motion was seconded and passed with a unanimous vote.

OTHER:

English Commons building design change

Alan Berry discussed that the Planning Board had requested him to bring the proposed modifications to the building design at 12 Boston Street/English Commons to the TCC. Three-unit buildings will be changed to two-unit buildings in the same locations. There would be a minor modification to the location of a 100-year overflow of a rain garden. The TCC reviewed the plan and found the modifications to be of no consequence and, therefore, no action is needed by the TCC.

At ~ 8:30 p.m. Luther moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by MacDougall and passed with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Lana Spillman
Conservation Administrator

Accepted at the TCC meeting on February 8, 2012

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.