

TOWN OF FITZWILLIAM

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, May 20, 2019
7:00 PM

Members Present: Paul Kotila, Susan Silverman, Kevin Woolley, Dorothy Zug

Members Absent: Hiel Lindquist, Cheryl Norskey

Mr. Kotila called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

PRIMARY:

Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 15, 2019 and April 25, 2019:

Ms. Zug made a motion to approve the April 15, 2019 minutes. Ms. Silverman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Ms. Zug made a motion to approve the April 25, 2019 minutes. Ms. Silverman seconded. Approved unanimously.

Meet with Richard Ketcham

- Construction Permit – Map 10, Lot 16 – Addition doesn't meet the 75 foot wetlands setback:

Ms. White reported that she received a call from Richard Ketcham asking to meet with the Conservation Commission as requested by the Planning Board. Mr. Ketcham's addition doesn't meet the 75 foot wetland's setback. Ms. White noted that Mr. Ketcham would be meeting with the Planning Board again on June 4, 2019 for a conditional use approval.

Ms. White noted that the Conservation Commission needed to comment on Mr. Ketcham's addition.

Mr. Ketcham shared the location of his property and the topical nature of the land. He wanted to add an addition at the west end of the house but the setback was 63 feet. Mr. Kotila asked if it was just the brook. Mr. Ketcham showed Commission members the location of the existing dwelling and the brook. Ms. Silverman asked about the roof. Mr. Ketcham shared it would shed water away from the brook. Commission members reviewed the documents that Mr. Ketcham had bought in. Mr. Kotila asked for clarification of the location of the existing dwelling and the location of the addition. Ms. Zug asked if water on the existing dwelling drained away from the brook. Mr. Ketcham shared that the roof shed water away from the brook and there was a small section that shed water towards the brook. It was determined that Mr. Ketcham's roof was a hip roof. Mr. Kotila discussed what they were looking at with the run off from the roof. Mr. Kotila asked about drainage. Mr. Ketcham shared that there was a perimeter drain which would be pitched towards the westerly side of the house. Ms. Zug shared that they wanted to keep as much water drainage away from the brook. Ms. Zug asked about the drain. Mr. Ketcham stated it would be a curtain drain around the addition.

Mr. Kotila asked about the 25 square foot porch. Mr. Ketcham shared that it was an entry porch on the addition. Ms. Zug asked if the deck would have a roof. Ms. Silverman asked if any trees would be removed. Mr. Ketcham stated that he wouldn't have to remove any but noted that he had taken one tree down last year. Mr. Ketcham shared that he tried to minimize the impact as much as possible.

Mr. Kotila stated that the addition added about 500 square feet of impermeable surface within 75 feet. It was over a 50% increase (estimate) in impermeable surface. Ms. Silverman asked about what type of mitigation could be done to help. Mr. Kotila shared if all of the draining and perimeter drains are properly installed, Mr. Kotila couldn't think of anything that could improve it. Reorienting the roof wouldn't add anything to that either. Ms. Silverman noted that plants could be added that would take up water. Mr. Kotila noted if trying to intercept the water before going into the brook, a rain garden wouldn't make that much difference. Mr. Kotila stated it was a judgement call and given the direction of the flow, if the construction was done properly as planned there's not much difference. Mr. Kotila stated it would make sense to add gutters to the whole dwelling, as there were no gutters on the existing dwelling.

Mr. Kotila noted the Commission's choice for comment and asked for their thoughts. It was noted that at a minimum there needed to be a comment regarding the roof drainage. The existing dwelling was 900+ square feet. Ms. Zug shared as long as they are careful with the perimeter drain and noted that gutters needed to be added to the existing dwelling. It was noted that wetlands would be affected and the Commission recommended the installation of gutters on the new and old structure to drain to the West, including perimeter drains going to the West.

Mr. Ketcham questioned the wetlands being affected. Commission members explained the language that they were adding in their comments was to state that: if the perimeter drain works accurately. Commission members agreed and Mr. Ketcham understood.

Meet with Beth Vanney

- Discuss Invasive Bittersweet Meeting with Doug Cygan, State Invasive Species Coordinator:

Ms. Zug mentioned there was a vacancy on the Commission. Ms. Vanney stated that she was interested. Ms. Silverman explained the appointment process. Ms. Vanney gave the Commission a handout listing the work she has completed to date and the tasks to be done. Mr. Kotila stated that he would give the Selectmen a recommendation for Ms. Vanney's appointment to the Commission. Discussion was held on what she had discovered.

Ms. Vanney shared there were two meetings set up with Mr. Cygan for June 19th at 7 p.m. Ms. Vanney would be meeting with Mr. Cygan prior to 7 p.m. Ms. Vanney explained what she would discuss with Mr. Cygan. Ms. Vanney thought it would be great if Commission members could attend. The meeting would begin at 5 p.m. at the Library. Ms. Vanney discussed having a public demonstration site. Mr. Cygan's meeting would be a general town discussion about invasive species. Mr. Woolley and Ms. Zug would attend the meeting at 5 p.m. This meeting would also include a site walk on Roger Keilig's property and the stable property. Ms. Vanney thought that the stable site would be a good demonstration site. At first she thought maybe the Transfer Station would be a good space but once she identified the stable property, she thought it would be a better demonstration site.

Ms. Vanney shared that she has a mailing list of property owners and she would try to contact the owner. Ms. Silverman suggested that she identify another site. Ms. Vanney shared that she had

met with the Garden Club. They were more comfortable with painting herbicide on cut stumps than herbicide spraying. Ms. Vanney would be working on clearing Ellie Luopa's property.

Ms. Vanney mentioned putting up lawn signs for the properties that they have cleared of bittersweet. She asked if the Commission was interested in purchasing the signs. Ms. Vanney shared that there were 80 properties and the cost was about \$10 per sign. Ms. Vanney discussed what would be put on the signs. Mr. Kotila mentioned adding contact information to the signs.

Ms. Zug made a motion to authorize the expenditure of \$100 for lawn signs for the bittersweet project. Mr. Kotila seconded. Approved unanimously. Ms. Silverman mentioned having Savron Printing do the signs.

Ms. Vanney thanked Commission members and shared that she would have a table at the Garden Club Plant Sale on Saturday.

Ms. Zug asked Ms. Vanney to come to the Commission if she needed to purchase additional items. Ms. Vanney handed out her business card.

Ms. Vanney shared that she met with John Fitzwilliam and they walked his property. She would help clear his property.

Ms. Vanney discussed getting the word out in the community. Ms. Silverman asked how she would be disposing of the cuttings. Ms. Vanney shared that it was being brought to the Transfer Station, put in the brush pile and would be burned. Discussion was held on putting the cuttings in the compactor which in turn was incinerated. Ms. Vanney shared that she needed to talk with Gene Cuomo about burning. Ms. Silverman asked why Ms. Vanney wasn't putting the cuttings in the compactor. Discussion continued on burning, compacting and the cost. Ms. Vanney noted that Mr. Fitzwilliam thought she should talk with Carol Beckwith of the Common Committee. Ms. Vanney shared that she met with Ms. Beckwith but it doesn't belong on the Common Committee. Ms. Beckwith had a lot of ideas. Ms. Vanney was going to talk with the Library Trustees. Ms. Vanney mentioned that she had talked with Debbie Favreau and Sheryl White. Ms. Favreau would ask the Selectmen for permission to begin clearing bittersweet around the fishing pond. Ms. Silverman asked how Ms. Vanney was going to dispose of the cuttings. Ms. Vanney discussed tree and brush infestation and the quantity of cuttings.

Ms. Vanney explained the cutting process. Ms. Silverman suggested that Ms. Vanney write a letter to the Selectmen to explain the bittersweet problem.

Ms. Vanney shared that the monthly talking point was the way to go. Mr. Kotila shared with Ms. Vanney that she was doing fine. Ms. Vanney offered to assist Commission members in clearing their property. Ms. Zug shared that she had some help taking care of the bittersweet on her property. Ms. Vanney was excited.

Commission members thanked Ms. Vanney for meeting with them.

Trails Updates & Design: Update on Metzger Trail Walk on May 4th – Mr. Kotila and Mr. Woolley did the walk which took approximately 3 ½ hours. They went over most of the trail. Mr. Kotila noted it was flagged and it could be followed the way it was. Mr. Kotila explained that they started at 119 and

did the loop and went down almost to Turner Road. Mr. Kotila noted he understood the Olson's concern. Excavators could be heard but Mr. Kotila couldn't see much of their house. Ms. Zug asked what they thought of the trail. Mr. Kotila shared that he agreed that an accessible trail would be a challenge. It was interesting and goes by Rhododendron. Most of the wet area was avoided. Mr. Kotila noted that this past winter there were a lot of deer. Mr. Kotila shared that in one area of the trail where it turned up towards Turner Road that underneath the leaves there was broken rock and it would be difficult to clear. Mr. Kotila shared that it seemed pretty well flagged out. Ms. Silverman shared that it would hold up to a lot of traffic. Mr. Kotila noted that clearing it would be rugged. Mr. Woolley shared that it would be nice to clear. Mr. Kotila mentioned that there wasn't any view. Ms. Silverman asked about the next step. Mr. Kotila shared that they needed to decide. Mr. Kotila shared that part of it was how sophisticated we wanted to get. Mr. Kotila mentioned putting up signs and suggested brushing on paint as it would last longer. It was noted that there were some vernal pools. Mr. Kotila shared that Lew Shelley was willing to work with the Commission.

Updating Ordinances: Review Shoreland Protection Overlay District – Draft

Mr. Kotila asked if anyone had reviewed. Mr. Kotila shared that it was already out of date and that he had made a lot of notes. Ms. Silverman shared that if it wasn't in its final form it was difficult to review. Mr. Kotila shared that he had a lot of questions. Ms. Silverman suggested that maybe there should be a joint meeting.

Ms. Silverman shared that the Planning Board wanted Rick van de Poll to review the ordinance. Ms. White would follow-up with Laurie Hayward to find out their process. Ms. Silverman asked if they were going to have consultants involved then the Commission wouldn't want to meet with the Planning Board too early. Commission members were willing to meet with the Planning Board. Ms. Silverman shared that last year the State had altered their version of shorelands protection and has made it less protective. Ms. White would follow-up with the Commission.

Ms. Silverman mentioned Senate Bill 306-FN needed to be looked at. The bill was to fund the formation of a three member board that would review any housing development that was sent to any Planning Board or ZBA. If the applicant didn't like the decision made, it could be brought to this three member board to have the decision overturned. Mr. Woolley mentioned that if the applicant disagreed with the decision it could be taken to Superior Court. Ms. Silverman stated she doesn't know how far it would get. She shared that some people think there is a housing crisis which may be driving it. Mr. Woolley asked who the sponsors were. Ms. White would send a link to the bill to Commission members for their review.

Correspondence: 2019 Lakes Congress Conference Information – May 30 & 31

OTHER BUSINESS:

ON-GOING BUSINESS:

Budget Report: Expenses as of May 15, 2019

Dog Waste Cleanup Bags: No Report

Meadowood Task Force Update: Ms. Zug shared that the Task Force met with the Selectmen and they agreed to apply to be nominated to the Brownsfield process through SWRPC. Four Task Force

members went to meet with the SWRPC Committee and the nomination was approved. The Task Force also wanted support from the Board of Selectmen in Troy, as some of the Meadowood property was located in Troy. The Task Force met with the Selectmen in Troy and they gave their support. Ms. Zug noted a general town-wide Brownsfield meeting and the agency that helps Towns through the process would be in Keene and could do a meeting for Fitzwilliam on June 14th. Ms. Zug mentioned that she did an article for the Fitzwilliam Newsletter on how the process worked and the funding. The First Phase has been approved, which is an investigation of all studies that have been done. Ms. Zug shared that she, Winston Wright, Ed Goodell and JB Mack have been attending the meetings. Ms. Zug brought this to the Commission's attention because she wanted to know if it was worthwhile saving the pond as it impacts the whole area. Ms. Zug asked Commission members for their opinions.

Mr. Kotila asked if she wanted the Town to take over the dam. Ms. Zug shared the history of the dam. Ms. Zug doesn't think there was contamination around the dam. She noted it was a separate lot and the Town could take it separately. Ms. Zug wanted to know if it was worth pursuing. Mr. Kotila shared that he never sees anyone use the pond. Ms. Zug mentioned that people fish. Mr. Woolley mentioned the liability of a dam. Mr. Kotila felt the dam would be what the Town would consider a liability. Mr. Kotila mentioned that the pond was shallow – only 3-8 feet deep. Commission members shared that it wasn't aesthetically pleasing. Discussion continued on already having water access for recreational activities in town, the property having a lot of different aspects, people not wanting to swim in the pond, needing to be cleaned up first and the contamination issue. Ms. Zug shared that there were three committees and the Dam Committee was working on it. She also shared that the Meadowood Board did have a study done.

Mr. Woolley asked if his report to the Recreation Committee should be put on the record. Ms. Zug shared that the snowmobile club was interested in using a shed to store their equipment and signs. They were also concerned about contamination. Mr. Kotila asked about accepting Mr. Woolley's report and mentioned that the Commission should review it again. Mr. Kotila asked if it was recorded in the minutes. Mr. Kotila shared that in the past they haven't accepted reports unless it was from a consultant. Mr. Kotila noted that it doesn't mean they can't summarize it later on. Mr. Kotila shared that Mr. Woolley and Ms. Zug's reports are adequate.

Monadnock Advisory Committee Update: No Report

Property Updates: No Report

Site Walk Reports: No Report

Solar Array Proposal – NextEra: It was noted that NextEra had cancelled their public hearing scheduled for May 21, 2019.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 17, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl White
Secretary to the Board of Selectmen