

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, April 14, 2011**

LOCATION: Public Services Administration Building - Charles River Room

ATTENDING: Dr. Lisa Standley (Chair), Dawn Stolfi Stalenhoeft (Vice Chair), Paul Alpert, Janet Bernardo, Marsha Salett, Carl Shapiro, Patricia Barry (Agent), Elisa Litchman (Assistant)

GUESTS: Mikhail Deychman, Nikki La Bella, Ardi Rrapi, Karen Skinner-Catrone, Anand Shete

L. Standley opened the public meeting at 7:40 p.m.

MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes of March 24, 2011 by C. Shapiro, seconded by C. Shapiro, approved 2-0-0.

HEARINGS

30 ABBOTT ROAD (DEP FILE#234-607) - *Continued* NOTICE OF INTENT

L. Standley opened the hearing at 7:50 p.m. M. Deychman of Hillcrest Development explained the proposed project that includes the demolition of the existing house and construction of a new single family home at 30 Abbott Road. The plans show that the existing impervious driveway currently located within the 200-foot Riverfront Area will be re-located entirely outside the Riverfront Area and restored to lawn. M. Deychman proposed the installation of a drywell for half of the single family home roof runoff to mitigate for the new impervious surface proposed within the Riverfront Area. The project would increase the impervious area within the Riverfront Area by about 4.8 percent. J. Bernardo asked if M. Deychman verified the groundwater table on-site to confirm if the drywell could sufficiently infiltrate the roof runoff and was to be installed at least 2-feet above the groundwater level. He stated that no soil testing had been conducted to date. L. Standley explained that the notice of intent application was incomplete as no economically equivalent alternatives analysis was presented to the Commission to sufficiently address viable alternatives within the Riverfront Area (i.e. decreasing the foot print of the proposed single family home).

M. Deychman also informed the Commission that a large red maple (*Acer rubrum*) which was growing in the front yard had mistakenly been cut down by his arborist. L. Standley asked M. Deychman to provide a planting plan to replace the tree. The Commission stated that the replacement trees must be native. The supplemental alternatives analysis and planting plan must be submitted to the Conservation Department by 10:00 a.m., Thursday, April 21, 2011. **Motion to continue the public hearing (for additional information) to April 28, 2011 at 8:45 p.m. in the Needham Public Library by M. Salett, seconded by J. Bernardo, approved 6-0-0.**

COMMISSION ACTIONS

MARY CHILTON ROAD (DEP FILE #234-256) & 1850 GREAT PLAIN AVENUE (DEP FILE #234-475)

The Commission discussed both Certificate of Compliance requests simultaneously because the projects were within the same location. However the Commission voted separately regarding the Certificate of Compliance issuance on each project. L. Standley recused herself due to a conflict of interest. Nikki La Bella, of Spectra Energy stated that both DEP File#'s 234-256 and 234-475 projects had been completed.

P. Barry explained that in 1995 Algonquin Gas Transmission Company was issued an Order of Conditions for the installation of a permanent corrosion detection tool launcher/receiver at the Needham Regulator Station off of Mary Chilton Road (DEP File#234-256). The later filing for 1850 Great Plain Avenue was required to install internal pipeline inspection facilities within the buffer zone at the existing regulator station. Both projects have been completed and restored as required in the Order of Conditions. The applicant has resolved the issues regarding the data building encroachment on Ridge Hill Reservation and the Article 97 transfer of land is at the state approval level. P. Barry noted that the gravel from the access way has been deposited into the bordering vegetated wetland as a result of snow plowing activities. Spectra Energy's routine annual maintenance within the buffer zone will take care of raking the gravel out of the resource area.

Motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance for Mary Chilton Road (DEP File # 234-256) by J. Bernardo, seconded by P. Alpert, approved 4-0-0.

Motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance for 1850 Great Plain Avenue (DEP File #234-475) by J. Bernardo, seconded by P. Alpert, approved 4-0-0.

1381 GREAT PLAIN AVENUE (DEP File #234-590) - MINOR MODIFICATION REQUEST

Ardi Rrapi from Cheney Engineering represented the owner and explained that due to the house being situated as close to the street it makes entering and exiting the driveway difficult. The owner, Anand Shete, requested that the new driveway be an arc design for easier entry and exit, and replace the originally proposed asphalt with pervious pavers since the new driveway will be larger in square footage than the original plan. Due to the change in the driveway size, the owner is also requesting approval to remove a 12-inch diameter tree in the front yard but he further explained that they have saved a 10-inch diameter tree in the back yard closer to the stream to mitigate for the front yard tree removal. Additionally, the plan modification requests the approval to install two infiltration trenches, instead of the originally proposed concrete drywells. **Motion to approve the minor modification for 1381 Great Plain Avenue (DEP File#234-590) by C. Shapiro, seconded by D. Stolfi Stalenhoeft, approved 6-0-0.**

449 CENTRAL AVENUE (DEP FILE #234-581) – MINOR MODIFICATION REQUEST

The owner has requested the approval of the following minor modifications to the proposed project at 449 Central Avenue: (1) adding stair installation off the back retaining wall of the pool/patio area to access the back of the property; (2) installation of a gravel wheelbarrow path from the driveway to the back of the property; and (3) changing the stair orientation from the upper deck of the house to the pool area. The Commission approved minor modifications (1) and (3) but did not approve modification (2) to install a gravel path as it is proposed beyond the limit of work allowed by the original permit and therefore, would need to be submitted as an amendment to the Order of Conditions. **Motion to approve the additional stairs and stair modifications to the Order of Conditions for 449 Central Avenue (DEP File#234-581) by M. Salett, seconded by J. Bernardo, approved 6-0-0.**

PERRAULT ROAD RESTORATION – HAZARD TREE REMOVAL REQUEST

P. Barry explained that Greg Petrini has requested an approval to remove a dead hazard tree at the Perrault Road Restoration area in accordance with Section 1.02 (4) of the Needham Wetlands Protection Bylaw Regulations (Minor Activities Exempt from Regulation under the Bylaw). A 15 to 20-foot snag will be left for wildlife habitat within the 100-foot buffer zone to bordering vegetated wetland. P. Barry updated the Commission on the progress of the Perrault Restoration area. She stated that a drainage pipe was found when they removed the fill along the stream and they have placed rip rap at the drain outlet to prevent further erosion of the bank. P. Barry expressed her concern for a significant amount of yard waste dumped on the other portion of the property located off of Tillotson Road. L. Standley stated that she will draft a letter to Greg Petrini regarding the yard waste and dumping within the wetland resource areas.

131 OXBOW ROAD – HAZARD TREE REMOVAL REQUEST

This request was withdrawn in writing by the applicant on April 12, 2011.

RIDGE HILL RESERVATION SIGN INSTALLATIONS – EXEMPTION LETTER REQUEST

P. Barry informed the Commission of the status of the Ridge Hill sign installation. The Commission confirmed that in accordance with Section 1.02 (4) of the Needham Wetlands Protection Bylaw Regulations (Minor Activities Exempt from Regulation Under the Bylaw), the installation of two 2-foot by 3-foot aluminum Ridge Hill Reservation signs at the 463 Charles River Street and 0 Cartwright Road entrances within the vicinity of the 100-foot buffer zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands and Intermittent Stream Banks is an exempt minor activity. **Motion to approve the installation of the signs as an exempt minor activity at the entrance of 463 Charles River Street and Cartwright Road by C. Shapiro, seconded by J. Bernardo, approved 6-0-0.**

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS EASTMAN CONSERVATION AREA – TRAIL MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION FORM

P. Barry explained that the educational sign installation along the Eastman Conservation trail area qualifies as a trail maintenance activity. **Motion to approve the proposed installation of educational signs under the Generic Trail Maintenance Determination of Applicability by J. Bernardo, seconded by P. Alpert, approved 6-0-0.**

NEEDHAM SCIENCE CENTER/ECO-EXPLORERS TEAM MITCHELL WOODS – TRAIL MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION FORM

P. Barry explained that the Eco Explorers Team would like to clear all of the trails at Mitchell Woods and close off a couple “bootleg trails” in accordance with the Final Master Trails Plan maintenance maps. P. Barry & L. Standley will mark off those trails to close as well as decide what to do with the greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*) and burning-bush (*E. alatus*). **Motion to approve the proposed trail maintenance under the Generic Trail Maintenance Determination of Applicability by J. Bernardo, seconded by M. Salett, approved 6-0-0.**

500 DEDHAM AVENUE (DEP FILE #234-356) – MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION FORM

P. Barry explained that the maintenance was the emergency removal of a black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) tree adjacent to Dedham Avenue. **Motion to approve the after-the-fact emergency tree removal at 500 Dedham Avenue under DPW Generic Maintenance Order of Conditions (DEP File#234-356) by J. Bernardo, seconded by P. Alpert, approved 6-0-0.**

RIDGE HILL RESERVATION – TRAIL MAINTENANCE ACTIVITY NOTIFICATION FORM

The Needham Trail Advisory Group has planned a Ridge Hill Reservation Spring Trail Day to be held on April 30, 2011 (rain date May 1st). The Trail Day will include guided nature walks and a two hour volunteer trail clean-up within Ridge Hill Reservation led by the Conservation Commission. As part of the guided nature walk preparation there are areas within Ridge Hill Reservation that the Parks & Forestry Department will need to clear dead and leaning trees in the trail path and flail mow trail sections. Additionally, the Conservation Commission will coordinate vegetation clearing along the trails consistent with the Generic Trails Maintenance Determination of Applicability. P. Barry notified the Commission that the Health Department has produced a sign for Ridge Hill informing visitors of Ticks and Mosquitoes. The Commission suggested that it be installed next to the front kiosk. **Motion to approve the proposed trail maintenance at Ridge Hill Reservation under the Generic Trail Maintenance Determination of Applicability by J. Bernardo, seconded by M. Salett, approved 6-0-0.**

NEEDHAM 300 BATTLE REENACTMENT – APPROVAL REQUEST FOR USE OF RIDGE HILL RESERVATION

The Commission approved the use of Ridge Hill Reservation with a conditional license agreement to protect the reservation resources to the Needham Tercentennial Committee for holding a Revolutionary War Battle Re-enactment scheduled the weekend of May 21, 2011 and May 22, 2011. The Commission reviewed the license agreement drafted by Town Counsel, Dave Tobin. P. Alpert stated that he has provided language to revise the agreement to tighten the language regarding indemnification. **Motion to approve the Revolutionary War Battle Reenactment at Ridge Hill Reservation as amended by M. Salett, seconded by D. Stolfi Stalenhoeft, approved 6-0-0.**

BRAKING THE CYCLE-APPROVAL REQUEST FOR USE OF RIDGE HILL RESERVATION

P. Barry explained that the 2011 Braking the Cycle HIV/AIDS Bike Ride would like to use Ridge Hill Reservation again as a rest stop during the morning of September 16, 2011 from 6:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and that two (2) small 10-foot by 10-foot tents will be placed on the parking lot. Similar to last year an indemnity agreement will be issued with new dates to reflect the three hour use of the Reservation. **Motion to approve the use of Ridge Hill Reservation for the 2011 Braking the Cycle event by C. Shapiro, seconded by D. Stolfi Stalenhoeft, approved 6-0-0.**

OTHER BUSINESS

TOWN NURSERY, CHARLES RIVER STREET – DISCUSSION

In response to a complaint the Conservation Commission requests that DPW provide a maintenance and management plan, with annual updates of projected activities. P. Barry will do a site visit and determine if the disturbed/tilled soil requires erosion controls.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT 40B GUIDELINES DISCUSSION

The Commission has been asked by the Planning Department to provide initial insight into the proposed Town of Needham 40B Guideline document that is currently in the beginning stages of being drafted. J. Bernardo attended the Community Preservation Commission meeting where there had been a discussion on the 40B Guidelines. The Commission agreed that L. Standley would draft a response to the Planning Department regarding the 40B Guidelines questions and circulate to the other Commission members by the end of May.

NEEDHAM WETLANDS PROTECTION REGULATIONS-REVISIONS

D. Stolfi Stalenhoeft stated that she needed more time to review the regulations. The Commission agreed to table the revision discussion to a later date to provide for additional review time.

RIDGE HILL RESERVATION SPRING TRAIL DAY-APRIL 30TH

P. Barry reminded the Commission of the upcoming Trail Day scheduled from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on April 30, 2011 at Ridge Hill Reservations. All members of the Commission plan on attending the event except for Sharon Soltzberg.

YARD WASTE LETTERS TO RESIDENTS

P. Barry informed the Commission that the annual letters to residents regarding yard waste dumping near or in wetlands had been sent and that our office has been receiving calls from nervous residents and their attorneys. To avoid enforcement order issuance, the Commission suggested a moratorium be placed to allow the removal of yard waste before June 1st to avoid any enforcement order and fines.

Motion to adjourn by P. Alpert, seconded by M. Salett, approved 6-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

NEXT PUBLIC HEARING

April 28, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. in the Needham Public Library-Community Room.