

**Peterborough Conservation Commission minutes
April 20, 2023, 7 p.m., Peterborough Town House**

Present: Members Jo Anne Carr, Swift Corwin, John Kerrick, Matt Lundsted, Dick McNamara, Bob Strong, Francie Von Mertens, Robert Wood,
Guest: Taylor Hennas, Meridian Land Services

Conditional Use Permit application for impacts to the Wetland Protection Overlay Zone relating to expanding, regrading and extending an existing driveway to access buildable upland off Hunter Farm Road (Parcel U034-001-005)

After presentation of plans by Taylor Hennas, Meridian Land Services, members agreed that Wetland Buffer Disturbance Areas #1 and #2 on the submitted plans conform to town code that allows, by means of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), crossing the Wetland Protection Overlay Zone (WPOZ) to access buildable upland.

Taylor Hennas explained that those first two crossings off Hunter Farm Road were approved for a prior development some 15 years prior. They are to be expanded and regraded (raised) to accommodate a buried utility line. Impact Area #2 also will be widened as required for fire/safety access.

Extension of the existing driveway also begins at the second WPOZ crossing (Buffer Disturbance Area #2).

Buffer Disturbance Areas #3 and #4 involve two paved accesses to a garage, a turnaround, and a width for parking—all in large part located in the WPOZ.

Members agreed that these uses appear to go beyond standard driveway access to a buildable envelope. Members cited town wetland code (245-15: Conditional Uses) that allows:

Streets, roads, access ways, and driveways if essential to the productive use of land not designated as wetland and located and constructed so as to minimize and avoid to the maximum extent practicable, any detrimental impact of such uses upon the Wetland Protection Overlay Zone.

And Site Plan Review Article IX Conditional Use Permit 233-52 CUP for Uses in the WPOZ; Performance Standards states there shall be:

No net loss of buffer functionality.

The town's Wetland Protection Overlay Zone 245-15 code states that a wetland's 50-foot buffer is to remain "naturally vegetated" to protect its buffering function.

Ms. Hennas said the house location on the plans was determined by a septic design, and would be looked at again to relocating construction disturbance out of the WPOZ to "minimize and avoid" impacts to the WPOZ (delineated wetland plus a 50-foot buffer).

Francie Von Mertens explained that town code requires that siltation fencing be installed along the WPOZ boundary before site preparation begins to avoid buffer impacts. She said a recent email exchange with Spencer Tate at Meridian Land Services confirmed that efforts would be made to relocate the building area to avoid impacts to the WPOZ.

Timing of a site visit was discussed. Robert Wood suggested it await revised plans. There was confusion whether impacts to Disturbance Area #3 had been approved years back. Members had memory of the two wetland crossings but nothing

further. Some research is needed. Taylor Hennas said she would speak with Danica Melone to determine past permits. ConCom members will, too. She also will confirm if wetland flagging remains in place, required for a site visit.

Von Mertens will communicate to the Planning Board the Conservation Commission's understanding that site plans will be changed to avoid impacts to the WPOZ (wetland plus buffer) relating to garage access, a vehicle turnaround, and parking.

NRI Mapping

Jo Anne Carr, Woody Wood and Swift Corwin as an NRI mapping subcommittee will take a close look at the DRAFT maps Fash sent ConCom members via DropBox. Francie Von Mertens studied and made comments on the Conservation Lands (Parcel Base) map.

Proposed link from Eneguess property horse trails to Fremont Conservation Land (cont'd from March)

Bob Strong reported that he and Sally Eneguess walked a route she proposes to link a network of horse trails on Eneguess property via Cornish Class VI Road with the town's Fremont Conservation Land.

After ConCom discussion, including concerns about the impact of horses on trails ("intense use" / "high impact"), members agreed that more information is needed.

1. Nature of the proposed trail: a fixed, defined trail of XX width, or minimal clipping of lower tree branches to allow single-file wending through the woodland;
2. Extent of use: Special good neighbor policy similar to past use by a Taylor family member, or riders trailering horses to access the trail from Old Jaffrey Road, Cornish Road;
3. Mapping proposed trail to include all Fremont trails that would be used as part of the expanded horse-trail network.
4. Checking route for wetlands (to avoid).

Bob Strong will communicate questions/concerns to Sally Eneguess, and request a written proposal that will help continuing discussion.

March minutes were approved.

/fvm