

**Peterborough Conservation Commission minutes  
August 26, 2021, Town House, 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Jo Anne Carr, Matt Lundsted, John Patterson, Robert Wood, Francie Von Mertens

**After-the-fact Conditional Use Permit for clearing along the Contoocook River**

Code Officer Herlihy determined likely town Shoreland Conservation Zone issues relating to clearing along the river at 32 Concord Street, and Conservation Commission comment to the Planning Board has been requested by Town Planner Melone.

Swift Tree LLC submitted a letter with the CUP detailing cutting of several trees in the 50-100-foot distance from the river relating to a "hazard tree" leaner on three mature trees. All were cut along with two small walnut trees and invasive Norway maple in the 100-150-foot distance from shore.

Applicant also cut dead trees and cleared brambles and invasive shrubs in the 100-150-foot area.

Applicant's letter cites remaining trees as meeting the state's shoreland regulations judged by the basal-width point system.

Robert Wood (Woody) reported that his site visit found the 50-foot wetland buffer remained naturally vegetated, meeting town code relating to wetland buffers, and that state shoreland protection regs when judged by the basal width point system likely were met, also. The remaining trees were grouped at property edges, however, and were not evenly distributed. Aerial photos prior to the clearing, show an evenly distributed canopy of trees, beneficial as wildlife corridors and habitat, goals of the town's Shoreland Conservation Zone and wetland buffer protection.

All agreed that assessing what has been removed is difficult given that the CUP is after the fact, stumps were ground to at-or-below grade, and the area has been seeded with a conservation mix.

Von Mertens reported a conversation with the applicant who said the landowner had expressed interest working with Swift Tree LLC in a landscaping plan.

Woody will draft a letter to the Planning Board reporting his findings, with a recommendation that a landscaping plan be developed that includes native trees with the potential to become canopy trees, as well as layered vegetation including native shrubs.

**Walden Eco-Village CUPs for wetland impacts**

Members divided wetlands on the Eco-Village property into two areas: the Walden Way entry road and the area where existing dwellings are in the Wetlands Protection Overlay Zone.

No issues were seen in the existing crossings with culverts along the entry way that are planned to be widened along with the road. Square footage of the proposed impacts are not shown on the plans or cited in the application narrative as required by the CUP checklist #10, and should be added.

Issues remain in the second area, the "Village" quad. The plans show up to 11 structures in the WPOZ, three of them residential. Details of impacts beyond a general statement about "adaptive reuse" of the structures are lacking. Residential structures are not allowed in the town's WPOZ.

Von Mertens will draft a letter of comment to the Planning Board recommending that any CUP for impacts in the Village area be denied, and that the applicant be directed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a Variance from existing town code. For any future application, the size of the wetland in the Village acre needs to be shown on the plans, in addition square footage of impacts to the WPOZ.

**Easement monitoring**

Robert Wood (Woody) has monitored seven easements

Pearson/LaRoche    DuBois/Wardwell    Ridgewood Heights

Fellows            Simonds/Wollett       Woods

Von Mertens made a motion (Lundsted second), that he monitor two additional easements, Millon and D'Addamio. The motion passed (Wood abstained)