

MINUTES OF THE NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, May 4th, 2021 – 5:00 p.m. (Via Zoom)

Work session for new garage with an ADU, replacement of a deck with three season porch, and replacement of gravel driveway for Donna and Paul Urbanek at 48 Laurel Lane, Tax Map 11, Lot 25.

Members Present: Conni White, Chair, Lynn McCarthy, Vice-Chair, Beth Barnhorst, Tom Chamberlin, Darcy Horgan, Ron Pascale.

Members Absent: Bill Marshall, Iain Moodie, Brandon Tanguay, Jim Rini.

Others Present: Brenton Cole, Granite Engineering, LLC; Donna and Paul Urbanek.

Chair White called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. Applications.

A. Work session for new garage with an ADU, replacement of a deck with three season porch, and replacement of gravel driveway for Donna and Paul Urbanek at 48 Laurel Lane, Tax Map 11, Lot 25.

Chair White showed the proposed plan and architectural drawings of the Urbaneks' proposed accessory dwelling unit (ADU). The construction activity will take place within the 100 foot buffer but beyond 50 feet of the Piscataqua River. Brenton Cole, Principal Engineer, provided details of the proposal. To the right of the house will be a new 432 square foot garage with an ADU on top. The front entrance leading into the existing house will be redone. There will be a new retaining wall where there is currently a natural grade from the foundation down to the parking area. A grading plan will be submitted at the final review of the proposed application. Mr. Cole noted how the proposal would level the area in front of the house and provide a second tier to the house. The existing gravel driveway will be replaced with a porous pavement driveway. There will also be a new three season porch where a deck currently exists. The area under the existing deck is open and has brick on the ground. Ms. Urbanek explained that they already have a deck that wraps around the house. The proposal calls for the deck to connect to the garage and apartment unit. Mr. Cole noted that the deck is considered impervious.

Mr. Cole explained that the project will not require a lot of excavation because the area where the garage and ADU will go is about six feet lower than the house. All structures would be above the 100 year flood zone, which is at elevation 9. The house is at elevation 10, and the garage and ADU would be at elevation 11 or 12. The proposal requires a conditional use permit from the Planning Board, and an NHDES Shoreland permit and Wetland permit.

Ms. Barnhorst requested to see an overlay of the existing conditions and proposed construction in order to see how much fill would be needed and how it will be graded. Mr. Cole responded that he would work on getting an overlay done for the next meeting.

Chair White noted that the existing conditions indicate that 22.6% of the lot is impervious, and asked how the proposal will result in a decrease in impervious surface area. Mr. Cole explained that the Urbaneks would be replacing the driveway that is currently gravel and considered impervious with porous material that will infiltrate stormwater back into the ground. He pointed out where the 1,825 square feet of porous pavement driveway would be. Ms. Barnhorst stated that there is another wetland just above the driveway, and it appears that most of the driveway in the proposal will be in the 50 foot wetland buffer. Mr. Cole responded that most of this area is already disturbed and the Urbaneks currently park there on the gravel. He felt that there will be a net benefit to the property by having porous pavement, and it will be better to have a garage than what is essentially a parking lot right now. Ms. Barnhorst inquired about how the new DES rules about building structures within 100 feet of tidal wetland impact this proposal. Mr. Cole stated that this will be a minor impact permit that they have already prepared and will submit to DES once they get the recommendation of the Conservation Commission.

Chair White felt that a lot of the property will be altered and noted how it seemed that there will be a lot of hard surface area on a very small lot. Ms. Barnhorst agreed and believed this would be a big ask for a small, sensitive piece of property that is located right in the wetlands. Mr. Cole noted that the Applicants have tried to stay within the areas that are already developed. Currently, water runoff from the gravel driveway flows right into the Piscataqua River. The proposed porous pavement will be better for the Town and the environment.

Mr. Pascale asked how water coming from the roof of the garage would be handled. Mr. Cole explained that there would be downspouts on the east side of the building situated toward the porous pavement. There would also be downspouts on the west side of the building, which would direct water into a drainage swale that leads down into the Piscataqua River.

Commission members asked questions about the ADU. Ms. Horgan asked how one would access the ADU. Mr. Cole responded that there would be access at the garage and access with stairs on the deck. Mr. Urbanek added that there would not be an internal stairway in the garage, so the access would only be on the outside. Ms. Barnhorst questioned whether plumbing would be added to the ADU. Mr. Urbanek stated that there would be plumbing, and this was suggested by Town Building Inspector Russ Bookholz. Mr. Urbanek noted that there is no issue with pumping, as there is currently a pump that goes into the main holding tanks. Chair White pointed out that an ADU requires parking for four cars. Mr. Cole showed how one car would be parked inside the garage, and the other three would be parked outside with room to turn around. Ms. Horgan suggested adding a chart of ADU requirements to the site plans when the Urbaneks reach the Planning Board. Mr. Cole commented that he would work on this. He noted that the proposed garage will be 16 feet from the side setback, and the ADU has been designed keeping Town Ordinances in mind.

Chair White showed a planting plan that Wicki Rowland prepared. Mr. Urbanek stated that the proposed planting bed width is about four to five feet wide. There would also be a pervious flat area to sit.

Chair White announced that the Commission would hold a site walk on Wednesday, May 12 at 5:00 p.m.

2. Announcements.

None.

3. Approve minutes from April 2021 meeting.

Mr. Chamberlin made a motion to approve the April 2021 minutes as submitted. Mr. Pascale seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Adjourn.

Chair White moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Barnhorst seconded. The motion carried, unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rumph
Secretary