

**NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**FEBRUARY 7, 2017, 5:00 p.m.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Lynn McCarthy, Chair, Connie White, Vice Chair, Beth Barnhorst, Member, Ron Pascale, Member, Jim Rini, Alternate, William Marshall, Alternate, Darcy Horgan\*, Planning Board Representative

\*Indicates partial attendance

**Also Present:** Mick Sheffield, Wickie Roland, Cindi Baker

**Members Absent:** Brendan Tanguay, Member

Chair Lynn McCarthy called to meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**1. Approve minutes of the January 17, 2017 meeting of the Conservation Commission**

Mr. Jim Rinni made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2017 Conservation Committee meeting as amended. Mr. Ron Pascale seconded. Motion carried, unanimously.

**2. Work Sessions/Applications**

**a. 51 B Laurel Lane, Tax Map 11, Lot 27**

**Applicant: Steve and Cindi Baker**

**Project: Review and recommend approval of landscaping plan**

Ms. Wickie Roland and Mr. Mick Sheffield of Labrie Design & Landscape, representing applicants Steve and Cindi Baker, answered questions pertaining to the Landscape Master Plan for the 51 B Laurel Lane property.

Chair McCarthy commented that New Castle Town Ordinance 9.2.8.4.b now restricts on-island fertilizer use to a minimum of 50% slow release nitrogen as a percentage of the total nitrogen component.

Vice Chair Connie White, noting pre-construction uncertainties, indicated that the Commission's approval would include acknowledgement that construction and site conditions may necessitate changes.

Ms. Beth Barnhorst and Chair McCarthy proposed, and Ms. Cindi Baker agreed, that Members be allowed to return, post-construction, to inspect the site for compliance.

Regarding the outstanding issue of outdoor shower runoff given the slope of the lawn, Ms. Barnhorst asked, and Ms. Roland and Mr. Sheffield answered, that they believe the runoff will be well-handled by the grass and planting buffers.

Mr. Rinni moved to recommend approval of the landscape plan prepared for Steve and Cindi Baker, 51 B Laurel Lane, dated 1/20/17 and accomplished by Labrie Associates with the ability to go back and inspect. Vice Chair White seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

**b. 97 Wentworth Road, Tax Map 13, Lot 28-1**

**Applicant: Marcia Cutting**

**Project: Work Session**

Mr. Will Connell, representing applicant Marcia Cutting, described the proposed plan to construct a house and driveway. Application has been made for a Building Permit; the Building Inspector suggested the applicant present their plans to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Connell described the property survey, including delineation of the 50 ft. wetland buffer, where, he noted, Ambit Engineering has proposed to sequence construction and install a silt fence. Because of the side and front setback requirements, the building site is fairly inflexible. Further, the State of New Hampshire, having jurisdiction of the state road to which the property abuts, has mandated a driveway turn around as well as the cut location for visibility. Mr. Rinni asked and Mr. Connell affirmed, that the state has allowed the driveway location within the setback.

A “Clean Solution™”, three tank septic system will be located under the driveway. Soil and perc tests were performed and state and local approvals have been secured. Applicant proposes to minimize lawn, and maximize trees on the property. He does not plan for fill, believing there to be four to five feet of dirt, as identified by test pits, atop the ledge foundation.

Responding to the concern about whether blasting would be used for the foundation, Mr. Connell indicated that he was uncertain at his time, but that the method would be safe and legal, noting that the decision about whether to build a full basement would be made during the construction phase, depending on the ledge. His preference is for blasting versus the prolonged process of ledge hammering.

Concerned about storm water management in a sensitive area with slopes toward the wetland and the street, Ms. Barnhorst inquired about the driveway construction. Mr. Connell described plans for an asphalt driveway that meets the state requirement for no runoff to the road, noting that he is neither opposed to a pervious surface, nor will he commit to it.

Vice Chair White suggested to Mr. Connell that when he presents plans to the Conservation Committee, they will be interested in the mitigation of stormwater runoff from the house, perhaps with a landscape plan or pervious driveway, as well as how many trees are to be cut and stumps to be removed. Mr. Connell described that tree removal will be based on the 50 ft. grid point scoring process (described in New Castle Ordinance 9.2.8.6). Ms. Barnhorst noted that the entire project is within the 150 ft. Woodland Buffer Zone, requiring that stumps and root systems remain intact in the ground, however Mr. Connell responded that he understands that stumps within the construction area and its 25 ft. perimeter may be removed. Members reiterated their request for a tree plan and landscape plan that mitigates the water runoff, especially given the apportioned area for the leach field that precludes plantings other than grass. Mr. Rinni added that because of the slope in the back, management of the roof water will be important.

Chair McCarthy suggested that a site walk with the Commission might help the applicant understand their concerns. Chair McCarthy, responding to Mr. Connell's question about the Commission's authority outside of the Wetland Buffer, affirmed the Commission's interest because restrictions apply to the over ½ acre property within the Woodland Buffer, and the pitch of the site's topography toward the wetlands.

Vice Chair White asserted that the Commission will also need to see architect's plans for the building. Mr. Connell answered that they are currently in the possession of the Building Inspector. Chair McCarthy further suggested that the applicant's engineer present the driveway plans to the Commission in order to assure that the runoff will remain on the property.

Mr. Connell stated that the property is not in any flood zone.

Recapping the next steps, Chair McCarthy recounted:

- Commission to conduct a site walk within the month, weather-permitting
- Applicant to mark the building corners on the property, if possible
- Applicant to provide a cutting plan reflective of the existing trees and the trees proposed to be cut to be emailed to Chair McCarthy prior to the site walk

Mr. Connell explained that the applicant does not intend to apply for a Conditional Use Permit, that the tree cutting will be limited to the building lot plus the 25 ft. perimeter allowance, and that there is no intent to enter the buffer area in the construction phase. Accordingly, he did not expect the application to come before the Planning Board.

## **2. Unfinished Business**

### **a. Stormwater Guideline Update**

### **Definition of Impervious Surface**

Mr. Rinni proposed a change to the definition of an impervious surface: *a modified surface that cannot effectively absorb water or that water cannot infiltrate*. With the intent to eliminate ambiguity, Members discussed whether impervious surface examples should be included in the definition. Ms. Darcy Horgan proposed, and Members agreed, that she solicit the opinions of the Building Inspector and the Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, including whether the word "modified" should be included, and report her findings to the Commission.

Ms. Horgan will present the revised definitions to the Planning Board on February 22, 2017.

### **EPA Stormwater Regulations**

With the intent to draft a proposed amendment to the New Castle Town Ordinance regarding an impervious surface calculation, Ms. Barnhorst and the New Castle Building Inspector sought counsel from Theresa Walker, Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) Consulting Planner. Ms. Walker suggested the town postpone the proposed ordinance change pending enactment of the EPA's update to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), which will likely impose its own stormwater runoff requirements on the town. Ms. Barnhorst noted the six minimum control measures of the MS4 rules:

- Public education and outreach programs
- Public participation/involvement
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site runoff control
- Post construction site runoff control
- Pollution prevention/good housekeeping

Following the February 15, 2017 workshop in Dover, more information may be available.

Separately, Mr. Rinni and Mr. Pascale agreed to plot the size of the town's lots in order to understand the distribution of lot sizes within the town to aid in the drafting of guidelines for impervious surface area relative to lot size.

### **b. Phragmite removal from Lavenger Creek**

Chair McCarthy indicated that she is uncertain if the work was conducted last week as intended.

## **3. New Business**

### **a. Purple loosestrife beetle**

While purple loosestrife beetles were utilized by the town in the past, they have not been in the last few years, and, as a result, there is more purple loosestrife. Chair McCarthy noted that a quantity of 1,000 beetles can be ordered for \$400.

Mr. Rinni moved to order 1,000 purple loosestrife beetles. Ms. Barnhorst seconded. Motion carried, unanimously.

Ms. Barnhorst noted the opportunity to utilize the beetles as an element of community outreach, suggesting the possibility of grant funding.

**b. *Island Times* article**

Chair McCarthy suggested that the specialty grasses, recommended by Labrie Landscaping & Design, would be a good topic for the upcoming *Island Times* article. Members agreed and assigned the task.

Mr. Rinni made a motion to adjourn which Ms. Barnhorst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:18.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Miller, Secretary