

APPROVED

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MINUTES OF THE NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, September 6th, 2022 – 5:00 p.m. (Town Hall)

320 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 14, Lot 13. Applicant: Nicole Beurang. Representative: Steve Ricker, Ambit Engineering. Proposed: New driveway.

17 Seabreeze Lane, Tax Map 13, Lot 20. Applicant: Steve and Suzanne Cook. Representative: Tom Emerson. Proposed: Addition.

Members Present: Conni White, Chair, Beth Barnhorst, Tom Chamberlin, Iain Moodie, Jim Rini.

Members Absent: Jim Cerny.

Others Present: Nicole Beurang; Steve Cook; Jim Manning; Alex Ross, Ross Engineering, LLC.

1. Call to Order.

Chair White called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

2. Approve minutes from August 2, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Chamberlin made a motion to approve the minutes for the August 2, 2022 meeting as submitted. Ms. Barnhorst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Applications.

A. 320 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 14, Lot 13. Applicant: Nicole Beurang. Representative: Steve Ricker, Ambit Engineering. Proposed: New driveway.

Ms. Beurang presented the application for a proposed “grass pave” system consisting of gravel and grass. She would like to relocate the existing gravel driveway and Jim Manning would add the grass pave. The existing gravel driveway is grandfathered.

Steve Riker of Ambit Engineering prepared the plans and provided a letter with further information for Ms. Beurang to share with the Commission. The DES Wetland application is considered to be minor because the proposed impacts occur within 75 feet of the salt marsh. The proposed project balances the impervious surface on the site. Mr. Riker and the applicants had looked into a pervious paver driveway, but given the projected sea level rise and the groundwater rise that would subsequently occur, Mr. Riker did not feel that a pervious paver driveway would function properly in the future at this location.

The grass pave area would be for overflow parking when needed. There would be crushed stone under the grass pave system. Ms. Beurang distributed a technical brochure that provided detailed information on the system. The grass pave product is installed and backfilled with suitable material that allows the grass to grow within the matrix. Grass within the product can be mowed and maintained just like a normal lawn area. Grass pave provides some structural stability to park vehicles on, and prevents and reduces soil compaction from vehicles.

Mr. Moodie felt that the proposed grass pave system with the gravel driveway is a better option for Ms. Beurang's property compared to a traditional asphalt driveway because it will capture the initial water runoff from cars. Mr. Manning added that the Department of Transportation would be providing them the specifications for what the pitch needs to be to best manage water runoff.

Mr. Moodie asked if the area to the left of the driveway will be a garden bed or lawn. Mr. Manning responded that it is currently lawn, but they hope to eventually put a garden bed there. Chair White recommended trying low growing native juniper in this location.

Mr. Moodie motioned to recommend approval of the Ambit Engineering plans C-2 and D-1 dated July 13, 2022 as presented for Applicant Nicole Beurang, 320 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 14, Lot 13 for the proposed new driveway. Mr. Chamberlin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 17 Seabreeze Lane, Tax Map 13, Lot 20. Applicant: Steve and Suzanne Cook. Representative: Tom Emerson. Proposed: Addition.

Alex Ross of Ross Engineering presented on behalf of Steve Cook. Marc Jacobs previously delineated the high tide setbacks and inland wetland setbacks. The Cooks intend to renovate the home by removing the east portion of the house down to the foundation and rebuilding it two stories. The portion of the house in the side setback on the south side will remain a single story. The existing single car garage will be removed. The applicants propose building a garage with living space above it on the west side of the home along the road. There would be a minor extension outside of the foundation line on the north side of the house.

A small portion of the existing house and most of the existing two tiered patio are located within a 50 foot inland wetland buffer. The proposed vertical expansion of the house will be partially within this buffer, though no expansion of the patio is planned. The small extension to the north and the garage on the west side will require digging for new foundations.

During the site walk prior to the meeting, a pump was discovered in the front yard overlooking the water. Mr. Cook explained that this had been connected to the washing machine for decades, but will be disconnected and removed.

Mr. Ross discussed potential locations for a new septic system, as the current one needs to be updated. He previously dug three test pits at the property. The plan is for an AOS pretreatment system that would be raised up and will allow for a small leach field. The existing leach field is where the parking currently is. A 10 foot setback is required from the leach field.

Chair White commented that 10 to 20 years from now, when there is more rain and groundwater, having the septic system in the front of the house overlooking the water may not be the best location, although it may work now. She felt that it would be best to have it near the street. Mr. Moodie added that the front yard would also not be the best location given the potential for storm damage, and that area falls within the 50 foot wetland buffer. Mr. Ross noted that the DES would likely not want the leach field in that location either.

Mr. Moodie asked about work within the 50 foot buffer. The proposed expansion above the screened-in porch would likely require an excavator to put in new footings. Mr. Ross stated that they will have to determine the elevation of the ledge as part of the excavation plans. Mr. Moodie requested to see plans of where the water runoff will go, and also reminded the applicants to use a silt fence during construction. Mr. Ross noted that he will be preparing a stormwater management plan as part of the shoreland permit and septic permit applications. Chair White commented that she would like to see the architectural section plans as well. Although the design of the septic system is not within the Conservation Commission's purview, the Commission does weigh in on the placement.

Chair White asked if the Cooks have a landscape architect for the project. Mr. Cook responded that they did not, as the main focus is currently on the house renovation. Chair White felt that it would be a good idea for the Cooks to consult with a company such as Woodburn & Company out of Newmarket, NH, as they can assist with stormwater management plans.

The applicants will aim to come to the next Conservation Commission meeting with final plans to be voted on. Then, the Cooks will go before the ZBA before applying for State shoreland and wetland permits.

4. Adjourn.

Ms. Barnhorst moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Moodie seconded. The motion carried, unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rumph
Secretary