



MINUTES OF THE NEW CASTLE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 18th, 2022 – 5:00 p.m. (Town Hall)

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

54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37. Applicant: William A. Lomas.
Representative: Raymond Bisson, Stonewall Surveying. Proposed: Renovations within 100
foot wetland setback.

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

Members Absent: Jim Cerny; Jim Rini.

Others Present: Steve and Suzanne Cook; Tom Emerson, Studio B-E Architecture; Bill and Gwen Lomas; Chris Mulligan, Bosen & Associates PLLC; Alex Ross, Ross Engineering, LLC.

1. Call to Order.

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

2. Approve minutes from September 6, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Chamberlin made a motion to approve the minutes for the September 6, 2022 meeting as submitted. Ms. Barnhorst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Applications.

A. 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. Test pits were previously dug on the ocean side and on the left hand side off of Seabreeze Lane. Both locations were workable for the proposed sewer system, but had poor soil and ledge. Mr. Ross explained that they did additional test pits up front in search of a better location. Marc Jacobs was present as the wetland scientist for the project. They found that the front yard would be the best location for the leach field, as it has better soil and allows for deeper digging. This location would be better for the inland wetlands and tidal area. A shoreland permit will be required for the leach field.

Conservation Commission members had questions about how the grade would work with the building. Tom Emerson, the project architect, explained the changes and showed a cross section of the house. The septic field will be roughly the same height as the driveway, so it will not appear like a mound. The house will need to be constricted by a foot in order to fit the septic. Mr.

Moodie reminded the Applicants that if the renovations will exceed 50% of the value of the property, then it will be considered new construction and will require that the entire construction comply with current codes. This may mean a new foundation, which would be something that the Commission would want to look into, particularly in relation to water treatment for any runoff. Mr. Ross noted that from what they have been able to observe, the foundation in the basement can be used and reinforced. He added that the shoreland permit application includes a stormwater management plan with infiltration trenches and drip edges. The driveway will consist of pervious pavers as well. Chair White explained that the pervious pavers require maintenance and cleaning out under the pavers in order to maintain its effectiveness.

Mr. Moodie motioned to recommend approval of the Ross Engineering plan, page 2 of 2, dated September 15, 2022, as submitted for 17 Seabreeze Lane, Tax Map 13, Lot 20, for a permeable driveway and septic system located to the rear of the lot, with the recommendation that the permeable driveway have at least a biannual maintenance plan to keep its permeable nature. Mr. Chamberlin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**B. 54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37. Applicant: William A. Lomas.
Representative: Raymond Bisson, Stonewall Surveying. Proposed: Renovations
within 100 foot wetland setback.**

Mr. Moodie recused himself from the voting on this case, as he is a direct abutter. Conservation Commission members conducted a site walk prior to the meeting. Attorney Chris Mulligan was present along with Applicants Bill and Gwen Lomas. Attorney Mulligan explained that the house was built in 1953 and has become dated and in need of renovations. The entire site is disturbed within the 100 foot buffer, with the existing house and shed located within the 100 foot buffer. The Applicants propose to remove the second story overhang and add a four foot bump out toward the road, next to which would be a farmer's porch. They would like to remove the shed, convert the carport into a screened porch, and build a detached garage outside of the 100 foot buffer. The pavement in the back of the house would be removed and replaced with an open deck approximately 7.5 feet wide that would run along the entire back of the house. The deck will consist of non-pressure treated boards with sufficient spacing to allow water through. Below the deck will be 18 inches of crushed stone and sand. There will be a drip edge around the deck as well. A sliver of the proposed deck would encroach the 50 foot buffer. The driveway will ultimately be reconfigured to remove much of the existing pavement and eliminate one of the entrances. The Applicants are interested in burying their electric lines as well.

Chair White felt that all of the proposed improvements make sense and are doable. However, she is concerned about going within two to three inches of the property line to build the deck, which would be well within the 100 foot wetland setback. In terms of water runoff from the house, Chair White felt that a deck with wide enough spacing and with 18 inches of material underneath will probably be better at handling runoff than what is there now. She would like to see a water runoff treatment plan for the property, including where the downspouts will go.

Ms. Barnhorst believed that the proposal will be much more attractive with a farmer's porch, but she would be more inclined to approve the requests in front of the house. She felt that it is a huge ask to have a deck in the back so close to the wetland. The deck would be adding impervious

surface. Ms. Barnhorst stated that she would like to see some native buffer plantings in the back instead of the deck. She suggested having Adirondack chairs to overlook the wetland instead of the deck. Mr. Chamberlin believed that the drainage could be improved with the deck if there is proper drainage below, as opposed to leaving the pavement that is currently there.

Attorney Mulligan noted that the Applicants will be removing almost all pavement within the 100 foot buffer, and will only be increasing the footprint of the house modestly. He felt that having water that is properly infiltrated will be a better situation than what is there now. No matter what the Applicants do, they will need some relief due to the nature of the property. Attorney Mulligan stated that what is being proposed is a net benefit. The impervious surface area of the lot will go from 38.9% to 37.6% once the entire project is completed.

Jim Cerny of 44 Portsmouth Avenue submitted a letter in support of the proposal. He is a direct abutter to the Lomas family and felt that the proposed changes would be imperceptible compared to man-made changes, such as the septic line that runs through the wetland.

Chair White asked if Gwen Lomas as the architect could draw a drainage plan for the water runoff. She questioned whether there would even be space for plantings in the back, and felt that it would be better to have a drip zone that can handle rising tides. Mr. Moodie shared these concerns over where the buffer plantings would fit on the property, especially where there is an encroachment into the wetland. He would prefer to have the deck in the back and believed it will be beneficial for the homeowners and the property. Mr. Moodie asked how high the deck would be off the ground. Mrs. Lomas stated that it would be about four steps, which is approximately 30 inches. Mr. Lomas noted that they would use sonotubes.

Mr. Lomas asked about the plantings that the Commission would like to see on the site. Chair White felt that what is currently on the property is fine, as they have native grasses that are sucking up water and holding together the soil naturally. Other members discussed the need for a landscaping plan. Mr. Chamberlin did not feel that it is needed in this case.

Chair White motioned to recommend approval of the site plan for the Lomas property at 54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37, as drawn by Stonewall Surveying, dated September 18, 2022. This approval is contingent upon the submission of additional drawing(s) that would include the deck, water management plan, and a landscape plan for the soil that is being disturbed. Mr. Chamberlin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Adjourn.

Ms. Barnhorst moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Moodie seconded. The motion carried, unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rumph
Secretary