

**MINUTES**

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**1 JUNKINS AVENUE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**3:30 p.m.**

**February 8, 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Steve Miller; Vice Chairman MaryAnn Blanchard; Members, Allison Tanner, Barbara McMillan, Kimberly Meuse, Matthew Cardin, Kate Zamarchi, Alternates Samantha Wright, Adrienne Harrison

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** N/A

**ALSO PRESENT:** Peter Britz, Environmental Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

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**I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

1. Chairman, Vice Chairman

*Ms. Tanner moved to re-elect Chairman Miller and Vice Chairman Blanchard to their respective positions for the upcoming year, seconded by Ms. McMillan. The motion passed unanimously.*

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. January 11, 2017

*It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.*

**III. STATE WETLANDS BUREAU PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

1. Standard Dredge and Fill Application  
363 New Castle Avenue  
Briggs Realty Association of Delaware, LLC, owner  
Assessor Map 207, Lot 3

**IV. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

A. 225 Borthwick Avenue  
Liberty Mutual Group, owner  
Assessor Map 240, Lot 1

Mr. Dave Fenstermacher of VHB, was present to speak to the application. He stated that he was before the Commission to seek approval for some recent upgrades to the site. They are seeking approval for the addition of some coolers that are currently in place where stone dust was added. The concrete pads and the stone dust fell within the 100 foot buffer. A stone dust walkway was also added. They have also restored an area with concrete grass pavers. He added that they have added a 25 foot no-mow area and will re-vegetate a 2,300 square feet area.

Vice Chairman Blanchard asked if this was an after-the-fact approval. Mr. Fenstermacher replied yes.

Ms. Tanner commented that she appreciated the increase in the plantings.

Ms. Wright asked about the existing vegetation between the new coolers and the wetland. Mr. Fenstermacher said that it was mowed lawn.

Chairman Miller asked if the geese that frequent the ponds in the front live in the back area. Mr. Fenstermacher said that they are all over the site. Chairman Miller said that adding tall plantings along the shore might reduce their activity in that area.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Miller asked for a motion. Ms. Tanner made a motion to recommend approval of the application as shown and presented on the plan dated stamped February 8, 2017. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zamarchi. There was no discussion. The motion passed by a unanimous 7-0 vote.

## **V. WORK SESSION**

### **1. City of Portsmouth – Peirce Island parking improvements for wastewater upgrade**

Mr. Terry Desmarais, City of Portsmouth Engineer, explained the resulting impacts associated with construction. The staging area is located at the current pool parking area, the existing City snow dump, and the off-leash dog area. To offset that loss, the proposed project includes the Four Tree Island parking lot expansion and parking improvements adjacent to the boat ramp.

Mr. John Pearson, AECOM, stated the existing lot holds 24 spaces and the proposal would expand to 54 spaces. The entrance would be widened leading to one way traffic moving through the area with parking in the middle and along the perimeter. No storm water management exists today and the project proposed to utilize infiltration either through pervious pavement or pavers. All landscaping was selected based on what is currently thriving on Pierce Island. An underdrain system will need to be routed adjacent to the boat ramp where the runoff leads to currently.

Mr. Jeff Clifford, Altus Engineering, explained the configuration of the area adjacent to the boat ramp that includes four rows of parking. The posts sitting in the ground are not considered impact. There are two different permits for the work at the boat launch because it is part of the larger project. The proposed plan would allow for the pavement runoff to infiltrate into the permeable pavement or pavers and overflow discharges would travel away from the salt marsh.

The total amount of pervious within the DES jurisdiction would not change.

Mr. Clifford clarified to Ms. Tanner that the 6,000 s.f. of impervious surface is outside the buffer. He added that all the plantings would be new and one tree near the entrance would be removed.

Mr. Clifford responded to Chairman Miller to describe the soil class and noted there would be enough structural strength to support permeable pavers. Mr. Desmarais added that the Department has not worked with permeable pavers before and may end up considering porous pavement. Ms. McMillan stated that sometimes issues can occur when using both impervious surface surrounded by permeable pavers. Mr. Clifford explained certain features and maintenance recommendations for permeable pavers. Chairman Miller stated it would be helpful to have additional information regarding using pavers adjacent to a pervious surface.

It was discussed whether a guard rail at the parking lot adjacent to the boat ramp would be necessary to prevent potential erosion. Ms. McMillan encouraged the area to remain as natural as possible and to introduce natural vegetation given the expected increase in use. Mr. Cardin questioned whether it will become a long-term parking area. Mr. Desmarais was unsure and noted that the Peirce Island Committee and Recreation Department would have to determine whether it will remain as flexible space. There was further discussion about if and when the space should be considered as a long-term parking area.

## **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

The Commission briefly discussed the upcoming work session with the Planning Board regarding Borthwick Forest. Comments were made regarding easements, the nearby wetland, and vehicle access.

### **A. Discuss and schedule Spring stewardship project**

It was determined that removing invasive species from the cross-country trails at Portsmouth High School along Sagamore Creek would be the next stewardship project. The date was set for May 11, 2017 but time is still be determined.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marissa Day  
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Conservation Commission meeting on April 12, 2017.