

**REGULAR MEETING
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

Conference Room "A"

3:30 p.m.

July 13, 2005

Members Present: Chairman, Charles Cormier; Vice-Chairman, Steve Miller; Members, Brian Wazlaw; Allison Tanner and Don Green; Alternates, Barbara McMillan and Skye Maher

Members Excused: J. Lyn Walters and Eva Powers

ALSO PRESENT: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner

Chairman Cormier called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

I. STATE WETLANDS BUREAU PERMIT APPLICATION

a) City of Portsmouth – Water Main Replacement between Portsmouth and New Castle

Dave Allen and Peter Rice for the City of Portsmouth's Public Works Department spoke on behalf of the petition. Mr. Allen informed the Board that there was a significant break in the largest water line that feeds into the Town of New Castle. He explained that there were actually 3 lines that feed into New Castle that were originally installed in 1960. They sent divers in to repair the line but it kept breaking. They were proposing to replace the broken water main with a high-density polyethylene pipe that would be installed by divers and the City of Portsmouth. He further explained that the divers would repair the channel-crossing portion of the water main and the City of Portsmouth would repair the remainder. He stated that they had hired Waterfront Engineers, LLC to put together the application submitted and indicated that they would be replacing essentially, 1800 feet of pipe. He noted that they had met with the US Army Corps of Engineers, NHDES, Coastal Zone Management and National Marine Fisheries to visit the site in question. He further stated that there was an eelgrass survey that was performed and an area of the eelgrass was mapped for which the City had agreed to a mitigation project. He pointed out that the eelgrass area was considered important habitat and stated that they had negotiated with National Marine fisheries to replace 6 moorings in the area with moorings that augered into the floor with a tether without a chain dragging. The City would be providing the funding for the replacements and work with the Port authority to address that issue. He reiterated that it was a 12-inch HDP. He noted that in the non channel crossing area, there would be about 2 feet of cover over the pipe with textile bags that would be filled with gravel that would cover the

pipe and act as ballast in that area. There would be an 8 ft excavation area where they would scoop up the material out of the bottom and install 120 foot sections of pipe (comes in 40 foot sections) and then fuse together the 3 sections. Mr. Allen showed pictures of the area to familiarize the Board with the areas of replacement and urged the Board for their recommendation to perform the replacement.

Chairman Cormier asked when they would start the project.

Mr. Allen said as soon as possible since the materials were arriving "as we speak".

Mr. Green asked if it involved two town.

Mr. Rice answered yes.

Mr. Green asked what the water arrangement was with New Castle whether there would be a problem with crossing.

Both Mr. Allen and Mr. Rice said no, that the New Castle Conservation Commission was copied on the present application and there was no response from them.

Mr. Allen also noted that they had been in touch and working with the New Castle Fire Department.

Vice Chairman Miller asked if it went back to the early days.

Mr. Allen said there were two crossings visible and that they would be putting in the same path as the original 1940's path.

Mr. Rice pointed out that Frank Jones originally ran the water line out to the Wentworth at one point

Ms. Maher asked if they had to regrade the bottom.

Mr. Allen said they have to do a precondition survey, which they were currently performing and once that was completed, they would have to resurvey to assume that the bottom contours had not changed.

Ms. Maher thought it was a very creative solution to replace the moorings.

Ms. Maher asked how much disturbance they would be allowed to do at the end of the causeway.

Mr. Allen said that it is staked out where they need to put the valve in and they would be digging there and noted that the old pipe line is off to the side of the causeway.

Ms. Maher said that they may have to take some of that stuff out.

Chairman Cormier asked if there was anything else.

Chairman Cormier asked if the Board was ready for a vote.

The Board concurred and the Chairman called for a motion.

Mr. Wazlaw made a motion to recommend approval and Mr. Green seconded.

Chairman Cormier called for the vote on the motion for a favorable recommendation of the project and the motion passed via a unanimous vote of 7-0.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES - Meeting of June 8, 2005

Ms. McMillan noted a correction on page 4, halfway down, to change the statement from "Ms. McMillan reiterated the fact there is not much function in the first wetland area" to "Ms. McMillan reiterated Mr. Clifford's comments about the wetland not being high value..."

Let the record reflect the changes have been made to the June 8, 2005 minutes.

Ms. McMillan moved to approve the June 8, 2005 minutes and Vice Chairman Miller seconded.

Chairman Cormier asked the Board for all those in favor and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Wazlaw commented on the last heard application and said that he thought it was very well written, concise and the best application he had seen in awhile.

Mr. Britz pointed out to the Board another expedited application for Sagamore Grove by Joseph Golter that was signed off. He explained that it was for an in kind replacement of an inoperable septic system and stated that it was an improvement since it will be a working septic system now.

Mr. Britz also informed the Board about the UNH Stormwater Workshop he attended. He noted that it was a success and full of valuable information. He explained the tests and demonstrations performed and noted that it was very useful research.

Mr. Green informed the Board that he attended a "save our groundwater seminar" that was held at the Unitarian Church. He stated that the groundwater withdrawal proposed by USA Springs was a ridiculous use of water and thought it would be a real impact in the future. He felt that all of the Conservation Commissions should take a position on it and he didn't think anyone had done a determination on how much water is held.

Ms. Maher asked if he was suggesting talking to the state.

Mr. Green agreed.

Ms. Maher stated that they did not control the water supply and suggested a campaign. She thought the water supplies needed to be protected and thought the Commission should make a pro-active stand and act as a catalyst to protect the water supply.

The Commission discussed the situation and made suggestions on how to address the problem.

Vice Chairman Miller asked Mr. Britz about the Griffin/Stokel work session whether the date was tentative or definite.

Mr. Britz stated it was tentative and noted another special meeting scheduled for August 25 to be held at the Tradeport.

Vice Chairman Miller said he was watching channel 22 and caught a Planning Board meeting. He said the part he caught was when they were discussing the Conservation Commission and he thought it would be a good idea if there was a work session held between both boards.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission members, at 4:30 PM a motion was made and seconded to adjourn to the next scheduled meeting on August 10, 2005 in Conference Room "A" and the motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina V. Staples
CC Secretary

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