

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

**Conference Room "A"**

**3:30 p.m.**

**August 10, 2005**

**Members Present:** Chairman, Charles Cormier; Vice-Chairman, Steve Miller; Members, Allison Tanner, J. Lyn Walters, Eva Powers and Don Green

**Members Excused:** Member, Brian Wazlaw; Alternates, Skye Maher and Barbara McMillan

**ALSO PRESENT:** Peter Britz, Environmental Planner

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

**I. STATE WETLANDS BUREAU PERMIT**

**a) Standard Dredge and Fill Application of PSNH  
Drainage Swale Modifications-Coal Yard at Schiller Station Portsmouth, NH**

Duncan Mellor of Waterfront Engineers, LLC spoke on behalf of the petition. He stated that the request was a standard dredge and fill application for modifications to an existing drainage swale. The site was located up hill from the Schiller Station and there was an existing coal storage yard. On the uphill side of the yard there was an existing manmade drainage swale built back in 1983 to catch any runoff coming from above the hill and divert around the coal yard so it wouldn't go into the coal yard water treatment system. He stated that they wanted to fill a portion of the swale on the uphill side of the coal yard to install a culvert underneath which would be a combination of a culvert and underdrain and then fill over the existing swale and ultimately expand the coal yard. He said as part of the wood project, the former upper coal yard had to be removed so they needed to expand the existing lower coal yard to get the required volume as per regulations. He went over some photos of the site, the existing coal yard and drainage swale.

Chairman Cormier asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Powers asked what would happen to the existing coal yard that was being moved over.

Mr. Mellor said that would become part of the wood project.

Vice Chairman Miller asked what would happen to the water after the work was completed.

Mr. Mellor answered that it would still go around and further stated that there was not much contributory area to it.

Vice Chairman Miller asked if the water was to be diverted around, it would be then released differently than the storage basin.

Mr. Mellor clarified by demonstrating the flow by using the map he brought with him to the meeting.

Vice Chairman Miller asked why the water didn't go into the same storage basin.

Mr. Mellor answered that it was because it was essentially clean water since it would not come into contact with the coal at all.

Mr. Green asked what type of water treatment facility there was onsite.

Mr. Mellor replied that he didn't know the details on that.

A representative from PSNH explained that the coal basin catches the water and then it is pumped through their main facility where it would be treated and released mainly because of the pH from coming in contact with the coal.

Mr. Green stated that he thought the people or abutters to the facility that get the garbage downwind needed to be at the meeting. He was worried that any mercury or metals that could get into the water would somehow get into the marshes and would effect the ecosystems in the ocean.

Chairman Cormier asked if the clean water would be running in the same place except through a culvert.

Mr. Mellor said that was correct.

Ms. Powers asked if there was any way to replace the trees and the shrubs that they would be removing.

Mr. Mellor said there weren't any plans proposed to.

Ms. Powers asked if that was something that the Commission could recommend.

Chairman Cormier said that the culvert would be covered with soil.

Mr. Mellor said that was correct and that there would be a membrane over it.

Mr. Green reiterated that was so they could put coal over it.

Chairman Cormier said there wouldn't be anything that would grow there after completion of the project.

Mr. Mellor answered no there wouldn't.

Chairman Cormier asked if that was more like metal than vegetation.

Mr. Mellor said yes.

Vice Chairman Miller said clumps of trees.

Ms. Powers read aloud from the application and stated that it specifically said that the trees and shrubs would be cleared, stumps excavated and the top soil removed.

Chairman Cormier said photo 6 would show that the best.

Mr. Mellor said probably photos 4 and 5. Mr. Mellor added that the wetlands vegetation was a fairly narrow strip and within the swale itself and that was best documented in the wetlands report. He did not think they had done any studies on what was on the soil outside the wetlands area.

Mr. Green said the whole exercise was to expand the storage area.

Mr. Mellor said yes.

Chairman Cormier reiterated to meet the state requirement.

Mr. Mellor said yes and that it was the best case scenario and option to accommodate the required volume.

Chairman Cormier asked if they had considered the alternatives.

Mr. Mellor said yes.

Mr. Green made a motion for a favorable recommendation of the project and Ms. Tanner 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.

**b) Standard Dredge and Fill Application of Pease International Tradeport Aviation Apron Expansion-International Drive, Portsmouth, NH**

Mr. Leon Kennison, facilities director for the Pease Tradeport and Mr. Jeffrey Cantara of Gove Environmental Services spoke on behalf of the petition. Mr. Kennison explained that in the next year, possibly starting in the coming fall, a rehabilitation and removal of the concrete in their hangar area to expand the small aircraft, hangar/aviation area. He further stated that their design had incorporated a

partition to serve as a sound barrier on the fill area. He indicated that in that area there was a drainage ditch that catches some runoff that happens to be classified as a wetland. He stated they would be filling about 2,900 square feet of the wetlands. Mr. Kennison turned over the presentation to Mr. Cantara.

Mr. Cantara explained that the wetlands in question were located in the southeast corner and classified as meadow wetlands. He said that they had been kept as low mowed grass and they were located in the areas in which they wished to build the additional hangars. He stated that there was very little room to build around the wetlands and that they had to tighten up the grading to steep slopes in order to minimize the impacts. He further indicated that they had not received any concerns or opposition from any abutters.

Mr. Green asked what would happen if they needed two more hangars in the future, where would they put them.

Mr. Kennison answered that their recent proposal was the end of their future developments to the aircraft hangar locations and that there would not be any further expansion at least to that particular area.

Ms. Tanner asked if there was ever standing water in the wetlands.

Mr. Cantara answered no.

Ms. Tanner asked how the drainage would be handled.

Mr. Cantara said it would flow through a multitude of grass swales and a meadow.

Ms. Tanner asked if that meant it bypassed the existing wetland that they proposed to fill.

Mr. Cantara said currently, yes.

Vice Chairman Miller was confused about the drainage and location of the area.

Mr. Kennison clarified the drainage and location for him.

Mr. Cantara further explained to him that there were some areas where there were wetland conditions in the meadow, which they were basically, a matrix of upland and wetland, mowed meadow plants.

Vice Chairman Miller asked if that would be disturbed.

Mr. Cantara said no.

Vice Chairman Miller asked if there was any way to enhance the area that it would flow into.

Mr. Cantara said one way would be if they would let it grow up.

Mr. Green asked how large the complex itself was.

Mr. Cantara said a couple of acres.

Mr. Green had no objection to the project.

Ms. Powers asked if there was any way to condense the areas of the hangars.

Mr. Cantara said no since there needed to be clearance between the aircrafts.

Mr. Walters made a motion for a favorable recommendation of the project 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.

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 13, 2005

Ms. Tanner moved to approve the July 13, 2005 minutes and Mr. Walters seconded.

Chairman Cormier asked the Board for all those in favor and the motion passed via a unanimous vote.

## III. OTHER BUSINESS

### a) **360 Constitution Avenue, LLC Earth Excavation Constitution Avenue, Portsmouth, NH**

Mr. Peter Britz gave a brief overview of the project to help shed some light onto the project for the Commission to better understand why the particular project was before them for their review.

Mr. Dwight Snow of Ames, MSC spoke on behalf of the petition. He stated they were applying for an excavation permit and went over a plan depicting the proposed site. He explained to the Commission the areas on the plan that were notated in green (areas affected by excavation), red (wetland buffer) and blue (the delineated wetlands). He stated that the current project would not be going into the wetland buffer and would not disturb the wetland areas at all. He further stated that area was essentially a pile of boulders that were put there when the site was developed. He indicated that they would be returning the site to its natural state/elevation and that the ultimate objective was to subdivide the lot. He also stated that they would be placing four inches of loam and seed the site but would not be proposing any other plantings as they hope the site would be developed into something else.

Ms. Tanner asked, since Mr. Snow only explained what one of the green areas indicated on the plan consisted of, what was in the other green areas shown on the plan.

Mr. Snow said that there was some boulders and ledge. He further stated that the soil would stay but that they would have to cut some trees in a couple of areas.

Ms. Tanner was concerned about the removal of the trees that they would be cutting down.

Mr. Snow said they would only remove the trees on the right of way, City land and those necessary to remove the boulders.

Ms. Tanner clarified that the trees next to the road would be left out.

Mr. Snow answered yes.

Ms. Powers asked about the other green areas indicated on the plan and how many trees would be cut down in those areas.

Mr. Snow said they may cut down in those areas to pave and make room for parking but that the plan for now was to seed that area.

Ms. Tanner clarified that when the applicant spoke of plantings, they really meant laying down grass seed.

Mr. Snow said yes, grass seed.

Chairman Cormier said at some point there would be a building there.

Mr. Snow replied yes.

Ms. Tanner replied if they received permission to subdivide.

Mr. Snow replied yes.

Mr. Green asked how wise it was to cut down trees that take 30-40 years to grow if they weren't positive on where the building would go.

Mr. Snow answered that whoever develops on the lot would have to make way for access and that was why they were doing it now. He reiterated that the area was very hilly and steep and that the goal was to level it out.

Ms. Tanner stated that it was an industrial zone area anyhow so she didn't think that they would want much visibility anyhow.

Mr. Snow replied yes, but clarified that it was actually office research zone and they were hoping they would rezone it to be industrial.

Mr. Green noted that the advantage of Constitution Avenue was that it was nicely wooded.

Mr. Snow reiterated where the best place for an access way would be and also indicated that there needed to be a ten foot buffer zone and explained that they want to do as little site work as possible.

Ms. Tanner asked how the site drained currently.

Mr. Snow said currently a little bit of water drains on site and the majority runs off into the wetland.

Ms. Tanner clarified that there was nothing coming off of the parking lot like a drainage swale that would deflect water from going into the wetland.

Mr. Snow said no, but that they would use silt fences.

Mr. Tanner asked after excavation how the site would drain then.

Mr. Snow said they graded it so that they would be a decrease in runoff afterwards since they were removing the steep slopes.

Mr. Britz asked if they would get infiltration on the site.

Mr. Snow said they would have more infiltration than what was on there currently.

Vice Chairman Miller asked what the vegetation was in the wetland buffer currently.

Mr. Snow answered that it was all wooded.

Mr. Britz asked Mr. Snow to explain the width of the City owned land between the road and the property.

Mr. Snow answered approximately 100 feet in some areas to 60 feet until close to the develop site where it would drop more.

Chairman Cormier asked Mr. Britz if the Planning Board was looking for a recommendation from the Commission.

Mr. Britz answered yes and suggested that the Commission recommend that they provide silt fences until the vegetation stabilizes.

Vice Chairman Miller suggested that they didn't go into the wooded buffer area as well.

Ms. Tanner suggested adding the stipulation to the recommendation that silt fences be installed during construction and that the silt fences be removed after the vegetation stabilizes.

Chairman Cormier asked if there were any further questions.

Ms. Tanner made a motion for a favorable recommendation of the project with the added stipulation that they remove the silt fences when the vegetation is stabilized.

Chairman Cormier called for the vote on the motion for a favorable recommendation of the project with the added stipulation and the motion passed via a unanimous vote.

#### 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 and the motion passed via a unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina V. Staples  
CC Secretary

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