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SUFFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION REC'D BY: K
MEETING MINUTES
MEETING OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024
SUFFIELD POLICE STATION

PRESENT:

Art Christian, Chairman
Glenn Neilson, Vice Chairman
Norm John Noble
Ray Wilcox
Beth Fanous
Pat Reilly
Gary Phelps

CONSULTANT:

Keith Morris

CALL MEETING TO ORDER- 7:00 P.M.

Chairman Christian called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Consultant Morris read the agenda. Vice Chairman Neilson made a motion to move public comment up on the agenda to after informal discussion. The motion was seconded by commissioner Wilcox and carried unanimously. The Commission introduced themselves to the public

PARKS SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:

Consultant Morris stated that the Parks Superintendent would not be attending tonight's meeting.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Braddock – South Stone Street

Jarrod Braddock addressed the commission regarding land he is considering purchasing on South Stone Street. He has had the wetlands flagged and is hoping on constructing two houses on 3.7 acres of land. He is asking for the commission's input as he does not think he can meet the 150' setback from wetlands for the two septic systems. A discussion followed on the setback of the septic systems. After discussion, the commission stated that it may be a viable project. Chairman Christian made it clear that there is no guarantee of approval and that the final decision will be made when an application with engineered plans is submitted and reviewed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Consultant Morris updated the Commission on the logging operation on land behind the former rectory for St. Josephs church on South Main Street. There was concern from resident Eric Boone of 65 Barry Place that a violation was taking place due to a small

portion of the logging area, two finger like areas, being shown as wetlands on the town GIS wetlands map. Mr. Morris was able to contact the property owner who had a Professional Soil Scientist delineate the jurisdictional wetlands on site back in 2022. The property owner forwarded the soils scientist's report to Consultant Morris. Mr. Morris stated that the report specifically mentions the two finger areas shown on the Town's GIS wetlands map and that soil samples taken in those two areas did not exhibit characteristics of wetland soils and therefore were not jurisdictional wetlands. Consultant Morris stated that he emailed the report to Mr. Boone earlier today.

Mr. Boone distributed a handout to the Commission and presented his information. He stated that the operation should be shut down as it was his opinion that a violation had occurred. A lengthy discussion followed with numerous abutters expressing concerns about the clear-cutting and concerns with water and wildlife issues.

Consultant Morris stated that the property owner should have come to the Commission prior to starting the logging operation to discuss the two wetland fingers and to submit the soils scientist report to the Commission, but at this time he did not see a need for any further action by the Commission. Mr. Morris stated that he instructed the property owner to contact the acting Town Engineer to insure that any necessary permits are obtained should he want to remove the stumps from the logging operation.

After discussion, the Commission took no further action.

PUBLIC HEARING (7:30 P.M.):

Permit # 1715 – MJL Realty Investments, LLC - (owner) – Phase 2, Eastwoods Active Adult Housing – East Street South. This property is located on the west side of East Street South, nearest intersection being Juniper Lane. Assessor's Map 78H, Block 47, Lot 91 D.

Consultant Morris read the legal notice and stated the dates that it ran in the Hartford Courant. It appears that most of the certified mail receipts from abutter notification have been returned. He then went over his handout to the Commission and stated what information each commissioner had in front of them.

Attorney David Sherwood, representing the applicant, then addressed the Commission. He stated that the application is for a renewal of a previous permit issued in 2003 which has since expired. The design is essentially the same as previously approved with the storm drainage system design being upgraded to meet the state's current storm water standards. The current application is for the construction of the remaining 32 units out of the proposed 65 units. 33 of the units were built as the first phase.

Attorney Sherwood referenced a court case which essentially stated that if the Commission previously approved an application and if the new application is essentially the same design, and the regulations have not changed, then they must approve the new

application. Vice Chairman Neilson questioned the court case and after discussion it was decided that Consultant Morris will contact Town Counsel to discuss.

Attorney Sherwood then submitted a list of materials submitted to the commission and handed Consultant Morris the complete set for the record.

Guy Hesketh, Professional Engineer of F.A. Hesketh & Associates, Inc. then addressed the Commission and went over the differences in the current proposal compared to the previously approved project. Minor revisions to the wetland boundary have been made resulting in additional wetlands. Other changes include modification to the detention basin and stormwater drainage system as requested by the acting Town Engineer. to comply with current regulations. Mr. Hesketh went over those changes in detail.

Consultant Morris asked if a U S Army Corps of Engineers permit would be required since there is approximately 9, 148 square feet of wetland impact proposed from the project. Mr. Hesketh stated that the Corp will have to be notified and they would decide if a permit is necessary.

Bill Jackson, Registered Soil Scientist, from Jackson Environmental, LLC addressed the commission. He stated that the original wetland flags were reflagged in the field by a surveyor and then discussed the minor changes he made to the boundary that resulted in a minor amount of additional wetlands. He then went over the function and value of the wetlands which include educational value, flood control, pollutant attenuation and wildlife value.

Chairman Christian opened the meeting to the public:

Public:

Ken Kudla – 216 East Street South: Had questions regarding access to the conservation land.

Diane Zipoli – 107 Juniper Lane: Expressed her opinion that their community was on a private road and any future development would be trespassing. Chairman Christian stated that that was not under the jurisdiction of the conservation commission.

Lynne Centore – 25 Greenbriar Drive: Expressed concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed development including wildlife and the environmental impact on the vernal pools and proceeded to quoted sections of the Suffield Conservation Commission regulations.

Rick Centore – 25 Greenbriar Drive – Had questions on the sewage pump station. Chairman Christian stated that his question was under the jurisdiction of the Suffield Water Pollution Control Authority. He is also concerned with the projects impact on wildlife and the ecosystem.

Charles Lukas – 367 East Street South: Had concerns with the proposed pumping station location, stating that if it fails the overflow would travel across his property. He also expressed concerns that the existing basin is not being maintained.

Gerry LaPlante – 29 Greenbriar Drive: Recommended that the commission review the conditions of the 2003 permit and also had concerns with the planting plan and maintenance of the pumping station. He is also concerned with the original planting plan never being done and the increased runoff due to climate change.

Carol Tallarita, 103 Juniper Lane: Concerned with increased traffic and current problems with water in her basement becoming worse with more development.

Rich Zipoli, 107 Juniper Lane: He is located right next to the proposed access to the proposed development and is concerned regarding if they have development rights for the property..

Fran Carlow, 37 Greenbriar Drive: Stated that every time there is a heavy rain the ponded water gets closer and closer to the condos.

With no further comments Vice Chairman Neilson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Noble, to continue the public hear until the November 12, 2024 meeting of the Commission, at 8:00 P.M.

CONSULTANT'S REPORT:

No Report

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 8, 2024 MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Noble made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by commissioner Phelps and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Noble made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by commissioner Phelps. The motion was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by
Norm John Noble
Recording Secretary