

SUFFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025

TOWN CLERK
SUFFIELD, CT

2025 JAN 22 PM 3:52

PRESENT:

Glenn Neilson, Vice Chairman
Norm John Noble
Ray Wilcox
Beth Fanous
Gary Phelps
Pat Reilly
Tom Elmore
Jessica McCue

REC'D BY:

CONSULTANT:

Keith Morris

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

Vice Chairman Neilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and stated that he will be chairing the meeting due the absence of Chairman Christian. Consultant Morris read the agenda. Vice Chairman Neilson stated that alternate commissioner Elmore shall be a voting member in place of Chairman Christian.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Sue Mayne – Sunrise Park Forest Management

This discussion will be tabled to a future meeting

Permit # 1719 – Roy (owner) – Garage – Thompsonville Road. This property is located at 331 Thompsonville Road. Assessor's Map 52H, Block 45, Lot 19.

Consultant Morris presented the application for 331 Thompsonville Road for the construction of a garage. Construction of the driveway results in the filling of just under 5,000 square feet of wetlands. This proposal was discussed numerous years ago informally but he doesn't recall if an application was ever filed. Commissioner Wilcox asked what has changed and if mitigation has been proposed. Consultant Morris stated that no mitigation has been proposed and the applicant has submitted a report from a soil scientist stating that the wetland area has been previously disturbed and did not provide many functions.

After a lengthy discussion, applicant Yvon Roy stated that he would come back with a wetland mitigation plan. The commission stated that this does not guarantee that the application will be approved. Commissioner Wilcox made a motion, seconded by commissioner Elmore, to table the application until the January 28, 2025 meeting of the commission. The motion carried unanimously.

Permit # 1720 – Burrell (owner) – Site work – Forest Road. This property is located at 623 Forest Road. Assessor's Map1H, Block 1, Lot 28.

Consultant Morris introduced the application and stated that each commissioner had a copy of comments from Norm Cheever from the Southwick Conservation Commission.

Tim Coon, Professional Engineer from J. R. Russo & Associates, LLC, presented the application and went over details of the proposed wall, which included a handout. Due to the presence of sand on site he doesn't expect there to be a problem with erosion. All work shall take place on land with nothing proposed within the water which would require Southwick Conservation approval. The existing boardwalk has been permitted by the Town of Southwick. The proposed patio will be constructed of pervious material with equipment access to the construction area being through the existing driveway on the southeast side of the house. The homeowners are hoping to start construction in the spring and finish by the fall. Chairman Neilson requested that a stockpile be shown on the plan in the front of the house and surrounded by erosion controls.

After discussion, commissioner Noble made a motion, seconded by commissioner Phelps, to approve the application of Richard and Darlene Burrell for site work at 623 Forest Road with the following conditions:

Suffield Conservation Commission stipulations 1-11 shall apply. (copy attached).

12) Prior to the start of work, and after erosion controls have been installed, the applicant shall conduct a pre-construction meeting attended by the commission's consultant, the contractor, and project engineer. Also, the engineer shall add a stockpile on the plan in the front of the house surrounded by erosion controls.

This property is located at 623 Forest Road. Assessor's Map1H, Block 1, Lot 28. The plan on record is entitled: "Burrell Residence, 623 Forest Road, West Suffield Connecticut, by J.R. Russo & Associates, LLC, dated November 25, 2024. This permit is granted in a Declaratory Ruling, as it is the Commission's opinion that the work will not have a significant impact on regulated areas. This permit shall expire on May 14, 2029. The applicant has paid a filing fee of \$233.00. The motion was carried unanimously.

Permit # 1718 – Burke (applicant).- SFH – Lakeview Drive. This property is located at 407 Lakeview Drive. Assessor's Map 10H, Block 3, Lot 161.

Consultant Morris presented the application for 407 Lakeview Drive for the demolition of an existing structure and construction of a new single-family home on the same footprint. Erosion controls have been installed. After a brief discussion commissioner Wilcox made a motion, seconded by commissioner Noble, to approve the application of Richard Burke for the demolition of an existing home and the construction of a new one on the same foot print with the following conditions:

Suffield Conservation Commission stipulations 1-11 shall apply. (copy attached).

This property is located at 407 Lakeview Drive. Assessor's Map 10H, Block 3, Lot 161. The plan on record is entitled: "Proposed House, prepared for David Straite, 407 Lakeview Drive, Suffield Connecticut, by Denno Land Surveying & Consulting, dated October 21, 2024". This permit is granted in a Declaratory Ruling, as it is the Commission's opinion that the work will not have a significant impact on regulated areas. This permit shall expire on May 14, 2029. The applicant has paid a filing fee of \$214.87. The motion was carried unanimously.

PLAN ACCEPTANCE:

Permit # 1721 – Egan – Retaining Wall – Lakeview Drive. This property is located at 485 Lakeview Drive. Assessor's Map 10H, Block 3, Lot 173.

Consultant Morris presented the application for 485 Lakeview Drive for the construction of a retaining wall. After a brief discussion commissioner Wilcox made a motion, seconded by commissioner Elmore, to accept the application and put it on the agenda for the January 28, 2025 meeting of the commission for a possible decision. The motion was carried unanimously.

Permit #1722 – Suffield Academy (owner) – Solar Array – Stiles Road and Academy Drive. This project is located at the end of Stiles Lane. Assessor's Map 33H, Block 30, Lot 101.

Consultant Morris briefly went over the application which is on the agenda for acceptance. After discussion, commissioner Noble made a motion, seconded by commissioner Phelps, to accept the application and put it on the January 28, 2025 meeting for a possible decision. The motion was carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Southwick Conservation Commissioner Norm Cheevers addressed the commission regarding a draft of an informational pamphlet he handed out at the last meeting on behalf of the Southwick and Suffield commissions discussing permitting requirements for residents living on the lake. Vice Chairman Neilson stated that Suffield's First Selectman does not have an agreement in place with the Board of Selectman in Southwick and was not in favor of the pamphlet.

PUBLIC HEARING (Cont. 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 gave the Commission an update since the last meeting on December 10, 2024. At the last meeting the commission voted to hire an outside wetlands consultant to review the plan along with the wetland delineation and offer comments regarding potential impacts and changes to the current plan compared to the plans submitted in the original application

George Logan of REMA Ecological Services was chosen to do this task. Mr. Logan then presented his report dated January 14, 2025. He had several minor changes to the wetland boundary but overall found the wetland delineation to be substantially correct.

It is his opinion that the current plans “mirror” almost exactly the plans that were originally submitted back in 2003 and the stormwater drainage system has been upgraded to comply with current regulations which benefits water quality.. Mr. Logan also recommended that the wetland mitigation design originally approved should be upgraded to current design standards. He stated that the applicant has submitted revised specifications for the mitigation design right before the meeting that he approves of.

Lastly, while not a wetlands issue, a Species of Special Concern (eastern box turtle) Has been recorded in the vicinity of the site by CT DEEP. A discussion with the public followed with Mr. Logan stating that the required General Permit from CT DEEP would cover protection of the turtle during construction.

Project engineer Guy Hesketh then submitted a response to Mr. Logan’s request regarding the mitigation area dated January 14, 2025 and Attorney David Sherwood submitted an updated list of materials submitted for the public hearing also dated January 14, 2025.

After a brief discussion commissioner Noble made a motion, seconded by commissioner Elmore, to close the public hearing and to put the application on the January 28, 2025 meeting of the commission for a possible decision. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSULTANT’S REPORT:

Consultant Morris informed the Commission that he has a meeting with the First Selectman and Finance Director on Thursday, January 16, 2025 to discuss the 2025 – 26 conservation commission budget. Vice Chairman Neilson and commissioner Noble will also attend the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 10, 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 Elmore. The motion was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by
Norm John Noble
Recording Secretary

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