

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting – 27 January 2021

Members present: Peter Vincent - Chairman, Lil Province, Bob Avakian, Jeff Carlson, Christina Brown

Absent: Geoff Kontje

Staff: Jane Varkonda, Lisa Morrison

ELMS FAMILY LLC & 18 CALEB'S POND ROAD LLC - NOI for vegetation management, repair and reconfigure beach stairs, and repurpose pumphouse for storage. Both properties are owned by Goldstein and are located at 22 and 18 Caleb's Pond Road. Kara Shemeth from SBH was present for the applicant. Fred Fournier of Landscape, Nelson Giannakopoulos of Sullivan Associates, and Mike Zadeh, contractor - were also present.

Shemeth noted that both properties are in need of bank revitalization. The plan is to remove invasive species, overgrown vegetation, and dead and dying trees. The same family has owned both properties for over 50 years.

18 Calebs Pond has a set of stairs and an old pumphouse the applicant would like to repurpose for storage. The applicant would also like to modify the configuration of the current stairway, which is very steep and unsafe. The applicant is also planning to use the new roof of the pumphouse as a viewing platform.

Shemeth said that they would like to remove about nine trees which are dangerous and falling out of the bank. Several mature trees will remain.

Brown asked how the bank will be kept stabilized once the trees are removed. Shemeth said that several trees are about to fall out of the bank and take a portion of the bank with them. They would like to cut them down before this happens. The root systems will not be removed. Steve Ewing will remove the trees from the site by barge. The bank will then be replanted with native species such as clethra and bayberry.

After some further discussion, Province made a motion to continue both hearings to the next meeting, 10 February, and schedule a site visit. Carlson seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

SCHARFSTEIN (continuation) - NOI to construct pool, pool cabana, and associated landscaping and site work. Jude Villa, Derek, and Andrew Kelly from Working Earth were all present for the applicant. Former Suhler property.

Hearing was continued in order to get more information on water usage on the lot to help determine whether or not the pool would have a negative impact on the aquifer. Kelly noted that the Suhler property had been thoroughly irrigated. Scharfstein intends to have a more natural and less water-dependent landscape. Several of the irrigation heads have been removed. There was some discussion about the timing of irrigation and the fact that irrigating in the middle of the day causes less water to re-enter the water table due to evaporation.

Carlson noted that the amount of water that will be used to fill the pool will probably not impact the aquifer at all, especially if it is done in the off-season.

The agent said that she has spoken to Matt Poole who is confident that this portion of North Neck Road does not have water problems. She also referred the commissioners to Brad Woodger's letter of 25 January 2021 [see file].

Vincent asked if a dry well is planned. Kelly said that one will be installed. Province made a motion to issue the order with the following conditions: dry well installed, pool to be filled only in the off-season. Carlson seconded the motion and voted to approve the project with conditions. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

The agent reported that the Katama Farm Committee has been meeting every week. She said that the RFP for the education portion will be ready tomorrow. The agricultural RFP will also be ready soon. The Committee will be responsible for the initial vetting of candidates.

Avakian asked if both leases could be awarded to the same candidate. Varkonda replied that it was possible, and would likely make the process easier. Two separate leases would require separate wells and electrical services, for example - which could be expensive.

Avakian said the first year will not be a full season, partially because of Covid and other considerations. He said the Committee and the Commission will be setting the course for the next ten or twenty years so they need to be sure they have the right candidate.

The following items were approved by the board:

Order of Conditions for 79 Turkeyland Cove.
Extension Permits for Burgin, MV Land Bank - Tom's Neck Farm, Herring Creek LOA.
Certificate of Compliance: Edwin Woods
Minutes of 13 December

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Approved: _____