

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting – 9 January 2019

Members present: Christina Brown, Stuart Lollis, Bob Avakian, Geoffrey Kontje, Jeffrey Carlson, Lil Province

Absent: Peter Vincent – Chairman

Staff: Jane Varkonda, Lisa Morrison

Farm Institute Lindsay Brown and Chris Kennedy were present to discuss proposed uses and events for the 2019/2020 season. The purpose of the meeting is to get approval from the Commission for fund-raising events that the zoning inspector has determined will require permission from the Zoning Board. Ms. Brown said that many of the events such as Meals-in-the-Meadow, Sheepalooza, and the Fall Festival are annual fund raisers that have been going on for years. Ms. Brown submitted an outline of proposed events including dates and expected attendance.

With the construction of the new commercial kitchen, the farm hopes to expand their weekly family oriented farm dinners. As these events are neither wholly educational or agricultural they would require additional permission from the ZBA.

Ms. Brown said that the board of health is currently working out the septic capacity, which could limit the number of people involved in farm dinners, especially during days when camp is in session. The camp runs from the last week of June through the end of August and serves approximately 100 campers.

Ms. Brown asked how the Commission felt about the farm renting the kitchen out to people who wish to make jam or can produce. She mentioned that the community group, the Gleaners, were looking for a place to clean and process produce.

Christina Brown was concerned about renting out the kitchen to for-profit ventures. Lindsay Brown said that they would be willing to run each case by the Commission.

After some further discussion, Province made a motion to endorse the Farm Institute's proposal and allow them to move forward with their plans. Avakian seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (Continuations):

Outerbanks Nominee NOI to remove vegetation from brackish pond. Doug Cooper, applicant's representative, submitted a full-size plan as requested. Cooper noted that the access road has been put on the plan, and reminded the board that any equipment will be transported using construction mats to minimize disturbance in the resource area. The location of silt fencing was also shown on the plan, as well as the dewatering corral. A floating backhoe will be fitted with a hydrorake and it will slowly go back and forth in about 2 to 3 feet of water until most of the weed is removed. Any disturbed upland areas will be restored at the completion of the project. The access will be adjacent to the Melrod lawn.

Mr. Cooper reported that the type of aquatic weed that will be removed is called 'widgeon grass.' He said that the work will take only a few days. The water temperature needs to be at least 46 degrees. He said he anticipates the project beginning in May.

Kontje asked if the bottom of the pond will be left barren. Cooper said that the hydrorake is not 100% effective and leaves about 15% of the weed behind.

Cooper noted that the work will be done by the same company previously used by Melrod to clean up the pond. He said that the work needs to be done every six or seven years.

Cooper noted that some of the existing lawn area was found to be technically in the wetland. This area will be delineated on the site plan and restored as outlined in the previous order of conditions. The agent suggested that some sort of barrier be put in place to keep the lawn from expanding in the future.

Kontje made a motion to approve the project as presented. Avakian seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Gammill – Alexander Plantingfield Way. Kris Horiuchi was present to review the proposed landscape plan. A report of the site visit was given. Members continue to have concerns about the lack of vegetative screening between the house and the pond. Lollis said that the proposal to plant seven cedar trees will not have much effect – the house is too high and prominent.

Horiuchi noted that they are proposing to plant a total of 20-feet of native buffer at the edge of the wetlands. Lollis said it will be too low to have much effect on the visibility of the façade. Horiuchi said that because the site is so open and windy, trees will not grow tall.

Lollis said that the vegetation needs to be planted closer to the house. He said he knows that the client is not in favor of that plan. Horiuchi reiterated that large trees will not do well in front of the house.

After some further discussion, it was agreed that native shrubs will be planted close to the house to help soften the façade.

Kontje asked if something could be planted in back of the house that would grow higher than the roofline. Horiuchi said that she did not think anything would grow tall enough to break the roofline either in front or behind the house.

The agent proposed that the meeting be continued to 23 January to allow Horiuchi to submit a proposal for the native plantings. It was suggested that the Commission could review the proposal again after two complete growing seasons and could require additional plantings at that time (spring of 2021).

McCourt Commission voted unanimously to have Chairman Vincent sign the escrow agreement that was proposed back in July. The McCourts have posted a bond with town counsel and the Commission has approved the restoration plan.

The modification to the guest house order of conditions will be heard at the next meeting, 23rd January.

OTHER BUSINESS

A request by Dick Knight and Peter Wells to install a flagpole on Chappy Point was discussed. The Commission voted to inform Mr. Knight that he needed to file a request for determination.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Approved: _____