

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting – 24 January 2018

Members present: Peter Vincent – Chairman, Christina Brown, Bob Avakian, Stuart Lollis, Jeff Carlson, Lil Province, and Geoffrey Kontje

Staff: Jane Varkonda, Lisa Morrison

Public Hearings:

JACQUET NOI to construct stone revetment to stabilize bank, North Neck Road. Reid Silva was present for the applicant. There is an existing bulkhead along the portion of the property that is in front of the original 1946 camp. The applicant is proposing to construct a new revetment along the remaining shoreline to the west of the existing bulkhead and to install a system of drift fencing on the shoreline to the east of the existing bulkhead. The proposal also calls for stabilization planting of the bank with native vegetation.

Mr. Silva explained that the western section of the property receives a higher level of wave energy hence they are proposing a traditional rip rap stone revetment in that area. They plan to keep the existing bulkhead. The height of the bank varies from about 8-feet at the eastern edge to 15-feet at the western edge.

Mr. Silva said that Mr. Jacquet hopes at some point to improve his access. Currently, during MHW, Mr. Jacquet has to drive through water to access his property.

Kontje was concerned that the proposal will be creating an armored peninsula that will be highly visible to anyone on the water.

Brown asked about the current rate of erosion. Mr. Silva said that according to CZM data the rate is 1.2 feet per year in places.

Kontje questioned whether the revetment could be permitted as it does not appear to be protecting a house in existence since 1978. The old camp already has a bulkhead in front of it.

After some further discussion, the Commission voted to continue the hearing to next meeting, February 14th. Kontje made the motion, which was seconded by Province. Unanimously approved.

SWEET SPOT (Ryan) NOI to replace existing wooden beach stairs with aluminum, North Neck Road. George Sourati was present for the applicant. This property has a steep 40-foot bank. An existing set of wooden stair has collapsed. Rather than replace the wooden stairs, they would like to hire the company in Maine that put in replacement stairs for the Trustees at their Wasque property.

The pilings that would be used are just 1.5 inches in diameter. They would be driven 8-feet into the bank. Another advantage is that the lower section can be removed in the off-season and replaced as needed. This allows the stairs to be readjusted to accommodate changes in the bank due to erosion. Because the bank is so steep, the stairs cannot be built as a straight run.

Vincent asked if the Trustees are pleased with the installation on their property. Mr. Sourati said he believed they were. There was some discussion about whether or not the silver-colored aluminum would interfere with the historic views and vistas. Mr. Sourati said that the stairs could be powder-coated in a neutral color.

Province made a motion to continue the hearing to the next meeting for a site visit. Brown seconded. Unanimously approved.

AMATO NOI for a vegetation management plan, Plantingfield Way. Andrew McGee and Jim Putnam of Wilkinson Ecological Design and Jim Esposito, caretaker, were present for the applicant.

Mr. McGee explained that there are four main areas that are currently full of invasive species such as porcelain berry and bittersweet and crowding out the more desirable natives such as cherry, Eastern red cedar, high bush blueberry, and sweet pepper bush. There are also areas of cattails and phragmites that need to be controlled.

The applicants would also like to reconfigure an existing path so comes out on their property, not on the neighbors.

The proposal involves using mechanical means as well as a program of targeted herbicide application to remove all invasives, and then do some rejuvenation planting. They will also prune plants that have been overrun by porcelain berry and bittersweet.

The goal is to make a healthier ecosystem.

Brown asked about a timeline. Mr. McGee said he sees it as a three year program. The first year would be dedicated to removing the invasives with a goal of replanting in 2019.

Brown asked how the work will be done. Mr. McGee said that wherever possible removal will be done by hand. He said that their aim is to always use the smallest amount of herbicide necessary to get the job done. No spraying is proposed. They will use the cut and wipe method. He estimates that 80% of the invasive vegetation will be done in the first year. The remaining 20% would be dealt with in the second and third years.

Mr. McGee said that they propose using two herbicides: glyphosate and triclopyr. A small excavator may also be used, but not in any resource areas. Penn mulch, a paper product, will be used to stabilize the areas where invasives are removed.

Kontje said he thought that disturbing the site encourages the growth of invasives. Mr. Mcgee said that while that could be true, it also gets the soil ready for replanting and seeding. Mulching prevents the growth of undesirable vegetation.

After some further discussion, Province made a motion to approve the project and issue an order of conditions. Conditions to include: Minimum three year project with on-going maintenance, project to be reviewed in three years.

Kontje seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Other Business:

Vincent made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 10th meeting. Province seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

The next meeting of the Commission was scheduled for 14 February 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Approved: _____