Minutes
Northampton Conservation Commission
2nd Floor Hearing Room, City Hall, Northampton, Mass.
April 25, 2019

Members | Present | Time
---|---|---
Kevin Lake, Chair | x |  
Mason Maronn | x |  
Randy Krotowski |  |  
Jack Finn | x |  
Jason Perry | x |  
Jessica Pica | x |  
Elizabeth Wroblicka | x |  
Staff | Present | Time
Sarah LaValley | x |  

Meeting Opened At: 5:31 p.m.  By: Kevin

Minutes Approved: October 11, 2018  Motion By: Elizabeth  Second By: Mason  Unanimous: Yes

Public Comment
None

5:30 PM Notice of Intent for roadway improvements including drainage improvements and adding and replacing shoulders. Northampton DPW, Cross and Spring Streets right-of-way.

Johanna Stacy, DPW, provided an overview of the project. Cross Street work will be done in estimated rare species habitat and riverfront, and includes crushed stone shoulders, new drain lines, and deep sump catchbasins. Spring Street work will occur in bordering land subject to flooding and includes new catchbasins. Jack asked about the rare species. Johanna replied that these are not disclosed, but that a ‘no-take’ decision was issued by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program. The Commission discussed DEP’s comments on the project, noting that it includes no new outfalls and will tie into the existing drainline. Johanna stated that gravel material should be a large enough grade not to mobilize into resource areas despite steep slopes. The Commission asked if there are any alternatives to proposed paved aprons. Johanna replied that paved aprons are proposed in steep areas where vegetation would not be sustainable.

Mason moved to close the hearing. Seconded by Elizabeth, the motion carried unanimously. Mason moved to issue an Order of Conditions with standard conditions. Seconded by Jessica, the motion carried unanimously.

5:40 PM Notice of Intent for roadway improvements including drainage work, repaving, and adding guardrail. Northampton DPW, Chesterfield Road right-of-way.
Johanna Stacy stated that the project involves repaving and shoulder work from the Kennedy Road intersection to the town line. No loss of flood storage is proposed.

Public Comment: Wayne Thibault stated that water pools near the former Upper Roberts reservoir, and asked if the grade will be changed in that location. Johanna replied that the road will be regarded to flow into a swale on the south side of the road and the new drainline. Wayne expressed concern about new proposed guardrails, suggesting that boulders could improve safety while maintaining character. Kevin stated that this is outside the scope of the Conservation Commission’s jurisdiction.

Jason moved to close the hearing. Seconded by Jack, the motion carried unanimously.

5:50 PM Notice of Intent for dumping ground remediation within bordering vegetation wetland and riverfront to unnamed stream. Work to include landfill excavation, removal of buried solid waste, and restoration to pre-construction conditions. MassDOT. 155 Locust Street, Map ID 23B-013

Tim Dexter, MassDOT, and Tom Keough, AEComm, provided an overview of the project. Tom stated that a Notice of Project Change was filed pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, and a Water Quality Certification amendment is underway. The overall scope of the project has not changed, but impacts have increased due to discrepancies with the plan that was used for permitting. Bank excavation is also now proposed. The restoration plan has increased to reflect the additional wetland impacts. The former dumping ground includes mostly solid debris, and not petroleum is anticipated to be found. Jason asked if dewatering is necessary. Tim replied that it is not, construction is proposed in the fall when water levels are low and soil is not proposed to be removed in its entirety. Sarah noted that the previous Order will need to be closed out as ‘invalid’ since work did not occur, and wetland boundaries will need to be marked and reconfigured.

Mason moved to continue the hearing until May 9 at 6:30 PM. Seconded by Elizabeth, the motion carried unanimously.

Certificate of Compliance, MassDOT, 155 Locust Street, DEP File 246-0726

Mason moved to issue a certificate of compliance, noting it as ‘invalid’ for work never having been completed. Seconded by Jessica, the motion carried unanimously.

Review of Staff-Issued Permits

Sarah provided an update on an emergency bank stabilization project at Smith College where a portion of the bank just north of the track collapsed. Overhanging trees with no underlying soil will be removed, and further investigation done by Smith’s engineers in anticipation of a possible future application for additional work.

General Public Comment

Wayne Thibault noted that there are differences in treatment of sediment between dam removal projects and other types of work, and expressed concern about sediment being deposited downstream.

Kevin noted that the benefits of dam removal are great, and plans need to include consideration of downstream impacts, including any possible threats to infrastructure.

Jessica noted that the Upper Roberts area is in the beginning stages of channel formation.

As there was no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:33 PM.