

PEMBROKE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 11, 2022

In attendance: Ammy Heiser (Chair), Carol Bertsimas (Vice), Ayn Whytemare, Wendy Weisiger, Karen Yeaton (BOS Rep), Brian Mrazik (after 7:20pm)

Absent: Kevin Foss (PB rep), Tom Gallo

Public: Jess Hunt (Stantec) & Ashley Friend (Eversource)

Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 7:09pm

Planning Board Applications:

1. Eversource - Special Use Permits for aquifer and wetland districts:

Ayn questioned about the removal of old poles. Eversource representatives responded that only one pole is close or in a wetland (#14 surrounded by a vernal pool within the wetland buffer). Those are the type that would typically be cut off and left. Eversource will need to make access road improvements (¾" crushed stone 12-foot wide). The work pad area will be 30'x60'. Ayn asked that Eversource do what they can to protect the area from illegal ATV use and damage. Ammy asked about the handling of rare or endangered species in this area. Eversource is still finalizing their identification of rare plants and best management practices with NHFG and NHNHBB. They have been working with USFWS, NHFG, & USACE to manage all of the rare species interaction. They are working on getting their protection plan into final sign-off. They will have monitors out there for the rare species. There is an EPA Construction General Permit (SWPP) which requires heavy amount of erosion control to be installed for stormwater protection.

2. 245 Pembroke Hill Rd - Special Use Permit for wetland crossing for driveway:

There was a proposal 8-10 years ago to develop this lot that met with opposition. At that time, the CC did a site walk and found the lot to be extremely wet. Ayn is concerned about impacts from creep (lawns, fill ,etc) after the house is built and suggested restricting the deed to preclude further development of the remaining lot area. It appears that the development at the proposed site will have much more impact than on the westerly portion of the lot, which also has access from Pembroke Hill Rd. The plan also appears to have impacts within the wetland buffer zone that were not addressed in the application. The CC recommends that the owner look for a site on the property that will not impact wetlands and the buffer zone. The Town should not provide a special exception if impacts can be avoided.

DES Letters and Applications:

1. Notice letter for the Pembroke Hill Driveway Application (see above)
2. Forestry Notification (SPN) on Map 523/Lot 12, 443N Pembroke Rd. (no CC comments)

Review and Approve Minutes June 13, 2022:

Motion passed to approve the draft minutes as submitted.

Conservation Lands:

1. Deed Reviews: Ammy spoke with Atty. Stephen Whitley regarding our concerns about several deeds that don't appear to provide adequate conservation protection. He will get back to us after reviewing our concerns and will give us a cost estimate and plan on how we should proceed.

2. Monitoring Update: Wendy visited White Sands on July 10 and found that there was partying, lots of boats, and a red pickup illegally parked on top of the bluff. Ayn suspected that the northerly gate has been open or unlocked. Ammy will check the gate and speak with Chief Gaskell about enforcement of parking restrictions. Wendy suggested that we post a sign prohibiting glass containers at the site.

3. Bragfield Pond: A resident on Jack's Dr. requested CC permission to bait bears on this parcel. Ammy advised him that we have never given bait permits in the past. The CC position is to deny the request for this site on the basis that baiting will further encourage bears to enter residential areas creating a public safety hazard. Since this is not a common request, the CC will reply to these on an ad-hoc basis. Wendy went over the policy that SPNHF uses for considering bait permits. She stated that for 60,000 acres of SPNHF property only about 10 permits are granted each year and only in very rural areas.

4. Beck Tree Removal Update: An abutter had asked that the Town pay for a shed damaged by a fallen tree from this parcel. Because fallen trees are usually handled as an act-of-god, the Town suggested she speak with her insurance company first. Wendy suggested that the CC adopt a policy to grant permission for abutters to remove trees that might cause damage to their property, provided that the work is done at the abutter's cost using an insured tree company. David Jodoin has suggested that we include checking for potential hazardous trees during routine monitoring visits. The CC adopted both these policies. Brian will revise the monitoring form to include reporting on potential hazard trees and circulate it to members.

5. Girard (Robert Frost Park) - Invasive Species Removal: Ammy received a letter from *Meet Me in Suncook* regarding cutting the extensive growth of bittersweet along the riverbank on this site. The Town has a service that mows all of its lawns and has been mowing this area. Public Works put out a bid for the work. Mattice Collins Property Services provided a proposal to cut the growth on the bank twice per year for \$500 each. Wendy inquired about what their plan is to deal with the invasives since they cannot be legally cut and moved to another location. Ammy will call Mattice Collins to obtain a written statement of their plan for disposal.

6. Ames Brook: The field at the entrance is growing in. Stetson Heiser offered to bushhog it this fall. Wendy inquired about what our plan is and why we want to keep this mowed. Brian stated that having fields and early successional forests on some properties would provide diversity since most of our lands are fully forested. Ammy suggests we take a look at the regeneration on this site and then make a decision in October.

Other Business:

Ayn suggested that the CC pursue obtaining a conservation easement on the 80-acre Whittemore Homestead (374 Pembroke Rd), as the property has historical, agricultural and riverfront attributes that should be preserved for the Town's benefit. With the recent death of the owner,

now is an opportune time to discuss this option with the new owners of the property. The discussion should include the CC's possible willingness to pay for the administrative costs of establishing the easement and obtaining a land trust organization to administer it. The current owners should also be advised of the tax advantages associated with the donation of a conservation easement. Ayn recently met on site with representatives of the Five Rivers Land Trust and they expressed an interest in stewardship of the property. The Whittemore family is having a family reunion on July 30th which provides an opportunity to begin this discussion. Ammy will draft a letter to the owners to express the CC's interest in preserving this parcel and will attend the July 30th celebration.

Adjournment:

By consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM

NEXT MEETING ON AUGUST 15TH