

BRENTWOOD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting of September 08, 2021

Members in attendance: Bob Stephens, Brian Silva, Andy Laroche, Robin Wrighton, Lise McNaughton

Selectmen in Attendance: Jonathan Frizzell

Alternates in Attendance:

Public in Attendance: Becky Dunham

Meeting convened at 6:39 pm.

- Wrighton made a motion to accept June's meeting minutes. Laroche seconded the motion. Motion carries.

- Town Properties and Easements:

NH DOT is doing sign work on 101. Some work will impact wetland areas and NHDOT is asking about mitigation projects to offset their impacts. NHDOT to provide ConComm with locations of work being done.

VHB and Eversource representatives were present to provide information on their proposed power line maintenance program on the ROW located between and near Deer Hill and Pine Roads. Stephens recused self from discussion over potential conflict of interest.

New steel poles will replace wooden structures and be placed about 10 feet from the existing poles. ConComm members expressed concern about possible negative impacts to this area as some of the worksites sit atop an area of high water transmissivity stratified drift aquifer within the Brentwood Aquifer Protection District. This aquifer is one of two within the town that is an important source for drinking water. Eversource has reached out to a landowner on Industrial drive for potential access. This would give construction traffic better access and lessen the disturbance of the wetlands.

Eversource would like to submit application to DES for permits at the end of September or the beginning of October. The turn-around time is about a week. They will review the process with DES and NH Fish and Game as well.

Conservation Commissioners expressed issues and concerns to Eversource and VHB representatives (Petitioners):

- Due to the specific location of this proposed work, the ConComm is concerned about minimizing ground disturbance and not creating negative impacts, or possible contamination, within this prime wetlands and high-transmissivity stratified drift aquifer. Petitioner indicated they would use timber mats to protect the ground from disturbance from equipment traffic.
- Communication is ongoing between Petitioners and NH Fish and Game, and ConComm have asked VHB to forward their feedback once received.

- From the information provided describing the nature and impact of the work, the ConComm questioned if the designation of “routine maintenance and repair activities” was accurate. Particularly concerning complete replacement of existing structures, to include construction of new foundations about 10’ from the existing. This reflects substantial ground disturbance for removal of existing wooden poles and placement of metal poles in new locations, and within this aquifer/wetland site may require a more extensive permit process.
- ConComm is reviewing Best Management Practices (BMP) for projects within wetlands.
- Questions arose regarding management of emergency situations such as fuel, hydraulic fluid, or other spills. The Petitioner indicated they would incorporate silt/spill fencing and spill pads.
- ConComm asked how would construction equipment, trucks, and other heavy equipment access each worksite, and where would equipment and vehicles be stored?
- Since the access road is narrow, crosses between waterways, and is located on the uphill side of the worksite, where would main access and turnaround points be located?
- PSNH is working with adjacent business owners for access to the ROW, minimizing traffic on existing access road.
- ConComm has asked for unrestricted access to check worksites for implementation of BMPs and impacts to site. Petitioners agreed.
- ConComm requested if Petitioners would remove significant amounts of soil from the worksite rather than spreading it within the wetland areas. Petitioners agreed.
- ConComm has no objections to routine cutting of brush alongside existing access road and within the ROW.
- Regarding pole placement alongside Deer Hill Road, Petitioners indicated placement of no closer than about 20 from the edge of pavement.

- Goals and long-term agenda:
Nothing to update

- Property Reviews:
Wrighton to review Conservation Easement audits.

- Bills and Reimbursements:
Association for NH Conservation Commissioners. ConComm to pay outstanding bill from previous year and to assess benefits to continue the membership.

Wrighton made a motion to pay the outstanding bill and Laroche seconded the motion. The motion passed.

ConComm to review Exeter Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee conservation group dues. Currently, ConComm does not receive feedback from this group. Stephens to research who is representing Brentwood.

Other Business:

Brentwood Recreation Dept. has announced a canoe trip on September 28th.

Wrighton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laroche seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Brian Silva