

DRAFT MINUTES

Exeter Conservation Commission May 11, 2010

Introduction: *Don Briselden, Ginny Raub, Michelle Newman, Sean Lyons, Carlos Guindon, Peter Richardson, Kristen Murphy, Town Natural Resource Planner and Bobby Aldrich, Chairman*

Call to Order:

Following introduction of members, the Chairman asked for Public Comment. There were no comments at this time.

Action Items:

1. Mr. Jonathan Ring of Jones and Beach was present to seek the Commission's comments to a Dredge and Fill application for expansion to existing parking for property located at 100 Domain Drive in Stratham Industrial Park. Before Mr. Ring proceeded, he noted the plans provided to the members prior to this meeting have been revised. Working from the revised entrance and parking layout plan he oriented members to the site, noting the property is located both in Stratham and Exeter. The 220,000 sq. ft. building includes a two story warehouse, single story manufacturing space, a two story office area and a multi-story building on 32.72 acres. The present building and site plan was approved in 1984. Various tenants have occupied the buildings over the years and the applicant, Altid Enterprises LLC., is in negotiations with several companies to lease portions of the building. The prospective lessee at the east end would like to expand the parking lot in the vicinity of their access door. Working from the existing site plan, Mr. Ring noted as a result of meeting with the Stratham Planning Board and Conservation Commission and incorporating their concerns and suggestions, the wetlands impact has gone from 11,300 sq. ft. to 5,500 sq. ft.

Mr. Mark Jacobs, a certified wetlands scientist, working from the plan set reviewed the existing site condition detailing the soil conditions. No secondary or primary indicators of vernal pool habitats are present.

Mr. Briselden asked for the total area of impact including wetlands and buffer. The wetland impact is 5,500 sq. ft. and the buffer impact is 16,900 sq. ft.. The buffer calculations were derived using the newly revised 40' wetland setback ordinance.

Mr. Richardson asked for drainage calculations and Mr. Ring stated a drainage analysis is completed and submitted to the Planning Board for review and to the State. Also, because an Alteration of Terrain permit will be required, the drainage plans will also be reviewed.

In response to a question, Mr. Ring replied at this time they plan to use the existing parking as well. The owners are currently in negotiation with other prospective tenants who may wish to make some changes but that will be another permit. Mr. David Flynn of Altid Enterprises

responded noting the additional 220 parking spaces combined with the existing 791 spaces will yield a total of 1011 parking spaces on the property. Mr. Flynn stressed the application is driven by the various tenants.

Mr. Richardson asked for verification that 53% of the 32.7 acre site is impervious surfaces. Mr. Ring confirmed saying the present site has 42% impervious surfaces and the additional parking would elevate the percentage to 53%. Mr. Richardson stated that was a high number. Mr. Guindon asked if a parking garage had been considered to reduce the footprint on the site. Mr. Ring replied at this time it had not but there has been some consideration to removing some parking at the westerly end of parking lot or perhaps reconfiguring the lots north/south instead of the present east/west.

When Mr. Briselden asked he was told a maintenance plan was included in the plan set for the Planning Board.

The Commission was also being asked to review the Conditional Use Permit and submit a letter of approval if the plan seemed reasonable to the Planning Board who reviews such Permits. The Chairman asked Mr. Ring to walk the Commission through the Permit application supplied to the members.

After some discussion on the options the Commission has on approving or opposing the application, Mr. Briselden made the motion to send a letter to DES not opposing the plan as presented to the Commission at this meeting. Mr. Richardson seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously. Approval of the Conditional Use Permit was implied in the motion.

3. The Chair stated the review of the CIP projects with a cost of at least \$25,000 and cover a 6-year period are currently being received by the CIP Committee for review. In 2009 the ECC submitted an application for the purchase of the Rider (Powdermill Trust) property in Exeter/Kensington and the application of No-Char for the Raynes barn. Neither of the proposals were accepted/or approved. Discussion focused mainly on improvements needed at the Raynes Barn. Mr. Briselden felt the dollar amount previously stated for the No-Char was not correct as there is prep work required before the application of the fire-retardant. He would re-look at the estimates. Mr. Briselden continued by asking if items could be linked together and submitted as one line item i.e. improvements to Raynes Barn. Mr. Aldrich replied he was unsure but for planning purposes to consider it an option. Going out 6 years, Mr. Briselden felt not just roof repairs were needed but most likely a total roof replacement as the present roof is 20+ years old. There is also the need for additional sill work: both are linked to the stabilization of the structure. Mr. Smart at Public Works would be contacted for an estimate of the projects for possible submittal.

As to the status of the Rider (Powder Mill Trust) acquisition, the agreement was entered into with the Kensington Conservation Commission. It is unsure if the warrant was present at their Town meeting or what is its' present status. Mr. Aldrich volunteered to confer with the Kensington officials. Mr. Richardson felt a conversation with all the parties involved was needed. However he did feel a dollar amount should be contributed annually to be used for the acquisition of critical lands should and when they become available. An annual request of

\$50,000 was suggested as a realistic amount. Mr. Briselden agreed but felt a conversation with the Open Space Committee be undertaken as that falls within their charter.

Ms. Murphy felt consideration be given to the replacement/reestablishment of the Little River Bridge that came off its underlings in the spring rain storms. Mr. Richardson viewed the bridge during the high waters and felt some engineering plans were needed to ensure a permanent and stable structure. This time, it appears retrieving the bridge back into its former place is not an option.

5. Mr. Richardson provided an on-line map marked with the locations along the Exeter River in the McDonnell Conservation area and another location upstream in the Exeter River Landing Park where serious bank erosion is occurring. He and Ms. Raub have flagged a new footpath some 30-40 feet away from the River in the McDonnell area. The present easement owner has been advised of the condition of the bank and will view the trail when in town. If no objections to the re-routing, Mr. Richardson and Ms. Raub will continue the work of clearing and placing the brush in portions of the old trail. Mr. Guindon agreed to help. As for plantings along the banks, the question is being asked in an upcoming meeting with ERLAC and DES; not necessarily on this site but different areas in need of stabilization as it can become involved.

4. Ms. Murphy asked for authorization to expend \$250 dollars for 50 **No Motorized Vehicle** signs to be placed at different trail locations where un-authorized trail machines have been observed. A motion to approve the amount passed unanimously. No final decision was made on the signage noting the (William) White Conservation area. It was felt the sign should mimic the signage across the River at the McDonnell area. When the verbiage and style (of sign) is finalized Mr. Briselden will submit to Mr. White's son, Bruce for his approval.

Follow-Up Items:

1. Ms. Newman presented an outline for the National Trails Day event set for Saturday, June 5. The trails in the Henderson-Swasey Town Forest have been selected to highlight. In viewing the web site of the American Hiking Society, a host kit to promote Trails Day was offered for a nominal fee to be used for raffle or giveaways. A motion to spend up to \$100 on the promotional material passed unanimously. Various means of publicizing the event was discussed.

2. In a Forestry Agreement update, Ms. Murphy in conversations with forester Charles Moreno stated the makings of a final schedule are taking place; ground prep in September-October, viewing of the marked trees by ECC and the harvest in winter of 2011. The June 12 date was mentioned as an opportunity to tour the Ahl Memorial Forest in Kingston as an example of a post-harvested forest.

3. As not all members had received the draft minutes of the Raynes Farm Stewardship committee meeting from May 5, Mr. Briselden reviewed the various topics discussed at the meeting: work on terms of lease renewal, storage of carriage parts from an Exeter farm, NCRS-EQIP grant for drainage work, removal of old farm machinery from field, future direction and goal of Farm, the invasive plant species, Russian (Autumn) Olive and the means of control, trail development, compliance with the LCHIP agreement. (Ms. Murphy is to research in more detail

the terms of agreement) and membership. Mr. Aldrich in discussing membership felt the representation present at this meeting was a good start and suggested two members from ECC be a part of the committee. After membership is determined steps will be taken to formalize the committee. At this time Mr. Nate Merrill is a member of the committee as a representative of Stuart Farm but does abstain on voting on issues of possible conflict.

4a. At the April 29 work session it was stressed there are funds available to participate in some of the on going workshops and training sessions scheduled throughout the area. Ms. Murphy reviewed some of the upcoming programs. The Chair recognizing not all members were available to attend workshops, suggested bringing the training to us. By dedicating an hour before the regularly scheduled meetings we would have a presenter provide a program to aid in educating ourselves. The meetings would be held several times a year and any suggestions for such programs would be welcomed.

b. Mr. Aldrich while updating the 2001 Bylaws has made some suggestions for revision but will review with the members in upcoming meetings review both the old sections and the suggested revisions for a consensus on content and/or additions to document.

c. With the Commission being involved in various areas of conservation and preservation, Mr. Aldrich referred to the ECC “tree” Ms. Murphy created with the areas of involvement and responsibility as the “leaves”. More will be done at future meetings on the targeting members’ areas of interest and a willingness to focus on a specific or portions of a task.

Regular Business:

1. Ms. Murphy referred to the previously prepared work plan divided into quarters for projects to be accomplished this year but commented on tasks yet to be initiated or completed. One item is the invasive species inventory and with the Russian (Autumn) Olive being cited as pervasive at the Raynes Farm perhaps this was a starting place. There is a need to prioritize the plants and how to tackle them. Mr. Richardson felt there is the need to become more aware of the plants and after doing that one will find they become more aware of their presence in the natural setting. The Chair felt this was a training opportunity and then add to agenda to aid in developing an inventory and how to tackle the problem.

In spite of “blank” spaces next to the list of work tasks there are a number of “completed” and Ms. Murphy was thanked for her work in seeing them accomplished either by herself or eliciting the work with others.

Work is ongoing in completing the trail blazing in Henderson-Swasey and Ms. Murphy asked for approval of \$137.88 for paint and other supplies to continue with the project. Motion to approve carried.

2. The Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented.

3. A revision to the Minutes of the April 13 meeting regarding the number of ECC members to the Raynes Stewardship Committee so as *not* to have a quorum was noted and the minutes of this meeting and the work session meeting of April 29 were accepted as amended.

4. Under other business, Mr. Aldrich announced the deed to the Little River (former playing fields) parcel is done after being reviewed by all parties. The ECC is to vote to accept the deed and then Selectmen vote to accept. Several members expressed a desire to verify the site clean-

up was satisfactorily completed and receive a site plan (surveyor's plot plan) to collaborate the verbiage of the deed before acceptance. A site walk of the site was also suggested. After reviewing the provisions permitted on the site, Ms. Raub asked if Gardens would be a permitted use. The consensus was they were allowed falling under the public educational and the passive recreation use.

6. The June scheduled meeting is set for the 8th, but Ms. Murphy is unable to attend that evening. Discussion focused on moving it to June 15. That date appeared satisfactory to all present and the motion to move the meeting to June 15 carried.

Motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Ginny Raub
Secretary