

Exeter Conservation Commission
November 12, 2024
Town Hall
10 Front Street
7:00 PM
Draft Minutes

Call to Order

1. Introduction of Members Present (by Roll Call)

Present at tonight’s meeting were by roll call, Chair Dave Short, Andrew Koff, Keith Whitehouse, Nick Champion, Conor Madison, Sean Torres, Valorie Fanger, Alternate Kyle Welch, Alternate Michele Crepeau, Alternate Bill Campbell.

Staff Present: Kristen Murphy, Conservation and Sustainability Planner

Chair Short called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members. Alternate Michele Crepeau was activated.

2. Public Comment

Action Items

1. Wetland Conditional Use Permit and Wetland Dredge and Fill Applications for a new 51,874 +/- SF supportive living health care center building at 5 White Oak Drive, Tax Map 97, Lot 23 (Erik Saari, Altus)

Chair Short read the Public Hearing Notice. Mr. Campbell recused himself.

Erik Saari of Altus Engineering presented the application for Riverwoods. He showed the location of the proposed health care center and the disturbed wetlands, gas line, and vacant house used for storage. He indicated the three buildings would be combined to one with parking underground and surface. He noted 66% of the property was in conservation. He showed the 100’ buffer and noted the application to encroach on the buffer was denied by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. He noted there will be retaining walls and steep slopes as needed. He discussed stormwater and underground treatment and two bioretention ponds, and porous pavement in front of the building which will capture roof runoff. He discussed sedimentation and erosion control, perimeter controls and lighting which he noted was dark sky compliant LEDs.

Mr. Saari reviewed the site walk meeting in the morning and buffer impact reductions. He noted 86,000 in buffer impact and 19,000 in wetland.

43 Brendan Quigley of Gove Environmental noted that he performed the delineation and provided a
44 functions and values letter, which he summarized. He pointed out the chain of small, segmented,
45 forested wetland which drains to Scammon Brook. He noted more substantial wetlands to the north.
46 He noted wildlife was not well connected. He noted some loss of water quality function mitigated by
47 stormwater management and insignificant impact.

48

49 Landscape architect Robbie Woodburn presented the landscape plan which showed the building
50 buffered by shade trees, most of which were native. She noted they could not put trees along the gas
51 easement. She showed evergreens screening the neighbors from the building and prominent edge of
52 the building. She noted raised beds, and a shed were relocated.

53

54 Mr. Saari noted there will be a mitigation donation of \$152,000 to the ARM fund and 3.5 acres to SELT in
55 conservation if they accept it. He noted the driveway to the house will be removed and seeded. Mr.
56 Koff noted the parcel is full of invasives and they will likely take over the seeded area eventually.

57

58 Mr. Torres asked about existing porous pavement and Mr. Saari indicated no, but there is a small rain
59 garden in front of Gooch Park.

60

61 Mr. Koff expressed concerns with the forced impact of wetlands and buffers because the buffer could
62 not be encroached and the parking lot in the wetland shown on the bottom of the plan. He asked if
63 parking could be minimized or located somewhere else. Mr. Saari noted the 100' buffer drove a lot of
64 this. Attorney Somers discussed the denial for the variance.

65

66 Mr. Madison asked if the state accepted mitigation and Mr. Quigley indicated they filed the pre
67 application. He noted the state is moving to the in-lieu payment program. Ms. Murphy advised the
68 Commission to condition the recommendation.

69

70 Ms. Murphy recommended a condition of approval for the local and dredge and fill permit
71 recommendations. That a deed restriction or conservation easement for the 3.5 acre portion of the
72 parcel (Map 97, Lot 23) be conveyed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy with a condition
73 similar to the town held easement on the property.

74

75 MOTION: Chair Short motioned to send a memo to the state that the Commission has no objection to
76 the dredge and fill permit proposed with the condition read by Ms. Murphy. Mr. Koff seconded the
77 motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Torres abstained, the motion passed 6-0-1.

78

79 MOTION: Chair Short motioned to send a memo to the planning board that the Commission has
80 reviewed the application and has no objection as proposed with the condition read by Ms. Murphy. Mr.
81 Madison seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

82

83 Mr. Campbell returned to the meeting table at 8:04 PM.

84

85 2. Expenditure Requests:

86 a. ESRLAC Volunteer Annual Dues - \$200

87 MOTION: Chair Short motioned to approve the expenditure request for ESRLAC dues in the
88 amount of \$200. Mr. Koff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion
89 passed 7-0-0.

90 3. Committee Reports

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92 a. Property Management

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94

95 i. Ms. Murphy reported an email from a resident with concerns of people passing through
96 the town easement to the woods with a chainsaw for trail building. She determined the
97 work was being done on private property but they cannot connect to the town's trail
98 system without approval of the commission. Mr. Short indicated he was assured it will
99 not be utilized further.

100

101 ii. Raynes Farm Updates

102

103 Mr. Whitehouse described renovations to the basement of the barn where there was
104 cement debris and a granite column. He recommended more lighting on both ends of
105 the basement. Mr. Whitehouse described the hole in the cement floor on the first level
106 which could be used for stairs. Ms. Murphy advised that with the annual barn report
107 there is a stewardship agreement for the grant and repairs are one thing and demo
108 must be approved by the Board of Directors so as to not jeopardize the final
109 expenditure. She noted the historic structure report documents it and identifies it is
110 deteriorated and should be removed. She is waiting to hear from Paula on the process.
111 The Commission recommended getting the design and materials together. Ms. Murphy
112 indicated there was \$300 left and recommended not taking up much of Steve's time
113 since he is on his second extension. She noted the paperwork was filed with L-Chip for
114 the second extension which requires Board of Director's approval.

115

116 b. Outreach Events

117

118 i. Hike Exeter Challenge – Kyle Welch

119

120 Mr. Welch reported he is working on the final descriptions.

121

122 ii. Sunrise Event at Raynes 11/23 Sunrise Keith/Nick

123

124 Mr. Whitehouse noted that depending on rain, there will be an event at sunrise. Mr. Campion
125 noted another event could be held on Winter Solstice in December.

126

127 c. Other Committee Reports (River Study, Sustainability, Energy/CPAC, Tree, CC Roundtable)

128 i. NHACC Annual Meeting
129 Ms. Crepeau noted the classes were good and it was a good change to network with other towns.
130 She looked into the land use change tax other towns use to fund conservation, some as much as
131 100%.

132 ii. NHSaves ButtonUp Workshop Exeter Library Nov. 19th 6-7:30 PM
133 Ms. Murphy noted the ButtonUp workshop presentation at the library shows residents how to
134 weatherize their homes.

135 iii. Window Dressers
136 Ms. Murphy noted that ordering deadline is the end of November and they will be looking for
137 volunteers to build in January.

138
139 4. Approval of Minutes September 10, 2024 Meeting – ***Tabled***
140

141 Approval of Minutes: October 8, 2024
142

143 MOTION: Chair Short motioned to approve the October 8, 2024 minutes. Mr. Koff seconded the
144 motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 5-0-1 with one abstention.
145

146 5. Correspondence
147

148 Ms. Murphy reported Mr. O’hearn can’t do the mowing and will forward some names.
149

150 **Other Business**
151

152 Next Meeting: 12/10/24, Submission Deadline 12/2/24
153

154 6. **Adjournment**
155

156 Chair Short adjourned the meeting at 8:47 PM.
157

158 Respectfully submitted,
159 Daniel Hoijer, Recording Secretary
160 Via Exeter TV
161 Webinar ID 878 3898 8356