



Conservation Commission
Town of Townsend
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DEC 17 2021
TOWN OF TOWNSEND
TOWN CLERK

Jennifer Eaton, Vice Chair
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James LeCuyer

Anne LeCuyer
Joan Savoy, Clerk

Jessica Consolvo, Conservation Agent

Meeting of the Townsend Conservation Commission MINUTES

Wednesday, November 10, 2021 @ 7:00 pm

*****DUE TO HIGHER THAN AVERAGE RATES OF COVID-19 INFECTIONS IN TOWNSEND, THIS IS A VIRTUAL ONLY REMOTE MEETING AND ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND via remote ZOOM @ 7pm**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85051687668?pwd=SEJtQnFPenB1WFFVcjlFRtM2aFY0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 850 5168 7668

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1.0 Preliminaries – Votes May Be Taken:

1.1 - Call the meeting to order and roll call Meeting called to order by Vice Chair JE at 7:02PM under the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) and the Townsend Wetlands Bylaw (TWB).

Roll Call: JG (P) JS (P) AL (P) JL (P) JE (P)

1.2 - Announce the meeting is being video recorded. Is anyone else recording? No one else is recording.

1.3 - Chairman's Additions and/or Deletions None

1.4 - Agent's report JE reminds the CC that on 10/27 JC observed dewatering at 6 Ball Rd and issued a stop order. On 11/1 JC issued a formal enforcement order for the violations. The emergency beaver order was also issued on 11/1.

1.5 - Chair's report JE welcomes the new Conservation Administrative Assistant Matthew Matos (MM) and JS shares her plans to meet MM, alongside the rest of the CC, on the upcoming Friday 11/12. MM introduces himself to the CC.

1.6 - Review/Approve the meeting minutes from 9/22/2021

*JG motion to accept meeting minutes from 9/22/2021, JS seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

2.0 Hearings and Appointments– Votes May Be Taken:

No hearings or appointments

3.0 Work Session – Votes May Be Taken:

3.1 - TWB 2021-112, 51 Emery Rd RDA for the removal of trees within a resource area JS reads the public legal notice regarding the RDA from Estelle Borneman at 51 Emery Rd. The location can be found on Assessor's map 24, Block 11, Lot 0. The proposed project is for the removal of 25+ large pine trees near a residential structure along at pond edge. This notice was run in the Groton Herald on November 5th. **The CC approves this project as long as the tree removal takes place after January 1st**, when the ground is frozen. The homeowner agrees to this condition.

*AL motions to issue a negative 3 determination for TWB 2021-112, JG seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

3.2 - Referral 233 Main St. discuss comments to submit to ZBA for 12/8/2021 hearing JS points out that the project does not reside in any wetland buffers and therefore it is non-jurisdictional, the rest of the CC agrees.

*JL motions to add non-jurisdictional to the comments for the ZBA, JG seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

3.3 – Referral 8 Jefts St. discuss comments to submit to ZBA for 11/17/2021 hearing JS informs the CC that the structure does lie within 300 ft of the Squannacook River and JE the property is within 200 ft of a riparian zone giving the CC jurisdiction. JC points out however, that since the structure where the activities will take place is outside of the 200 feet there is no jurisdiction, assuming there is no illegal discharge. There is some concern about the heavy equipment and construction vehicles on the property, but the applicant in his submittal mentioned that this was only temporary, to fix the driveway due to flooding. The applicant claims that the use for the building will be mainly for carpentry and as a machine shop, not as a contractor's yard. JG informs the CC that the town maintains the catch basin near the property and JL mentions that stormwater from that property wouldn't end up in the river because the ground slopes to the opposite direction. The CC approves this project, assuming that there will be no illegal discharges of harmful chemicals into the river.

*JL motions to add no comments to ZBA submittal, JG seconded
This motion passes unanimously*

3.4 - Discuss options for future land protection re: Squannacook Meadows JG recuses himself from voting on 3.4 because he is a member of TAYSA, and he doesn't want there to be a conflict of interest. JC informs the CC that there are 2 potential options for land protection. Option 1 would be to make the land the CC's property where the CC would then be responsible for maintaining and preserving the property. Option 2 would be to put the property into a Conservation Restriction (CR), which would be more centered around endangered species protection. This CR would be given to a land trust who would then become responsible for the protection of the property. The Liaison (Veronica Kell) informs the CC that the BOS will discuss both options on their December 7th meeting, stating that they want to come to a decision by January, so there is plenty of time before the lease with TAYSA expires in March. The CC decides to table the discussion until they have more information and JS advises the CC to attend the BOS meeting on the 7th to find out more. The Liaison reminds the CC that the National Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) had discussed the 2 options with the CC before and it was the NHESP who wanted the property protected.

*JL motions to table discussion until next meeting, AL seconded
JG(Abstained) JS(Y) (AL(Y) JL(Y) JE(Y) – motion passes*

3.5 - Vote to Change 2010 Fee Schedule Changes to Fwd to BOS for approval JS has shared the current fee schedule and the proposed changes to the rest of the CC. JL has issues with the large increases in some of the fees and recommends instead a 10-15% increase across the board. JE informs the CC that the purpose of the proposed changes is to encourage people to file and discourage people from letting their OOCs run out. The proposed changes would be in step with surrounding towns. AL, JL, and JG still argue that considering the difficult times many people are facing, a 10-15% increase would be much more reasonable. JS asks the rest of the CC to edit the proposed fee schedule with what they want changed and to present it at the next meeting. JS reminds the CC that there seems to be a pattern of people not filing OOCs and letting them expire, so harsher fees will hopefully encourage better behavior. JL argues that better enforcement practices would make a bigger difference than just fee changes. JE and JS ensure the CC that better enforcement and notification procedures are also being implemented. JL, AL, and JG agree to bring their own proposed fee schedule to the next meeting. JC proposes to add an additional site visit fee for any consulting that requires the Conservation Agent to go out to their property. JL proposes that this fee be included in the general permitting fee, so that applicants only have to pay one fee. JE mentions that not all people who want consulting end up sending in an application, so the only way to charge them would be with a consultant fee. The CC all agree that this is a good idea and a good way to get the Agent's advice and opinion quickly, without having to wait for a public meeting.

*JG motions to table this discussion until the next meeting, JL seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

3.6 - Ball Rd NOI update on amended NOI, Agent has issued enforcement order for drained pond, DEP has been notified There have been no updates regarding the amended NOI. However, JC filed an official enforcement order on 11/1/21.

*JS motions to ratify the 11/1/21 enforcement order, AL seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

4.0 Correspondence – Votes May Be Taken:

No new correspondence.

5.0 Education and Conferences – Votes May Be Taken:

5.1 PSA Japanese Knotweed JS informs the CC that the PSA will be postponed until next season because with winter rapidly approaching the PSA is not incredibly relevant. However, JS submitted a post on Nextdoor with information regarding Japanese Knotweed. JG suggests starting a CC Facebook group where the CC would be able to post PSAs and other educational materials.

6.0 Items for discussion at next meeting: Squannacook Meadows future landholding possibilities, proposed new fee schedule, possible supplemental materials (amended OOC) for 6 Ball Rd, potential application status spreadsheet.

7.0 Next meeting: Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 7 pm. This meeting may be virtual Zoom remote in accordance with Covid-19 safe meeting guidelines.

****This will be the final meeting for the month of December, unless emergency meeting is necessary, Please check the agenda**

8.0 Adjournment:

*JL motions to adjourn at 8:07PM, JG seconded
The motion passes unanimously*

