

**Minutes**  
**Northampton Conservation Commission**  
**Remote Online Meeting**  
**May 14, 2020**

Members	Present	Time
Kevin Lake, Chair	x	
Mason Maronn	x	
Randy Krotowski	x	
Jack Finn	x	
Jason Perry	x	
Alec Bernstein	x	
Elizabeth Wroblicka	x	
Staff	Present	Time
Sarah LaValley	x	

*Meeting Opened At:*

*By:*

5:34 p.m.

Kevin

*Minutes Approved:*

*Motion By:*

*Second By:*

*Unanimous:*

December 12, 2019	Mason	Randy	Yes, with one abstention
January 26, 2020	Mason	Alec	Yes, with two abstentions

**Public Comment**

None

**5:30 PM –Continuation: Notice of Intent for residential driveway construction within buffer zone to wetland resource areas. Timothy Seney, 1087 Westhampton Rd, Map ID 41-70**

Tom Miranda, attorney for the applicant, provided an overview of the property and the project; a proposed 800 foot driveway from Westhampton Road, with work proposed in the buffer zone but outside the 50 foot protected zone. Jim Gracia, engineer, Ryan Nelson, R Levesque Associates, and Emily Stockman, wetland consultant, also provided information. The property was part of a larger parcel that was divided, three lots were created off a common driveway, with this lot remaining. A 2015 confirmed wetland delineation expired, and a new delineation performed. Staff worked with Emily Stockman on a few flagged areas that have since been modified, and detailed wetland data sheets have also been provided. The driveway is proposed to be a 12 foot travel surface with rip rap swales and a settling basin for sediment. 11,782 square feet of buffer zone disturbance, and no work within the 50 foot buffer zone.

Mason asked about slope of the riprap drainage channels, noting that checkdams are not included in the plans. Jim stated that these would be requested during the construction phase.

Randy asked if drainage along the driveway will include runoff from the house site. Jim stated that the house site can be mitigated separately. Jack asked about soil types. Jim stated that they are fine sandy loam in this area, and the lot was perc tested in the past. Alec asked about a proposed 90 degree turn in the riprap drainage at the bottom of the driveway. Jim stated that the corner could be built up to prevent flooding if needed.

Kevin read the buffer zone performance standards from the Wetlands Ordinance, and noted that erosion and sediment directed to a wetland area would not meet these standards. Jim stated that there is runoff from the slope in existing conditions, and the proposed settling pool could potentially be enlarged.

Kevin asked about operation and maintenance of the stormwater system. Jim replied that monitoring and cleaning of the swales will be necessary to ensure that leaves and organic matter are removed; if this is not done erosion could occur. Elizabeth asked about access to the lot. Jim replied that a maximum of three lots can be served by the common driveway.

#### *Public Comment*

Lyn Simmons, abutter and former owner of the property, stated that only three buildable lots were intended to be created from the larger parcel, and expressed concern that the driveway will increase inundation that is already present near the property boundary, and concern that the proposed settling pool won't be maintained, noting that several large trees have fallen in the past few years.

Cassidy Bowman, Westhampton Road, stated that wet conditions have increased since houses on the adjacent three lots were constructed.

Elizabeth asked if the applicant has an explanation for increased wet areas behind the abutting lots. Jim suggested that the natural topography directs surface water to those areas. Tim Seney stated that select cutting for views were completed, but that there was not a large-scale logging.

Mason asked about the driveway surface. Jim stated that it is planned to be traprock gravel, with possible paving in the future. Mason asked about stormwater permitting. Sarah replied that a DPW stormwater permit will be required if the total project is more than one acre, and recommended that if an Order of Conditions is granted, phasing not be allowed, as there are other instances in the City where driveways were constructed in advance of prospective houses that ultimately were never constructed.

Elizabeth moved to close the hearing. Seconded by Mason, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Kevin stated that the Ordinance performance standards do not appear to have been met. Elizabeth expressed concern that wetlands will be harmed through creation of the driveway. Jason added that the full picture of potential alteration was not provided since the house is not proposed at this time.

Elizabeth moved to issue an Order of Conditions pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, with a condition that permitting for both the driveway and house be completed prior to work. Seconded by Mason, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Elizabeth moved to deny an Order of Conditions pursuant to the Northampton Wetlands Ordinance, as the work has not been demonstrated to meet the performance standards for buffer zone work. Seconded by Mason, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **5:30 PM – Continuation: Notice of Intent for parking lot expansion and 5:50 PM – Ecological Restoration Notice of Intent for restoration 13.25 acres of former agricultural land to floodplain forest. Work to include invasive species management, native plantings and related work. MassAudubon Society, Old Springfield Road/Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary. Map ID 45-031**

Tom Lautzenheiser, MassAudubon, provided an overview of the project, whose goal is to restore floodplain forest. Funded through a Department of Ecological Restoration grant, climate change adaptation will be pursued with diverse species, and rare species on the property should benefit. Craig Wood, ESS Group, added that the goals are to enhance functional capacity of wetlands, reduce weedy species and invasives. Deer browsing protection will be added. The Commission noted that a York rake will not be allowed in BVW pursuant to DEP's comments that this would require water quality certifications.

Kevin asked about education and outreach. Tom replied that MassAudubon was hoping to involve campers in planting work, but summer workshops have been cancelled due to covid.

Mason moved to close the hearing. Seconded by Elizabeth, the motion carried unanimously, by roll call vote.

Jason moved to issue an Order of Conditions, with standard conditions, valid for five years. Seconded by Randy, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**6:10 PM – Request for Determination of Applicability to determine if resurfacing of an existing paved pedestrian pathway is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act or Northampton Wetlands Ordinance. Northampton Office of Planning & Sustainability, North Farms Road/Broad Brook Greenway - Fitzgerald Lake. Map ID 07-035**

Sarah provided an overview of the project; repaving of the existing pathway. This will address root damage and improve accessibility and wheelchair access to the Lake. Dave Hershops, Broad Brook Coalition, asked about involvement in the design process. Kevin clarified that the project will not involve new work; only repaving of the existing path. Mason moved to issue a negative determination by checking box 2. Seconded by Alec, the motion carried unanimously.

**All other business not foreseen when agenda was published**

None

As there was no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM