

Town of Pelham, NH
Pelham Conservation Commission
6 Village Green
Pelham, NH 03076-3723

MEETING OF 08/09/17

NOT APPROVED

Members Present:

Karen Mackay, Paul Gagnon,
Louise Delehanty, Ken Stanvick

Members Absent:

Paul Dadak, Mike Gendreau,
Lisa Loosigian

Paul Gagnon brought the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Map 7 Lots 9-135 & 9-135-1	Katie Lane, Wildwood Estates – Proposed conservation subdivision – Presentation by Shayne Gendron of Edward N. Herbert Associates, Inc.
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The proposal is for a 13 lot conservation subdivision off Katie Lane. Wetlands were flagged by Gove Environmental. A conventional and a conservation subdivision plan will be presented. The conventional subdivision will be used to show a yield plan or how many conventional lots can be built on the lot. Two lots will be developed, as conventional lots on both plans, with frontage on Simpson Road. These two lots will be larger than all the others and will be the same dimensions regardless of the design plan that is chosen. Lot 12 will be 9.12 acres with most of the land under the power lines and therefore unusable and lot 13 will be 2.6 acres along Simpson Road. These lots were not used as part of the yield plan.

A yield plan is a subdivision plan that follows the standard zoning for the town. This includes 200 feet of frontage on a town road, one acre minimum to build, 35,000 sf of uplands and other rules specified in town ordinances. The developer has to prove that under traditional rules they can show how many homes they can build on the land. This plan shows 13 lots, but 2 lots will be the same on either plan so only 11 of the lots will be used in the calculation. There is no open space, a second roadway with a wetland crossing, and large lots. Once an applicant has shown they can fit 11 lots they can request a conservation subdivision and request the same number of lots plus bonus lots.

Conservation subdivision regulations require a minimum of 40 percent of the land be preserved and left as undeveloped open space. In exchange houses can go on smaller lots with less required frontage. This plan proposes 2 open space lots. One of 2.055 acres and one of 6.141 acres for a total of about 8 acres of open space. In addition, the developer is requesting 2 extra lots for a total of 13 not including the 2 lots that will be on both plans regardless. There is room for negotiation because the bonus lots are not guaranteed. The developers will have no problem getting at least the 11 lots. The developer prefers the conservation subdivision because they build less road and the infrastructure costs are less.

The process is a balance between what the town will get and what the developer will get. The town would also like less road, less impervious surface, less wetland and WCD impacts and the maintaining of some open space. This plan has the open space as part of the homeowners association, but the land could be negotiated to be deeded to the town. The town may not really want this land because it is surrounded by houses. If the land had abutted town forest, the town may want the land or at least want access to the land for the use of town residents. This land is isolated so we may not need access, but the land is still open space. One of the goals of the Commission is to maintain as much open space as possible. There is less impact to the WCD and wetland with the conservation subdivision plan.

The conventional layout breaks the lot into 11 lots with 2 roads. One road enters the subdivision off Katie Lane and the other road enters off Simpson Road. The road off Katie will be 1,050 linear feet with 3,595 sf of WCD impact and the road off Simpson will be 400 linear feet with 2 WCD impacts of 2,809 sf and 1,797 sf for a total of 4,606 sf. The road off Simpson has an area of wetland impact. The wetland impact could be about 526 sf feet, but the area could possibly be bridged to reduce impact. The wetland impacts will be on the old farm field. The wetland in the field area is a man-made farm ditch which can hold water or be totally dry. This land is part of the old Smith Farm. The field is open to the powerlines and open to Hayden Road. There are wide open view sheds from the lots off Simpson Road. All lots in the conventional layout meet town requirements for frontage (200 ft), contiguous uplands (35,000 sf), septic and well systems.

The conventional subdivision is not fully designed because the desire is to proceed with the conservation subdivision. The town does not require a full design of the yield plan and developers traditionally do not fully design these plans because of the expense. If this plan was designed out and included designed road crossings and drainage, the additional impact would be about 12,000 sf more than the conservation subdivision. Conservation subdivision impacts total 10,454 sf with no wetland impacts. The conventional subdivision impacts would total over 22,000 sf including wetland impacts.

The developers would prefer to construct a conservation subdivision. The conservation subdivision would be 13 lots on one road. The road length will be 1,050 linear feet and will enter the subdivision off Katie Lane. The road will run in a slightly different location to the road proposed in the conventional subdivision. There will be no WCD or wetland impact for the road. There will be 2 detention basins. Basin one will have 4,428 sf of WCD impact and basin 2 will have 6,026 sf of WCD impact for a total of 10,454 sf of WCD impact. Most of both basins are within the WCD. The plan meets the requirements for a conservation subdivision.

The land is flat and rolls slightly. The road profile will be within 1-2 feet of grade and require only minor filling. The trees will be removed, top soil will be removed, the road way will be prepped with base layers and gravels then the road will be laid. Large cuts will not be needed to make slope. The grade is about 2.5 percent. A roadside ditch line is proposed to catch water coming off the road. About half way down the road water will enter culvert one and be directed into catch basin one. The basin is 3.5 feet deep and has a weir structure. As water builds up, it is carried by another culvert under the road to catch basin 2. This pond is also 3.5 feet deep. Pond 2 is about 12 feet from the wetland. The water will be slowly released into the wetland.

Regulations require the developer meet pre and post development runoff. There can be no more runoff than current conditions. These plans will be reviewed by Keach/Norstrom the town's reviewing engineering company to make sure detention areas meet all requirements. Sheet flow from the Katie Lane end of the road and the cul-de-sac end will drain to about the center of the road. The basins are not large because the velocity is slow due to a mild slope.

Commission Comments:

Mr. Stanvick is concerned we are making too many exceptions to regulations. There seems to be a lot of compromise. Developers always want an exception for WCD impacts. We are supposed to be protecting the WCD. The density will increase if this plan is approved. With increased density, there will be more runoff and more pollution.

Mr. Gendron stated that twenty-five percent of conserved land in a conservation plan must be upland. This plan has 80 percent of the preserved land as upland. There is a lot of buildable land in this plan. The remaining land will be placed in a conservation easement and can never be built. There are tradeoffs in the conservation subdivision. The developer builds smaller houses, smaller yards, less roadway and less impacts to WCD and wetlands. In exchange, the developer is asking for 2 extra house lots.

Mr. Gagnon stated that if the same number of houses were on both plans, clearly the conservation subdivision would be better because it preserves open space. The question the members of the Commission must ask themselves is does the elimination of a short road warrant the addition of 2 houses? There must be balance and compromise between the town and the developer.

Mr. Gagnon asked about the other land surrounding this proposed development. The same land owner owns about 70 acres between Simpson, Hayden and Tallant Roads. We are talking about 20 acres. We would like to see some type of plan of how the other land will be developed. If 2 more conservation subdivisions are going to be put on this land we would like the open space to be connected.

Mr. Gendron does not have that information. This is the only parcel they are working on at this time. There is a powerline easement going through many of the lots in this area. There may only be the possibility of frontage lots for future development, though he cannot be certain. Power lines devalue property. Mr. Gendron cannot use any of the land under the power lines in any calculations for open space. The area is completely unusable.

Mr. Gagnon asked for a trail easement to be described on the plan to access the open space for the residents of the subdivision.

Ms. Mackay asked if the lots could be adjusted slightly to decrease the size of one lot and add the land to other lots on the plan. Lot 18 is 1.072 acres while one of the other lots at the beginning of the road is .461 acres. Lot lines could be shifted to decrease the size of lot 18 and increase the .461 acre lot and maybe some other lots. In addition, detention pond 2 could be pulled farther away from the wetland.

Mr. Gendron has the basin at the lowest point on the site which is where they want to release the water. He will try to pull it away from the wetland a small amount and will see if it is possible to shift the lots. He will also have a trail to the open space drawn onto the plan.

Open to Public:

Mr. Gagnon read a letter from a resident into the record. The letter was from an abutter, dated August 2, 2017 and addressed to Planning and Conservation. The subject of the letter was water flow of the site and drainage from the site. Pictures were provided that show the wetlands on the property. Several of the pictures were taken in December of 2004. The abutter is concerned about water impacting the properties across Simpson Road and the drainage from the land. In addition, they have concerns about the density of the development on the site. Mr. Gagnon showed the pictures on camera and used the letter to describe the landscape.

Close to Public

A site walk will be conducted on August 16, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. We will meet on Katie Lane.

Map 39 Lot 1-89	38 McGrath Road – Proposed tear down of an existing home and building of a new home with second floor expansion. Replacement of the existing septic system and the addition of a storm water infiltration system – Presentation by Alden Beauchemin of Keyland Enterprises, LLC.
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The proposal is to raze a home on a lakeside lot on Long Pond. The new home will have the same foot print as the old home. The new home is proposed as a 2 story building where as the current home is 1 story with a walk out basement. The dimensions are 20x38 feet overall. A new septic system, well and storm water infiltration system will be constructed. The old home has mold issues and is not worth fixing up. Mr. Beauchemin displayed pictures of the existing home from various viewpoints.

The existing disposal system is an old drywell type system and is not state approved. The new septic system will be state approved and meet all setback requirements from the pond. The new system is being designed by Granger Engineering and will be an Enviro-Septic system. The system has a 12 inch corrugated pipe wrapped in fabric. Test pits have been dug. The design has not be completely finalized yet. The old septic system will be discontinued.

A new well will be drilled on the lake side of the house. The current well is still viable, but the new septic system will be too close to the well; therefore, the well must be discontinued.

The work will require a Shoreland permit from NHDES. The lot has two 24 inch oak trees and one 18 inch hemlock tree. The remainder of the yard is open. The applicant is proposing native plantings such as low bush blueberry about 10 feet from the shore. The owner is proposing to eliminate a concrete walkway that extends from the house down toward the lake and a shed in

the front yard. Pervious pavers will be used under the deck to facilitate the infiltration of storm water.

A foundation drain will be installed around the house at the level below the basement slab. The foundation drain will handle the water that collects at the bottom of the foundation. Water from the drain will discharge into a plunge pool which is like a small, dug out, rock garden area. The plunge pool will be about 3x3 feet and 1.5 feet deep. There will be a drip line infiltration trench along the edge of the house to deal with the roof runoff. The trench will be filled with crushed stone. The drip line infiltration trench does not run into the plunge pool.

The foundation is at grade on the lake side of the house. The basement will be a walk out as is the current house. The high water elevation for the lake is 88 feet. The basement slab will be set at 96 feet which is 8 feet above the high water mark. The front deck will be in the same foot print as the old deck. The front deck is 42 feet from the shore, the house is 51 feet from shore and the septic will be 100 feet from shore as required by town regulations.

There will be no adjustment to the shore line. A seasonal dock will remain in place.

Nothing has been finalized with the state at this time. The applicant wanted Conservation input prior to submitting to the state. They have an application before the ZBA for a variance for height. Their meeting will be on Monday night.

Open to Public:

No members of the public attended the meeting. There was no public comment.

Conservation Comments:

Ms. Mackay suggested the applicant plant more native plants around the plunge pool and perhaps tie the plunge pool garden to the new shore line garden.

Ms. Mackay asked for a site walk. Other members did not feel a site visit was necessary.

Mr. Stanvick asked if the septic tank was going to be removed. Mr. Beauchemin stated that if there was a metal tank, it would be removed and the hole would be filled. Mr. Stanvick wanted to make sure that if there was a tank, it was removed to avoid a possible safety hazard.

The Commission will write a letter to ZBA regarding our recommendations on this project. The letter will also be sent to Planning. Mr. Beauchemin will receive a copy of the letter and can distributed it to the state with the Shoreland application.

Motion: (Mackay/Stanvick) to approve the plan as described. The Commission supports the removal of the shed and removal of the concrete walkway and the plantings near the shore. We recommend the removal of the septic tank and filling of the area as necessary and additional plantings around the plunge pool.

Vote: 4-0-0 in favor.

MINUTES:

Motion: (Stanvick/Delehanty) to approve the minutes of 08/09/17.

Vote: 3-0-1 in favor, Gagnon abstained.

WALK IN ITEMS:

Mr. Gagnon asked if there was anyone who could work a table at the Old Home Day. We would like to promote our mission to the town residents. We will send maps, the open space plan and some brochures. Louise volunteered to collect some materials and work the table for part of the day.

Ms. Mackay informed the members of a Routine Roadway and Railway maintenance notice from the state. These are sent to inform the town of maintenance on culverts. This culvert replacement is near the state line off Mammoth Road.

Ms. Mackay talked about the emerald ash borer which is a pest that attacks ash trees. UNH Cooperative Extension sent the town informational materials that describe the insect. One of the easiest ways the beetle is transported is in firewood. If you are going camping, buy your firewood at the location you camp. Burn all your wood there or leave it. Do not transport wood to your campsite or bring wood home from your campsite.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: (Delehanty/Stanvick) to adjourn

Vote: 4-0-0 in favor.

Adjourned 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Mackay,
Recording Secretary