

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

MEETING OF 10/10/18

APPROVED 11/14/18

Members Present:

Karen Mackay, Ken Stanvick,
Louise Delehanty, Lisa Loosigian,
Paul Gagnon, Mike Gendreau
Brandie Shydo

Members Absent:

None

Paul Gagnon brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He introduced the newest member of the Conservation Commission. Ms. Brandie Shydo has been a member since March, but the Commission did not have any meetings over the summer. Mr. Gagnon welcomed her and appreciates her volunteering her time to the town.

NEW BUSINESS:

Map 39 Lot 1-103	4 Jones Road – Proposed subdivision of a single lot into 2 lots. Project will have WCD impacts – Presentation by Jessica McNeill of The Dubay Group, Inc.
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Ms. Loosigian recused herself from this case because she has a current business relationship with The Dubay Group.

The proposal is to subdivide a 2.4 acre lot into two lots. The existing lot has a dwelling and a well which will remain. The lot with the house will be 1.155 acres. The new lot will be to the north of the original lot and will be 1.233 acres in size. Both lots have the required space for the building envelop and can maintain lot line setbacks. There are no wetland impacts on this project. The applicant is applying for a special permit to place the driveway within the wetland conservation district (WCD) and to remove an unapproved access drive off Sherburne Road. The driveway for the newly formed lot will impact 3,236 square feet (sf) of the WCD. The additional WCD impact for the restoration of a wetland along Sherburne Road will be 1,520 sf. The restoration will be to remove the access drive off Sherburne Road that is present on site, but was never approved by NH Department of Transportation.

The 3 wetlands on the site have been flagged by a wetland scientist. Wetland 1 is located in the northern portion of the lot along Sherburne Road and runs into wetland 2 via an 18 inch corrugated metal pipe (CMP) under the unauthorized stub off Sherburne Road. Wetland 2 runs along Sherburne Road then turns to run along Jones Road. Wetlands 1 and 2 will be within the new proposed house lot. The applicant has proposed to restore wetlands 1 and 2 to their original form. The proposal is to dig out the unauthorized stub and restore the slopes to the existing grade. The restoration effort will impact 1,520 sf of WCD. The area will be planted with a wet

meadow wildflower and grass seed mix. The Commission appreciates the restoration efforts of the applicant. The removal of the stub and returning wetlands 1 and 2 to their original grade will improve conditions on the site. Wetland 3 is in the far southern corner of the original lot. Wetland 3 nor its buffer will be impacted by this project.

The proposed design is the most feasible way to subdivide the existing lot. The existing house is within a rectangular building envelop as required by Zoning. The new proposed house also has a rectangular building envelop. The building envelop on each lot is within all setbacks. The proposed driveway location, off Jones Road, does impact the WCD, but has the advantage of entering traffic on a slower side street and not crossing any wetland. The proposed driveway is located between the proposed property line and wetland 2. The driveway is within a few feet of the property line; therefore, cannot be moved any farther from the wetland. The stub entrance to the lot both crosses a wetland and enters a fast moving road.

The building envelop on many lots in town do not have a rectangle building envelop. Ms. Mackay would like to see a shifted building envelop that may not be a perfect rectangle. Perhaps a diamond shape or a slightly less rectangular shape would fit the lot in an acceptable manner and still allow the applicant to meet setbacks. The building envelop could be along the setback line. The lot line could be moved to run along the WCD line in the area of the lot near the road with the goal to move the driveway farther from the wetland. The lot size could remain the same by moving the lot line to the north in the rear of the lot. Both lots can stay the same size with an adjustment of the lot line. Environmental conditions can be improved by moving the lot line while changing the shape of the building envelop will not impair the lot in any way.

The lot as currently designed places the driveway about 3 feet from the lot line and 5 feet from the wetland. This driveway location is not at all desirable for the Commission. Salts and oils from the driveway will wash into the wetland during rain events. The lot line could be moved to run along the WCD. The driveway could then be moved 25 feet from the wetland rather than 5 feet from the wetland. The goal of the WCD is to protect the wetland. Every foot more of WCD is a foot more of grasses, wildflowers, trees and shrubs that will filter water before going into the wetlands.

The septic system is in the front of the house with the well to the north side of the house somewhat near the center-rear of the lot. The septic and reserve area are tucked between the driveway, wetland and well. There is a lot of empty space between the septic and the dwelling. Ms. Mackay asked if the septic could be located behind the house. Ms. McNeill explained the septic would then need a pump up system rather than a gravity fed system because the rear of the house is higher. The well is not in the WCD, but the WCD can be used for well placement. The well could move toward Sherburne Road. They need 75 feet between the well and septic. Ms. McNeill said the well radius is within the lot line which is an approved waiver the well radius is in the setbacks. The well is in the best location on lot given the constraints.

Long Pond should not be affected by this development. These wetlands and this project is not in any category for restrictions from the state. This development is outside the 250 foot shoreland buffer. The state allows a land owner to cross a wetland to reach buildable area on their lot. The

WCD is not a state regulation; therefore, the state does not limit a land owner from using land in the WCD.

The applicant was before the Planning Board last week where the Board recommended the applicant meet with Conservation. All abutters were notified as required prior to meeting with Planning. The applicant has not received any negative abutter feedback for this project.

Motion: (Mackay/Stanvick) to recommend the plan based on the applicant moving the lot line between the two lots toward the existing driveway such that the proposed driveway is a minimum of 25 feet from the edge of the wetland.

Vote: 6-0-1 in favor; Loosigian abstained.

The Commission talked briefly about moving to paper free plans. Mr. Stanvick suggested members could view plans on laptops rather than printing out plans for each member.

Map 15 Lot 8-216	Windham Road – Landmark Estates Elderly Housing Community - Proposed 42 home elderly housing condominium with wetland and WCD impacts – Presentation by Shayne Gendron of Herbert Associates, Inc.
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This case has been before Planning once and will be back a few more times. The purpose of this meeting is to invite the Commission to the site walk being conducted on October 20, 2018 and to present the plan to the Commission prior to the site walk. This plan is in the initial stages and changes will be forthcoming as the project develops. Mr. Gendron wanted to schedule the site walk while the weather was mild.

The proposal is for a 42 unit elderly housing project on a 36.5 acre parcel. The town regulations have changed elderly housing to be to over 62 rather than the previous regulation that require the residents of elderly projects to be over 55 years of age. The project will be built by Jim Peterson who has built two similar projects in town. The previous projects have been on St. Margaret's Drive and Sherburne Road.

The development area is currently forested with wetlands. There is an old sand pit on the property that has been dug out then overgrown with vegetation. The property will have 2 community wells which will be designed by Lewis Engineering. The wells have been drilled and tested, but have not been approved yet. Mr. Gendron will be back before Planning in November.

Mr. Gendron initially met with Planning in February to discuss the project. He has since been to the Highway Safety Committee, the Fire Department and the Police Department. Mr. Gendron wanted to create access to the parcel off Claudine Drive which is an existing road off Simpson Road. The previously mentioned Committees required an alternate access point. The parcel must be accessed off Windham Road. The Windham Road access created the problem of crossing a wetland. There will be a proposed entrance off Windham Road with an emergency access onto Claudine. The residents on Claudine do not want this new development to have access down their street. The Claudine neighborhood is a small cul-de-sac built in the 1960's. The sight

distance from Claudine onto Simpson is limited which may pose a possible problem if the traffic increased dramatically on the small road due to this new subdivision.

The main access is proposed off Windham Road with an emergency access off Claudine. The road width will be 22 feet which is the narrowest the Highway Safety Committee will allow. The plan is drawn with a 22 foot wide road to Claudine, but the applicant is considering reducing the road width to 15 feet and perhaps gating the road depending on the recommendations and requirements of the town boards and committees. The applicant is still working on the road design. The Condominium Association will be responsible for maintaining the road and the bioretention areas because all land in the development will be private.

The parcel has been surveyed and the wetlands have been flagged by Gove Environmental. Mr. Luke Hurley of Gove will be coming before the Commission to present the wetlands application when it is complete. There are a lot of units on a lot with multiple wetland and WCD impacts. Total wetland impact will be 4,601 sf; total WCD impact will be 62,645 sf.

There are 3 wetland impacts on the project. Wetland impact number 1 is a crossing of 1,453 square feet (sf) just off Windham Road. The proposed road in this area is curved so as to minimize wetland impacts, but Mr. Steve Keach, the town engineer, has requested the road be straightened for safety reasons. This will increase the wetland impacts to some degree. Mr. Keach has also requested the road be straightened in other locations. Ms. Loosigian suggested the WCD impacts may be reduced if the main road ran along the lot line. Additional WCD impacts could be avoided if units 7 and 8 were removed from the plan.

Wetland 2 is located at the intersection of Claudine and Abacoa Road. Mr. Gendron expects this impact to be reduced because the plan currently shows a 22 foot wide road off Claudine, but expects to narrow the access road to about 15 feet wide. In addition, the road currently has a curve at the intersection location, but will be straightened to increase safety. Mr. Gendron expects the changes to reduce the wetland impacts slightly. Wetland 3 is located on the north side of the property with a crossing just beyond the intersection of Abacoa and Basswood Roads. The impact for this crossing is 1,751 sf.

Poorly drained soils and very poorly drained soils are both considered wetland soils. Poorly drained soils will hold water, but usually dry up in the summer. Very poorly drained soils can hold water year round, but can also dry up in summer months depending on precipitation. Test pits were dug in December. Some areas that were labeled very poorly drained on the plan were completely dry in December when the test pits were dug.

The WCD impacts are all associated with road crossings, grading and drainage structures. Mr. Keach is happy with the drainage system design. NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is encouraging developers to create drainage systems to infiltrate water back into the ground which this system will achieve. Test pits have been dug and the soils in the area are good for drainage. Ledge is not a problem on this parcel. Additionally, the parcel does not have a high water table which enables this type of drainage system to be functional. Drainage structures are considered bioretention areas and have been dispersed throughout the parcel. Multiple basins are

relatively small, shallow infiltration areas for water to go back into the ground and into the aquifer. The basins look like detention ponds, but are planted with native vegetation.

There are 20 useable acres on the property. Forty-two percent of the property is in open space. One side of this lot has a powerline easement which is 10 acres in size. The easement land cannot be included in any calculations of open space for the lot and cannot be built upon. Mr. Gagnon asked if there had been any thought about donating the land under the powerlines to the town. Mr. Gendron agreed to discuss the matter with the owner. Ms. Mackay questioned whether land donation was valuable in this location because earlier this year the Selectmen rejected land under the powerlines on a nearby lot. The power company already has an easement on this property which means nothing can be done with this land.

The plan has snow storage piles located in various locations around the property. Some of these piles are close to the wetlands. Snow should not be piled close to the wetlands because plowed snow often has sand and salt which can run into the wetlands. Mr. Gendron will review the location of the piles and try to move some of them to a better location.

A site walk has been scheduled on October 20, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. Members and the public will meet at the end of Claudine Drive.

WALK-IN ITEMS:

Ms. Delehanty told the Commission about National Drug Take Back Day on October 27, 2018. Unused prescriptions can be dropped off at the Pelham Police Department on this day or any other day. The drugs should be brought in to the police to be disposed of properly. Drugs should not be flushed down the toilet because the chemicals in the drugs can enter the ground water which is unhealthy for the environment.

The Friends of the Library are having a book sale on Saturday, October 13, 2018 from 10-2.

The Border Riders Snow Mobile Club is having an open house on October 20, 2018.

Ms. Delehanty thanked the residents of town that came by the Conservation/Forestry booth at Old Home Day. She also thanked the Border Riders for inviting us to share the booth with them.

A lot of residents stopped by the booth to look at maps and talk about town lands. Some residents volunteered to adopt trails on town lands. The Commission asks them to hike the adopted trail a few times a year and report the conditions on the trail to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: (Mackay/Gendreau) to adjourn

Vote: 7-0-0 in favor.

Adjourned 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Mackay
Recording Secretary