

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

SITEWALK OF 01/16/21

APPROVED 03/10/21

Members Present:

Karen Mackay, Paul Gagnon,
Brandie Shydo, Ken Stanvick,
Lisa Loosigian, Dennis Hogan (alt.)

Members Absent:

Mike Gendreau, Al Steward (alt.),
Louise Delehanty, Kara Kubit (alt.)

Applicants:

Shayne Gendron, Edward N. Herbert Associates
Joe Passamonte, Crossroads Baptist Church
Mark Giampa, Crossroads Baptist Church

Map 29 Lot 7-27-1	43 Atwood Road – Proposed addition to Crossroads Baptist Church. Addition to have impacts to the WCD – Presentation by Shayne Gendron of Edward N. Herbert Associates.
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Paul Gagnon began the site walk at 9:00 a.m. This visit to the site was to discuss the initial plan for the addition of two portable classroom buildings to the site. The plan is in the beginning stages. Mr. Gendron would like input from the Commission prior to drawing up a final plan so he can incorporate our opinions and requests to the plan. He presented a version of the plan to us at our meeting on January 13, 2021.

The site has one portable classroom building. This classroom building is outside the wetland conservation district (WCD). Running west to east, to the east of the classroom building, is a long, narrow detention pond. This pond runs along the edge of the parking lot from the side of the building to the edge of the lot line. A small percentage of the pond is within the WCD. The area surrounding the pond is in a mowed grass area. The grass area is largely in the WCD area. The applicants stated that the WCD has been in this current condition for many years, as far back as they can remember. Mr. Stanvick is concerned about the mowing of grass in the WCD. He said this is a violation of the WCD rules. The WCD is a no cut/no disturb zone. This area should be restored to a more natural condition such as planted shrubs and no mowing. He also noticed the plowed snow in the detention pond. The snow cannot be plowed into the pond as it reduces the volume of the pond that may be required to store storm water. The snow on the site must be plowed to some other location.

The new classroom proposed to be directly adjacent to the existing classroom is proposed to have the south-east corner of the building in the WCD. The third classroom building, proposed to be at the end of the row of buildings, is approximately 40 percent in the WCD. With the addition of these buildings, the detention pond will need to be reconfigured and reconstructed. The pond will be moved to the south-east corner of the lot and will be reshaped to a shorter, wider pond.

The pond was proposed to be slightly smaller than the existing pond, because Mr. Gendron's calculations show that is all that is required. At the Wednesday meeting, Ms. Mackay asked for the pond to remain the same size. Ms. Loosigian reiterated the desire for the pond not to be reduced in size. It does not make sense to reduce the size of the pond while increasing the area of impervious surface on the lot.

Members had more of a concern about the third building (the one on the end) because of the 40 percent in the WCD. Ms. Shydo felt she may be able to accept the corner of the middle building being in the WCD, but felt very uncomfortable about having a large percentage of the end building in the WCD. Ms. Loosigian agreed with Ms. Shydo on this matter. Ms. Shydo asked if there could be some plantings in the WCD to help restore the area. Mr. Gagnon would like to see the end building moved toward the parking lot and perhaps into the parking lot which would cause the loss of parking spaces. This move would reduce the percentage of the building in the WCD.

Mr. Gagnon commented that the detention pond was working as it should this morning as we stood in the pouring rain. Water sheet flowed off the parking lot and entered the detention pond. We could see a few areas that the water was flowing into the pond intensively. Mr. Gagnon explained that the pond was collecting this run off and that if there was no pond there, mud and debris from the parking lot would be flowing into the wetland behind the church.

Ms. Mackay said that this site is currently intensively used as nearly the whole lot is impervious surface. She explained the WCD is important as this buffer area is used to filter out contaminants prior from the water flowing into adjacent wetlands. The woods behind the site are an important part of the buffer. Conservation members are looking to improve the environmental conditions on sites as they are further developed. With the addition of the new buildings to this site, the site may be improved from a real estate stand point, but may be degraded from an environmental stand point. The Commission's mission is to try to improve the site environmentally as it is developed.

The applicants did not like the description that they had violations on their property. The conditions on the site have been the same as far back as they can remember. They want to work with the town and come to some agreement regarding the expansion of their buildings so they can serve the residents of town. Mr. Hogan said we would like to work with the applicant. He understands the church is trying to improve the community for the families that live here. The Commission is also working to improve the community, but our job is to protect the environment. He felt we could get to a point of agreement that would satisfy the Commission as well as the church. Mr. Gendron was going to talk to the applicants and redraw the plans with our comments in mind and will present to us again.

Adjourned 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Mackay,
Recording Secretary