

GEORGETOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Memorial Town Hall ♦ One Library Street ♦ Georgetown, MA 01833

MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2021

Committee: Conservation Commission

Date: May 20, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Commissioners present: Carl Shreder, Rachel Bancroft, Rebecca Chane, Chris Candia, Elisabeth Clark, Tom Howland, and Laura Repplier

Staff members present: Steve Przyjemski

The meeting was called to order at: 7:09 PM

Rachel Bancroft starts the meeting by reading off the following:

This Public Hearing is being conducted in a way that is an attempt to satisfy the Open Meeting Law, and other State Laws pertaining to the Public Hearings of the Town's Public Bodies pursuant to Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, as recently amended by Chapter 201 of the Acts of 2020. It is a good faith, best effort to comply with the Executive Order waiving certain provisions of G. L. c. 30A, sec. 20 during the COVID -19 pandemic. Internet based technologies will be used by the Conservation Commission to conduct Public Meetings and Hearings until the Executive Order is rescinded, or the State of Emergency is terminated.

HEARINGS

Carleton Drive – Map 15 / Lot 46 (DEP# 161-0891; GCC# 2019-19) NOI - (cont.)
New transfer station

Steve stated that the Applicant requested a continuation to the July 15th meeting.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to continue the hearing to July 15, 2021 at 7:00 PM.
Tom: Seconds motion.

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ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE

Motion carries.

9 Sawmill Way (GCC# 2021-02) – RDA - (new)

Removal of eight (8) 200' mature pine trees that are within 70 feet of the wetland.

Present:

James Pac (Applicant)

James: Eight trees are in an area of concern; they're labeled A through H. I took measurements from the DPW and found them to be 70-feet, 65-feet, 54-feet, 59-feet, 66-feet, 65-feet, 60-feet, and 50-feet. The concern is purely safety. A tree last fall that was 50' farther in the wetlands than any of these trees, and a windstorm came and took out the top of it, and the debris field landed on my back porch. There have been issues in the neighborhood; one of my neighbors just had a tree fall on his back porch and do considerable damage approximately two weeks ago.

Carl: What kind of pine trees? Are they yellow pine trees?

James: No, they're white pines. They're mature; up to three and four feet in diameter, probably 200-feet tall.

Carl: Steve, have you been out to the property?

Steve: Yes, I have. I think the closest tree he referenced was 50-feet, and it's diseased and damaged. If it was just the tree, I would've authorized to cut it down right then and there. All other trees are well outside the 50-foot, no cut, no disturb, which is why I steered him towards an RDA, as well as the other two hearings relating to tree cutting. I'm not worried about erosion; they're going to crane these out, and I'm recommending not removing the stumps. It's not ideal, but from a safety standpoint and given that a tree next door fell a few weeks ago, I feel it's the right play. It's vegetated. You could suggest replanting, but it's so well vegetated, I think stuff will come up the second the trees come down.

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Carl: If we're trying to clear a safety zone for a building, and we're cutting down trees, it doesn't make much sense to put other trees in the exact same spot.

Rachel: What was the under story that you could see growing up, as well as what wetland is this located near?

Steve: It's a long, skinny one; it's not a huge wetland. It's a pretty narrow wetland.

Rachel: Okay. What is there now, that would be coming back?

Steve: A lot of cherry, small pine, and sweet pepper bush. The pine makes me nervous because in 20 years, we'll be having the same discussion.

Rachel: Is it possible that something of a lower growth could be put in its place, because there are so many with all of these that I'm seeing. Is there a way to put in smaller trees that won't get to that height, that have a slower growth?

Steve: I 200% support the idea, but historically, precedent wise; if the trees being cut down don't require a waiver to be cut down, it's awkward for the Commission to require it.

Rachel: I'm just asking.

Steve: If the homeowner is okay with doing the replanting plan, I 200% support that. But when they're not requesting a waiver, the Commission can't really stipulate it.

Carl: Why don't we ask the Applicant?

James: I would be open to suggestions. There are already lots of trees growing in that area, and I have no intention of removing the stump. My opinion is that the other trees would take over the ground by the time these other stumps had rotted out. The soil is very rich, and things grow very quickly.

Steve: If the Applicant is willing, we can have a discussion offline.

Carl: I certainly don't want to create a formal planting plan to remove some trees; that would be above and beyond.

Steve: Correct.

Rachel: But if he's willing to have that conversation, I would like to see it be had; not formal.

Carl: If the Applicant wants to have a discussion with Steve, I'm okay with that, but I don't want to mandate it.

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James: I'd be happy to speak with Steve about the possibilities.

Steve: I've been out to all three of these properties, and it's so well vegetated. You might be able to put one or two shrubs in, but these are going to be craned out, hovered across, and no soil disturbance. If the Applicant wants to work with me, I'll work with them, but I would absolutely not condition it. We can have an informal agreement, but if they put in two blueberry bushes, I'd be ecstatic because these areas are really well vegetated, and they'll fill in really quick.

Carl: I'm okay with that. Any other questions from Commissioners?

*There are no Commissioner questions, and Carl opens it up to abutters but no one comes forward.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to approve the RDA by issuing a negative determination.

Rachel: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

Rachel: Makes a motion to close the hearing.

Rebecca: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

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5 Sawmill Way (GCC# 2021-03) – RDA - (new)

Removal of 14 trees surrounding the home.

Present:

Mark & Gayle Fehlman (Applicant and Applicant's wife)

Mark: We're doing this application based on concerns of safety, as the previous Applicant mentioned as well. We've become more and more prone to tree damage due to the higher winds that we seem to be incurring. Unfortunately, I started this process about two months too late, because we had a 33" diameter tree split and fall on our home. It wiped out our sunroom, and it smashed five rafters in my attic. I have water damage throughout my house, and I'm waiting to get a general contractor in line. I live in a world of limbo right now.

Carl: That's very unfortunate, sir.

Mark: It is, trust me.

Carl: That's definitely unfortunate, and it shows how sometimes it's essential to look at the safety aspect of trees.

Mark: I would add that the under story is significant within the area, and we have a little red bud that's come out that we put in. We can put some more trees of that nature in there. I don't want to sign up for anything specific, but we'll do something along those lines, to try to minimize any large growth trees.

*Carl asks for additional Commissioner comments/questions, there are none so he opens it up to abutters. No abutters come forward.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to approve the RDA by issuing a negative determination.

Chris: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

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Rachel: Makes a motion to close the hearing.

Rebecca: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft

AYE

Rebecca Chane

AYE

Chris Candia

AYE

Elisabeth Clark

AYE

Tom Howland

AYE

Laura Repplier

AYE

Carl Shreder

AYE

Motion carries.

59 Warren Street (DEP# 161-0904; GCC# 2021-04) – NOI - (new)

Establish a 170' x 150' field for annual crops and fruit bearing shrubs.

Present:

Vanessa Romasco (Applicant)

Laura Short (Applicant's mother)

Maureen Herald (Norse Environmental)

Carl: Have we received the green cards for this project, and is the Applicant and/or Consultant with us tonight?

Steve: Yes, sir. We have a couple people connected to this project. Just for the record; all of the green cards for the projects have been submitted and accounted for, so we're good on the entire meeting.

Carl: Okay.

Maureen: Good evening. My name is Maureen Herald, and I work at Norse Environmental Services. I flagged the property that's in question this evening. The property is located at 59 Warren Street, Catbird Farm. We're proposing to clear some of the existing vegetation to plant some annual crops, as well as fruit bearing shrubs and 170' x 50' area approximately 30 feet from the wetland, and I can bring up the plan if the Commission would like to see it.

Carl: Yes, I would like to.

*Maureen shares the plans on her screen.

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Maureen: The bordering vegetated wetland is shown in green on the map. The ponded area, the edge of the water is shown. The proposed field is highlighted here, as well as the access point off of Warren Street. Also, here with me tonight is Laura Short and Vanessa Romasco. I can open it up to the Commission if you have any questions or concerns.

Carl: Thank you. This has been on the docket in previous renditions before, but I think we finally have what we were looking for. Some of the items that we were concerned and felt were missing.

Steve: Carl, do you want me to give you a quick overview?

Carl: Yes.

Steve: This has been ongoing for almost three years. A lot of concerns were more related to lack of information more than the project. From the beginning, the Commission has supported the project and the agricultural mission of this property. My perspective was that we have to treat every Applicant the same way; they didn't delineate the property, and the access wasn't shown. This isn't a perfectly engineered plan because some of it is hand-drawn, but I think we're 99% there. The last time we dealt with this, it was lack of information. The two pieces we needed were the delineation and the access shown in red. As this is shown, I think it satisfies a lot of the concerns. I fully support it.

Laura R: Are they going to plow that?

Vanessa: Tilling once a year with in the field.

Steve: The Applicant requested to waive the fees. When the Commission decides to vote, they should vote to waive the fees.

Carl: Has the Applicant put that in writing?

Steve: Yes.

*Carl opens it up to abutters.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Daryl Lamonica: 2 Ordway Street

I support this project, as it provides a valuable resource to the community.

END OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Laura: Makes a motion to approve the project.

Tom: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

Laura: Makes a motion to waive the fees, as this is a resubmission.

Tom: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

Rachel: Makes a motion to close the hearing.

Tom: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

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7 Sawmill Way (GCC# 2021-05) – RDA (new)

Cut down 12 trees.

Present:

Rick Sarcia (Applicant)

Rick: I don't want to cut trees down, but the neighbors have had trees come down. All of the bedrooms in the house are in back where the trees are. They will be craned out, and the stumps will be left.

Carl: Are the they white pines?

Rick: Most are, but one could be maple – but it's rotting.

Carl: You haven't had any fall on your house?

Rick: Not yet.

Carl: Sometimes trees do fall, and it's a safety issue that needs to be addressed. Were you planning on doing something with the under story, or just let it vegetate once the trees come down?

Rick: Same thing. There's plenty of vegetation back there.

Carl: Do any Commissioners have any comments?

*There are no Commissioner comments, so he opens it up to abutters. No abutters come forward.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to approve the RDA by issuing a negative determination.

Liz: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

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Rebecca: Makes a motion to close the hearing.

Liz: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft

AYE

Rebecca Chane

AYE

Chris Candia

AYE

Elisabeth Clark

AYE

Tom Howland

AYE

Laura Repplier

AYE

Carl Shreder

AYE

Motion carries.

70 Nelson Street (DEP# 161-0905; GCC# 2021-06) – NOI – (new)

Repair an existing 3-bedroom septic

Present:

Cliff and Mary Petersohn (Applicant and his wife)

Cliff: I asked my Engineer, Steve Sawyer to be there tonight, but I'm not sure why he's not.

Carl: Not a problem. Can Steve give us an overview?

Steve: It's a septic repair, and the Board of Health has approved it. I would recommend approving it.

Carl: What will be done with the original system?

Cliff: The existing system is to be crushed and destroyed.

Carl: Okay, I just wanted to clarify.

*Carl opens it up to Commissioner comments, but there are none. He opens it up to abutters, but none come forward.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to approve the project.

Rachel: Seconds motion.

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ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

Rebecca: Makes a motion to close the hearing.
Rachel: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

7 Crescent Drive (GCC# 2021-07) – RDA – (new)

Install a 33' above ground pool with a 16' x 24' deck

Present:

Matt Barnett (Applicant)

Matt: I want to put in a 30' above ground pool with a 16' x 24' deck; that's the biggest the deck would be. It's approximately 80 feet from the wetland, and 20 feet from the current garage. I would like to install it behind the garage.

Carl: The deck isn't attached to the house; it's around the pool?

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Matt: Yes, and actually I don't think the deck would be within the 100-foot buffer; the corner could possibly be. I also wanted to put in a shed, but I don't know if that made it in; it was last minute.

Steve: Was it in the 100-foot buffer?

Matt: Yes, it was; about 85 feet.

*Rebecca shares the plan on screen.

Steve: Is it in line with the septic leaching field at 85 feet?

Matt: Yes; it's approximately 40 feet from the right-hand property line, and it's in the elevated 97 area on the plan. The outside edge is 97, and the inside edge is approximately 85 feet.

Carl: What's the footprint of the shed?

Matt: 16' x 22', but it probably won't be that big.

Carl: A shed that big would need footings.

Matt: Yes.

Steve: And a building permit.

Carl: Right.

Steve: That must've fallen through the cracks.

Matt: I understand; it was last minute.

Rachel: Are any trees coming down?

Carl: Will there be footings or a slab for the shed?

Matt: It would be sonar tubes or on a slab.

Rachel: My question regarding the trees; the shed would become an impervious area, and there would be run-off which could create a problem for you or your neighbors. Would you be willing to work with Steve in planting something?

Matt: Absolutely.

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Rebecca: We're proposing to approve a shed when we don't know where it's going to be?

Steve: We can tentatively give him a head nod and continue to next month.

Carl: That was my question. We're doing this electronically, so we can't draw it on. This becomes the legal document for your case, so we'd approve the plan and say the plan was drawn on the 20th of May that we modify, and it's tougher to do electronically. The next meeting could be live.

Rachel: You'd have to wait to approve the pool and start the pool if he wanted to include the shed.

Carl: I think Steve's right. I think his point is the Commission can say that it's something we're okay with if we can get the plan marked up, and at the next hearing it would just be a matter of voting for it.

Matt: Okay. My major concern is the pool right now.

Carl: The other option is that we could approve what we have here, but that would mean you'd have to resubmit for modification.

Steve: I wouldn't recommend that. My suggestion is that I can work with you offline to get you going. We can continue this tonight with head nods from the Commission, and approve it at the next meeting. I think we should continue it, and next month we can fully approve it.

Laura: Makes a motion to continue the hearing to June 17, 2021 at 7:10 PM.

Tom: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries.

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BUSINESS

MEETING MINUTES

Rebecca: Makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 15, 2021.
Chris: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	ABSTAINED

Motion carries, and the minutes are approved.

CLOSING THE MEETING

Rebecca: Makes a motion to close the meeting.
Tom: Seconds motion.

ROLL CALL

Rachel Bancroft	AYE
Rebecca Chane	AYE
Chris Candia	AYE
Elisabeth Clark	AYE
Tom Howland	AYE
Laura Repplier	AYE
Carl Shreder	AYE

Motion carries, and the meeting is closed.

The Meeting was adjourned at **8:30 PM**. Documents and other exhibits used at the meeting will be available for review at the Conservation Office.

******END OF MEETING MINUTES******

See the following section for approval information.

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This section is for approving the meeting minutes

Minutes for the Conservation Commission meeting held on April 15, 2021 were approved by a virtual roll call vote on July 15, 2021. The Chairman will sign the Meeting Minutes when in-person meetings resume.
(date)

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman: _____
(Signature)