

Newburyport Conservation Commission
August 17, 2021
Online Meeting
Minutes

1. Call to Order

Chair Joe Teixeira called an online meeting of the Newburyport Conservation Commission to order at 6:50 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Steve Moore, Dan Warchol, David Vine and Joe Teixeira. Carole Wagan, Ron DiCola and Paul Healy were absent. Conservation Administrator Julia Godtfredsen was also in attendance.

3. Minutes

Dan Warchol moved to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2021, meeting. Steve Moore seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

4. Old and New Business

Plum Island Updates

Julia Godtfredsen reported that the dredging project is expected to commence in late October. The dredged material should be in place on the beach for the winter season. The planting of beach grass is a part of the application. Residents have on their own have been planting beach grass in the vicinity of 77th Street. A UNH professor has applied for a large grant for the planting of vegetation along the coast, including Plum Island. State funding is not available at present for the coir bag project that was approved. It appears the bags would not be necessary at this time, as their installation would have occurred concurrently with the dredging project.

Evergreen Commons

Tom Hughes described the plans to rectify the mowing of the pollinator meadow and rain garden. He said the HOA is taking the matter seriously and will attach the permit to future landscaping contracts. The meadow will be overseeded with a wildflower mix in mid to late September. A revised O and M plan will be submitted to the Commission. Changes are being considered that would make the stormwater system easier to maintain. One of the proposed changes would be the conversion of weeded rain gardens to mowed rain gardens.

5. Certificates of Compliance, Requests for Determinations, Requests for Minor Modifications

Katherine Tanner and Adam Penn

12 K Street

Request for Determination of Applicability

Noel Ochtman represented the applicant, who is proposing to remove an existing deck that extends 10'-5" from the house and replace it with a new deck that would extend 12'-5". Several

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existing footings would be reused. The applicant is proposing to install six new diamond pier footings. The project is outside of the high hazard flood area. Steve Moore said Mr. Ochtman is performing some work at his house, but this does not present a conflict.

Steve Moore moved to issue Negative 2 Determination. David Vine seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

Stephane Hauville, c/o Hughes Environmental Consulting

192 Northern Boulevard

Request for Minor Modification

Tom Hughes represented the applicant, who is proposing to install an elevated platform on the side of the house for an air conditioner compressor and generator. The skirting around the platform would be at least 2.5 feet above grade. The platform would impact approximately 20 square feet of vegetation impact. Mr. Hughes said that the amount of vegetation on the site had been increased by more than this amount. The Commission members discussed reducing the size of the patio as mitigation but decided this would not be necessary. The plans were also corrected to include a label for the hung storage space the was constructed under the building.

Steve Moore moved to approve the Minor Modification. Dan Warchol seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

Eileen Bockoff

13 Basin Street

Certificate of Compliance

DEP File #051-1045

Tom Hughes represented the applicant, who was issued a Variance for the construction of an accessible entrance to her home. Mr. Hughes said the project was completed in compliance with the approved plans. Two blueberry bushes were planted.

Steve Moore moved to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 13 Basin Street. Dan Warchol seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

6. Public Hearings

David Vine moved to open the public hearings. Steve Moore seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

Lorraine and Michael Riley

2 Spofford Street

Amend Order of Conditions

DEP File #051-0972

The applicant requested a continuance. Steve Moore moved to continue the public hearing to the September 7 meeting. David Vine seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

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Dan Warchol moved to close the public hearings. Joe Teixeira seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).

7. Order of Conditions

None

8. Old and New Business

National Grid will be asked to attend an upcoming meeting to discuss the planting plan for the area behind the revetment at the substation. Some plant materials have failed. National Grid has indicated the plantings are to be replaced this fall.

Woodman, Inc. and Land Stewardship, Inc. have submitted proposals to monitor and manage the City's open space parcels that the Commission oversees. The City could be asked to include a line item in its budget for the annual fee for the service and Commission funds could be used for any additional expenses.

Harbormaster Paul Hogg sent an email stating that Reeds Ferry has informed him the shed in the Plum Island parking lot is too heavy for the company to be able to elevated it. Other options for raising it would be prohibitively expensive. The regulations require the shed to be one foot above grade. It is located on a slope and is not one foot above grade around its entire perimeter. Steve Moore pointed out that a homeowner would be required to rectify the situation and the City should be held to the same standards. Dan Warchol responded that the shed is located over pavement and would not impact the migration of sand. The Commission members decided not to pursue that matter at this time. The shed might impede the flow of flood water, but its location in a parking lot would not result in an impact to residences. The Harbormaster would be required to reinstall the shed correctly if it were to come off its cinderblock footings during a flood.

9. Adjournment

Dan Warchol moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Steve Moore seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a 4-0 vote (Steve Moore, yes; David Vine, yes; Joe Teixeira, yes; Dan Warchol, yes).