

Town of Southbridge  
Conservation Commission Minutes  
Meeting of January 3, 2024  
Town Hall – McCann Room  
5:15 p.m.

Present: M. Doyle, Co-Chair, N. Nowick, Co-Chair, K. Buxton, Ken Comia, Interim Conservation Agent

1. The meeting started at 5:18 p.m.

2. A motion was made by K. Buxton to accept the minutes of the December 20th meeting. N. Nowick seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed, unanimous in favor.

3. A motion was made by N. Nowick to move to items 5a and 5b as it was not time yet for the first public hearing. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed unanimously in favor.

4. 87 Golf Street

Scott Lazo was present, and the commissioners had visited the site earlier in the day. Once again, a storm had delayed work as well as an equipment breakdown. By tomorrow morning Mr. Lazo feels they will be done. The commissioners asked that Mr. Lazo allow a wetland scientist (to be hired by the commission) to evaluate whether remediation is complete, and he agreed. He asked that the report be shared with him, and the commissioners agreed. K. Comia has requested quotes from BSC Group and CEI.

5. Pleasant Hills

Mr. Gammell was present and reported to the commissioners that DEP would be visiting the site in the morning. The commissioners reiterated that they are hiring a wetland scientist to determine the extent of the violation in preparation for issuing fines. Mr. Gammell reported that he was told Mr. Atwater had been at the site and had put in some retention fabric, but that it appeared to be not well secured and was beginning to fail by the end of the day.

6. Public Hearing – Request for Determination of Applicability – BSC Group on behalf of MECO – proposed installation of two new utility poles along Paige Hill Road and Charlton Street and UG conduit along Charlton Street – (Map 30 Parcels 9, 101, 102, 103)

Carolyn Gorrs of BSC Group was present to discuss this project. A site visit was performed earlier in the day. The typical height of the new poles is forty-four'. There will be four trees removed, stumps left in place. There will be 200 ft. of underground conduit replacing overhead lines. Excess spoils will be removed off-site. There is approximately four square feet of disturbance per pole. Equipment will be staged along the roadway. There is not a set timeline for the work. National Grid forestry will be removing the trees.

A motion was made by N. Nowick to close the public hearing. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed, unanimous in favor. A motion was made by N. Nowick to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability with no special conditions. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed, unanimous in favor.

7. Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – BSC Group on behalf of Boston Gas Company – proposed replacement of existing gas mains from 25-43 Randolph Street – (work within roadway)

Carolyn Gorrs of BSC Group also presented this project and a site visit was performed earlier in the day. DEP has issued a file number with no comments. Boston Gas is methodically replacing gas mains that are exposed underground as this one is. It is cast iron, which can leak, and is near a body of water. This section will be removed and capped at each end. The portion within the bridge abutments will be emptied, capped, and left in place. The new gas main will be plastic (6” in diameter, same as the previous diameter) and will be threaded through at least five feet below the bottom footing of the bridge. This pipe has a 100-year life span. Pressure tests determine whether the pipe is properly emptied and whether the new pipe has any leaks, and regular monitoring takes place after installation. The proposal meets standards for erosion and sedimentation controls and the roadway will be surrounded with compost socks. A neighbor has requested that turnarounds in the driveway leading to the town pool be limited. The drilling itself will take approximately two days. If the work is done in June, reptile activity will need to be reported to the commission and pits should not be left open overnight.

A motion was made by N. Nowick to close the public hearing. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed, unanimous in favor. A motion was made by N. Nowick to issue a standard Order of Conditions with the additional condition that reptile activity or eggs must be reported to the Conservation Commission and that pits should not be left uncovered overnight. K. Buxton seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion passed, unanimous in favor.

8. Flooding Along Cady Brook

A letter has been sent from the commissioners asking the property owners abutting the tree blockage to come to an informational meeting with the commissioners at either of the next two meetings. M. Doyle wondered if sedimentation could contribute to raising the level of the brook exacerbating the problem.

9. M. Doyle noted that we can call Victor in IT to get badges for the Conservation Commission. She also recommended the Beaver Dam Analogs as an informative read.

10. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. in the McCann Room. It was unanimously decided to adjourn. It was 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Loin  
Administrative Assistant