

Town of Southbridge
Conservation Commission Minutes
Meeting of June 22, 2023
6:30 p.m.

Present: E. Rumsey, Conservation Agent, Maureen Doyle, Co-Chair, N. Nowick, Co-Chair (via teleconference)

1. The meeting was opened at 6:45 p.m. A motion was made by N. Nowick to accept the minutes of the June 1st meeting. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. M. Doyle YES, N. Nowick YES. The motion passed.

2. 6:45 p.m. – Public Meeting – Request for Determination of Applicability – Jacob Castiglione – proposed septic system repair and associated site work within the buffer zone of a bordering vegetated wetland and riverfront area.

The hearing was reopened. Pete Engle of McClure Engineering was present to discuss the project. A site visit has now been held. A motion was made by M. Doyle to issue a Negative Determination of Applicability with no special conditions. N. Nowick seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. M. Doyle YES, N. Nowick YES. The motion passed.

3. Partial Certificates of Compliance – 140 Cournoyer Boulevard

These requests are only for partial Certificates to clear the roadway and subdivision orders from a lot that is not subject to the WPA. A motion was made by M. Doyle to issue the partial certificates for file #291-348 and file #291-361. N. Nowick seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. M. Doyle YES, N. Nowick YES. The motion passed.

3. Commissioners' Announcements

M. Doyle attended the MSMCP event and spoke with our circuit rider, Mia McDonald. N. Nowick shared a picture of herself and a large turtle at an event that made the newspaper in Ipswich.

4. 7:00 p.m. – Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – BSC Group, Inc. for Town of Southbridge – proposed construction of a multi-use rail trail along the disused rail line running along the south bank of the Quinebaug River, activities proposed within the 100-ft. Buffer Zone, 200-ft. Riverfront Area, Bordering Land Subject to Flooding, and NHESP Priority/ Estimated Habitat

The clerk read the notice of public hearing and the hearing was opened. Jeff Fasser and Matt Burne of BSC Group and Joe Coan, a landscape architect, were present to discuss this project. The Rail Trail will start at the Dudley-Southbridge line and proceed through town to follow Route 131 to East Main Street, Main Street, and the former depot, to Crane Street, River Street, Mill Street and West Street. The trail will stay on the rail bed at about 10 feet wide, with a few spots at 8 feet when necessary. There are a few exceptions. There will be a spur near 5 Case Street to connect the trail to the parking lot. There will also be a small area near Dresser Park that will be off the rail bed.

Railroad tracks and ties will be removed. There will be a need for fencing in some areas where the side of the trail is particularly steep. If there is already chain link fence in these portions it will be replaced as chain link, otherwise it will be wooden post type. There will need to be some vegetation management in some places.

There are three existing intermittent streams and the culverts associated with these will be repaired. In addition, one non-jurisdictional culvert will also be repaired. Work at the stone bridge may require a tarp to prevent material from falling into the river.

Commissioners are concerned that the trail goes near a site that has contaminated soil and suggested signage visible from the trail stating such. M. Doyle also suggested that signage might be placed near vernal pools to point them out and educate about them.

There is no planned work in the Bordering Vegetated Wetland or other resource areas. Some work will take place in the Buffer Zone, Riverfront Area, and Bordering Land Subject to Flooding. The project qualifies as a redevelopment and as a limited project.

Stabilized soil will be the surface. In some areas the level of the trail will need to be built up slightly and some vegetation clearing will need to take place. The trail will be as maintenance free as possible. The suggestion was made to have doggy waste bags and bins available at intersections that would make it easy for DPW workers to clean these receptacles. The possibility of security cameras was discussed, as well as some way to showcase the trail to those who cannot physically see it themselves.

The project is slated to begin by early October. The NHESP file number is 23-7299 and the engineer anticipates no issue, but the letter is not yet in hand. DEP has not issued a number yet.

A motion was made by N. Nowick to continue the hearing to July 6th at 6:30 p.m. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. M. Doyle YES, N. Nowick YES. The motion passed.

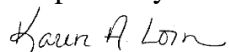
5. 87 Golf Street – E. Rumsey said that work was continuing. All the trash has been removed. Work near the stone bridge will be by hand. He stated that Mr. Lazo said he would be finished in 2 to 2 ½ weeks. A single sample taken by E. Rumsey to the lab returned with elevated levels of one type of PCB and some signs of petroleum. These were not particularly large. E. Rumsey will send the report to the commissioners. The commissioners requested that a company be hired that will take and test multiple samples. E. Rumsey will get a quote for the next meeting.

A motion was made by N. Nowick to begin imposing fines (our bylaws would indicate \$100 per day) if the work is not completed by September 1st. M. Doyle seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. M. Doyle YES, N. Nowick YES. The motion passed.

6. E. Rumsey said that he is applying for another position in town, but that either way he would remain agent through July.

7. The next meeting will be held on July 6th at 6:30 p.m. in the McCann Room. A motion to adjourn was made by M. Doyle and seconded by N. Nowick. A roll call vote was taken. Doyle YES, Nowick., YES. The motion passed unanimously. It was 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Loin
Administrative Assistant