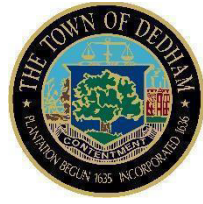


Tim Puopolo, Chair
Erik DeAvila, Vice Chair
Stephanie Radner, Clerk
Nathan Gauthier, Associate
Leigh Hafrey, Associate
Elena Taurasi, Associate



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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of May 1, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and involved two site visits.

The following Commissioners were present:

Erik DeAvila, Vice Chair
Elena Taurasi, Associate

The following Staff were present:

Meredith LaBelle, Conservation Agent
Chris Reardon, Environmental Specialist
Joseph Flanagan, DPW Director

The following Commissioners were absent:

Leigh Hafrey, Associate
Tim Puopolo, Chair
Stephanie Radner, Clerk
Nathan Gauthier, Associate

The following Applicants and/or Representatives were present:

Brian Croscup, Applicant, 450 Sprague St. Footbridge Project
Paul Megan, Applicant, 450 Sprague St. Footbridge Project
Scott Henderson, Representative, 18 Powers Street
Jerry Romano, Applicant, 18 Powers Street

The meeting began at approximately 5:00 PM.

1. Site Visit: 450 Sprague Street – Manor Fields “Mosely Brook” Bridge Construction- NOI 141-0628

Applicants: Brian Croscup and Paul Megan, Local Eagle Scout Candidates

Conservation staff, Commissioner DeAvila, Commissioner Taurasi, and DPW Director Joseph Flanagan met the applicants, Brian Croscup and Paul Megan, Eagle Scout Candidates, at the Capen School at 322 Sprague Street. The applicants were in the process of picking up trash around the property just before the meeting began. From the Capen School, the group proceeded eastward, entering the Manor Fields property at 450 Sprague Street and walking down the trail until they reached the proposed bridge site. A

missing sign was noted at the trailhead and the applicants explained that they planned to reinstall the sign using longer screws to prevent it being vandalized.

At the bridge site, the applicants pointed out stakes on either side of the stream as the proposed beginning and end of the bridge.

Agent LaBelle asked the Commissioners whether the proposed 4.5'x1'x1' concrete footings at either side of the bridge were necessary, or if they might be replaced with a method of anchoring the bridge that would result in less disturbance of the resource area. Commissioner DeAvila stated that he was concerned with ensuring that the bridge would be safe, even in cases of ATVs being driven over it. Mr. Flanagan suggested driving metal anchor stakes into the ground as a stable and sturdy method of anchoring the bridge, while causing minimal disturbance. The applicants as well as Conservation staff and Commissioners agreed that this method would be acceptable.

Agent LaBelle then asked the applicants to confirm that the bridge met the Stream Crossing Standards requirement that a bridge span at least 1.2X the bank-full stream width. They confirmed that yes, the bridge would have a long enough span.

Commissioner DeAvila suggested changes to the wooden frame of the bridge, advising that the applicants include additional boards running the length of the bridge. The applicants agreed that they would include this change as well as the updated anchoring method in an updated site plan, to be presented at the Conservation Commission meeting the following day.

The possibility of installing a ramp to meet ADA standards was discussed, but no firm recommendations were made.

The name of the water body at the project site was also discussed, with the father of one of the applicants stating that it has long been known as "Mosely Brook".

The Commissioners thanked the applicants for their time and the 450 Sprague St. site visit concluded at approximately 4:30 pm. Mr. Flanagan departed and did not join for the 18 Powers St. site visit.

2. Site Visit: 18 Powers St- Retaining Wall Violation

Representative: Scott Henderson, Henderson Consulting Services, Applicant: Jerry Romano

Conservation staff, Commissioner DeAvila, and Commissioner Taurasi, met the applicant, Jerry Romano, and his representative, Scott Henderson, at Mr. Romano's residence at 18 Powers St. The site visit began at approximately 5:45 pm.

Mr. Henderson asked Agent LaBelle if anything formal had been issued by the Commission or its representatives regarding the retaining wall violation. Agent LaBelle responded that only a Notice of Violation letter had been issued so far.

Mr. Henderson explained that he and his client would likely not be able to meet the June 1st deadline for submission of an after-the-fact NOI, but that they would appear before the Commission to demonstrate progress on the NOI and that they would submit a permit application as soon as possible. Agent LaBelle acknowledged that this was acceptable.

Mr. Henderson raised the possibility of major erosion of exposed soil at the retaining wall site and asked the Commissioners if hydroseeding of grass would be an acceptable temporary erosion control measure. The Commissioners agreed, stating that Mr. Romano should be prepared for the possibility that he may

later be required to remove the grass. Commissioner DeAvila proposed the applicant use contractor grass seed mix for the reseeding, to which the applicant and his representative agreed.

Mr. Henderson asked if the applicant install a chain-link fence on top of the retaining wall to prevent potential injuries. Agent LaBelle agreed that this would improve the safety of the site while permitting was worked out, but the applicant should be prepared that the Commission may eventually require the fence to be removed as part of site work associated with the restoration plan.

Mr. Henderson summarized that no further work would be carried out at the site for the moment aside from installing a thin layer of loam, hydroseeding for erosion control, and installation of a chain link fence on top of the wall. Agent LaBelle asked that the applicant also prevent Japanese Knotweed that was emerging from exposed soil in the backfilled area from spreading. Mr. Henderson agreed to prevent the knotweed from spreading.

Commissioner DeAvila asked that a note be made that, if the section of the wall made of large irregularly shaped stones extends beyond Mr. Romano's property, abutters may need to be notified. Later in the meeting, Mr. Henderson confirmed that a portion of the wall made of irregularly shaped stones extended into a neighbor's property. He stated that the neighbor had given permission for this work to be done on their property.

Commissioner DeAvila also noted that it appeared several large stones had come loose from the aforementioned wall section.

Commissioner Taurasi noted hoses and piping running from a neighbor's yard to the slope down to the wetland. She also noted the evidence of numerous small and large trees and shrubs being cut as part of the project.

Commissioner DeAvila noted a survey stake reading "D O'Brien" close to the water's edge.

Commissioner Taurasi inquired if the loose cinderblocks scattered at the base of the wall were brought into the site.

Mr. Reardon noted the diversity of wetland and upland tree species on site, including Sweet Birch, hickories, oaks, White Pine, and maples, and noted exceptionally large Highbush Blueberry shrubs growing immediately adjacent to the work area. He also noted a brush pile as evidence of many native shrub and tree species having been cut.

In response to a question from Agent LaBelle, Mr. Henderson explained that construction of the large stone portion of the wall and the cinderblock portion of the wall was carried out concurrently.

Commissioner Taurasi asked if crushed stone was used to fill some of the space behind the wall, noting that crushed stone was scattered around the base of the wall. Mr. Henderson responded that yes, crushed stone was used as part of the fill.

Mr. Henderson stated that water will be able to seep out of the wall, so wall failure from hydrostatic pressure would be unlikely.

Mr. Henderson reiterated that the applicant would install erosion controls, seeding, fencing on top of the wall, and not make any further alterations to the site. Agent LaBelle asked the applicant could confirm that he agreed to these terms. Mr. Romano stated that, yes, he agreed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 pm.