

Freetown Conservation Commission
Minutes of the Monday, December 9, 2019 Meeting
Town Hall – Assonet, Mass.

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2019 DEC 24 AM 10:45
J. B. Brown

Present: Keven Desmarais, Charles Sullivan, and Maria Ternullo.

Absent: Christopher Mather and Janine Robidoux.

Call to order: Keven Desmarais called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Notice of Intent – 0 Will's Way, Assonet

A motion was made by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mrs. Ternullo, to waive the reading of the public hearing notice. The motion carried unanimously. Jon Connell was present from SITEC to introduce the proposal, which is a solar farm on land off High Street and Copicut Road with an address of 0 Will's Way.

Mr. Connell stated they are proposing a little over 5,000 square feet of replication as a result of wetlands crossings and other disturbances. Mr. Desmarais asked if this project had been referred to Natural Heritage, and Mr. Connell stated the work was designed to avoid the Natural Heritage area. Mr. Desmarais asked if it mattered that Natural Heritage areas were present on the property albeit outside the area of work, and Mr. Connell stated it was not necessary to notify Natural Heritage so long as their areas of concern were outside the area of work.

Mr. Connell noted a total of 4,975 square feet of disturbance. He stated the first wetlands crossing would have 875 square feet of alteration and 1,500 square feet of replication; the second crossing would have 700 square feet of alteration and 1,000 square feet of replication, and the third crossing would have 2,800 square feet of alteration and 3,000 square feet of replication.

Mr. Desmarais asked to have the D.E.P. comments checked for any relevant information.

Mr. Connell will coordinate with the Planning Board on getting money deposited for engineering review.

Mr. Desmarais reviewed and summarized an e-mail received from Lisa Lundrigan of Algonquin Way relative to solar farm projects. Members were sympathetic to Mrs. Lundrigan's concerns, but felt that the majority of them were outside the scope of what the Conservation Commission can address under the Wetlands Protection Act, and were instead best addressed by the Planning Board.

A motion was made by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mrs. Ternullo, to continue the public hearing to Monday, December 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. The motion carried unanimously.

Meet with Representatives of South Coast Rail

Lars Carlson and Jean Fox were present. Dr. Carlson stated the plans are now entirely finalized, and that several changes have occurred in the work on both sides of town. In East Freetown, the work primarily involves retaining walls with a total impact of less than 235 square feet; in Assonet, the impact is approximately 2,071 square feet related to culverts. Additional work in Assonet involves the Icehouse Lot walking path, and demolishing the dwelling at 15 Richmond Road and related site work in preparation for turning the property over to the Conservation Commission, which is part of the larger Icehouse Lot path project.

Mr. Desmarais asked if the work was temporary or permanent in nature, and Dr. Carlson stated it was primarily temporary impacts. Mrs. Fox noted there was also work being undertaken on an interpretive historical panel to describe the former icehouse.

All felt that the work was related to matters discussed thoroughly during the Notice of Intent process, and that filing a Request for Determination would be redundant. A motion was made by Mrs. Ternullo, seconded by Mr. Sullivan to accept the plans dated September 20, 2019 (Assonet) and October 18, 2019 (East Freetown) as the controlling plans of record for the projects. The motion carried unanimously.

Request for Determination – 76 Quanapoag Road, East Freetown

Julie Goodwin, wetlands scientist, was present from Prime Engineering. Ms. Goodwin described the bordering vegetated wetlands on the northeast corner of the property, and wetlands on the neighboring bog property formerly owned by Lopes and now owned by the Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District. Ms. Goodwin also discussed an area felt to be an isolated land subject to flooding, but not a jurisdictional wetland. She stated Rich Rheaume had provided a letter to that effect; members requested the letter be rewritten with additional detail.

Mr. Desmarais asked about stormwater management, and Carly, a representative from Borrego, addressed the intended stormwater management process. Mr. Desmarais asked if the proposed basin would be a retention basin or a detention basin, and the response was infiltration basin.

Mr. Desmarais again acknowledged Mrs. Lundrigan's e-mail, as she had requested it be considered during any and all solar projects.

All parties agreed to continue this discussion on January 13, 2020, after additional information was available.

Continued Notices of Intent

Mr. Desmarais called the following hearings back to order, noting the applicants' requests for continuation.

On motions made by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mrs. Ternullo, it was unanimously voted to continue hearings as follows:

- a. 19 Howland Road, Assonetto December 23, 2019, at 7:00, at the Town Hall
- b. 0 Chace Road (Gurney Farm), E. Freetownto December 23, 2019, at 7:00, at the Town Hall

On motions made by Mrs. Ternullo, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, it was unanimously voted to continue hearings as follows:

- a. 25 Hemlock Point, East Freetownto January 13, 2020, at 7:00, at the Town Hall
- b. 27 Hemlock Point, East Freetownto January 13, 2020, at 7:00, at the Town Hall

Old Business

These items were passed over.

New Business

Consensus was to request part-time help in the FY21 budget as was done in the FY20 budget, with an eye toward property maintenance (gate at Porter Pasture, etc.).

Request for Certificate of Compliance

This item was passed over for not having been able to schedule a site inspection prior to this meeting.

Bills & Minutes

Bills paid since the previous meeting were recounted. The minutes of December 3, 2019, were received. A motion was made by Mrs. Ternullo, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, to approve the minutes as received. The motion carried unanimously.

Other Business Properly Before the Commission

Mr. Desmarais reviewed a letter from an abutter to the Betsy Taber property on Nestle's Lane who is concerned about hunting at that property. The letter will be reviewed more fully at the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Mr. Sullivan, seconded by Mrs. Ternullo, to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Senior Clerk