

# TOWN OF PRINCETON

## BOARD/COMMITTEE: PRINCETON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: May 17, 2022

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Town Hall Annex

Note: this public meeting and public hearing were conducted in person at the Annex, with a remote teleconferencing option available for public participation. Public participation details were posted with the agenda.

Members in attendance: Brian Keevan, Victoria Taft, Barbara Laughlin, Bryanna Weigel, Jenny Sanders, Bonnie Hirsh

Members in attendance remotely: None

Applicants and others in attendance: Alan and Melissa Hawthorne, Sean Conway, Jennifer Shenk, Brandon Ducharme, Paul Kuokkanen

Applicants and others in attendance remotely: Linda Nash

\*\*\*\*\*Remote meeting internet connection lost at 8:15p.m. and reconnected at 8:25 p.m.

Votes taken in the following actions are "all in favor" unless noted otherwise.

Brian Keevan called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the April 19, 2022, meeting were approved with minor revisions.

Item 1: 7:10– 7:19 p.m. Continued Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent (DEP File #267-0441) filed by Compass Builders (David E. Ross Associates, Inc., representative) for construction of a single-family home within the buffer zone on Lot C, Houghton Road, Map 13 Parcel 1C. The applicant's representative Brandon Ducharme submitted a revised plan dated May 2, 2022 showing a 36-inch diameter HDPE culvert embedded with a natural bottom substrate similar to surrounding streambed materials. Concrete block retaining walls were lengthened to accommodate additional foot of fill needed due to larger culvert. No public comments. The Commission voted to close the public hearing and issue an Order of Conditions with typical special conditions at 7:19 p.m.

The Chair paused the meeting briefly to welcome new Commissioners Jenny Sanders and Bryanna Weigel.

Item 2: 7:23 – 7:55 p.m. Continued Public Hearing for a Notice of Intent (DEP File #267-0442) filed by Melissa and Allan Hawthorne for new single-family home and septic construction on a new ANR lot at 143 Ball Hill Road. Proposed owners Alan and Melissa Hawthorne provided information related to MassDEP questions regarding agricultural use and whether the culverts will remain in place. A site visit was conducted on April 27, 2022 with Greg and Marsha Dowdy, Alan and Melissa Hawthorne and Commission members to inspect the stability of the gravel and dirt access road, the culvert beneath the access road, and potential impacts of the wood processing area across South Wachusett Brook. During the site visit, there appeared to be three culverts instead of two culverts, which were installed via an older Order of Conditions issued circa 1987. Regarding the land use within Riverfront Area, the Commission did not observe adverse impacts of silt migration into the resource area and there are extensive berms between the wood processing area and the river. The current site use meets the definition of agricultural use. Regarding the NOI submitted for the construction of a single-family home, potable well, and septic

construction, the Princeton Board of Health has approved the septic design. No public comments. The Commission voted to issue an Order of Conditions with typical special conditions at 7:55 p.m.

Item 3: 7:59 – 8:23 p.m. A Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) was filed by Jay and Jen Shenk at 69 Mirick Road for tree removal in a wetland resource area. Jennifer Shenk provided information and Alan Hawthorne (Princeton Tree Services) assisted with answering questions regarding the removal of 10-12 dead and declining trees located in three areas due to vines. Tree removal will be completed using a crane and stumps will be left in place to allow for regrowth/resprouting. The Commission also discussed mechanical control of invasive plants seen in the area. The Commission voted to issue a Negative Determination #3 with conditions (not to cut one of the larger live cherry trees, and allowing future hand cutting of invasive plants) at 8:23 p.m.

Item 4: 8:27 – 8:38 p.m. Extension of an Order of Conditions (267-0421) for Country Lane filed by Mike Pucko. The applicant requested an extension for an Order of Conditions that expires June 4, 2022. The Commission completed a site walk on May 2, 2022 to inspect current site conditions and work progress. Site conditions were not yet stabilized sufficiently to issue a Certificate of Compliance and requests were made to add erosion controls and seed and stabilize certain areas. The Commission voted at 8:38 p.m. to issue an eighteen-month (18) extension of the original Order of Conditions to December 4, 2023.

Commission Other Business, Mail, Procedures, etc.:

Yearly Operation Plan (YOP) for Vegetation Control by P&W Railroad dated April 19, 2022: The Commission reviewed the vegetation control plan prepared by TEC Associates and that has been prepared in accordance with the 5-year plan previously approved in 2021.

Four Corners Farm Plan Review and Discussion: A site visit will be conducted by Commissioners on May 26, 2022; Stimsons will be notified and asked to attend to answer any questions the Commissioners may have after review of the Farm Plan.

Solar Farm working group: A stream crossing and associated culvert that is currently in poor condition was discussed and infrastructure investment and/or funding options were briefly discussed and the possible project stakeholder(s) position. The property is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Forest Cutting Plan(s): None

Meeting ended at 9:18 pm

*Respectfully submitted, Barbara Laughlin*