

TOWN OF PRINCETON

BOARD/COMMITTEE: PRINCETON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: July 19, 2022

TIME: 7:00 PM

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, Jenny Sanders, Bonnie Hirsh, Bryanna Weigl

Members in attendance remotely: Jennifer Vuona

Applicants and others in attendance: none

Applicants and others in attendance remotely: Anita & Bart Murphy, Carla Volturo

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

Brian Keevan called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Approval of minutes: Minutes from the July 12, 2022 meeting were approved with minor revisions at 7:07 PM.

Item 1: 7:07 PM – 7:19 PM Continue Public Hearing for unnumbered NOI for new house and septic on Ball Hill Road, Lake Hill LLC. Request via email from applicant to continue hearing to August 16 because they were not able to complete engineering and survey work from the site visit conducted in June. DEP has not issued a file number yet. We also have no updated plans to review. Commissioners voted to continue the hearing.

An abutter asked a question about the property in regard to how the Commission handles endangered species should they be present on property. The chairman explained how things worked procedurally because the hearing had closed.

Commission Other Business, Mail, Procedures, etc.:

Update for lot 4 and 3A on Pine Hill Road – Matt said last visit in May shows areas growing in nicely. Plans to put in request for Certificate of Compliance for the August meeting. This will require a site visit ahead of the next meeting. Bonnie will notify the other Commissioners if she arranges it. The backstory is: one lot was going to put a driveway in through wetlands and they agreed to replicate wetlands on adjacent landowner's property. Both landowners agreed to the conditions.

Hobbs Road Culverts: Both culverts have been installed and Brian inspected them on 7/19/22. Town will pave the area themselves. As far as he can tell they did the work according to specifications. Seems to have been accomplished without too much disturbance to wetlands. Water is flowing in both pipes now. The culverts appear to be embedded; they installed 48" plastic corrugated culverts. DPW person hopes to open by tomorrow.

Coal Kiln Road: received notification yesterday that erosion control will be installed today. Brian looked today and noted some things that did not comply with what we agreed to. The plans have the stream line very close to the town line and they are marked similarly on the plans. So they mistakenly installed

erosion control measured off of the town line marker rather than the stream line. Therefore the EC is not protecting the wetland resource/stream. Brian will bring this up with the town. There is also an area on sheet 10 where erosion control was installed where it was not specified (near marker 40). Also on sheet 10 near the 47 marker there is a gap in erosion control. But that might be beyond what was originally asked. Probably ok as installed. We may just want to keep an eye on it. If needed, we could ask that they pull the EC at marker 40 and place it in the areas that lack EC to protect stream.

Rhodes Road: Last week, the town notification email alerted us to a culvert repair without an NOI. Brian reached out to town and Commission discussed development of a blanket Order of Conditions. Ben Metcalf; Brian Keegan; Victoria Taft, Sherry Patch; Larry Greene, Jr. all met at the site today (7/19/22). The Commission brought a lot of information from the DEP circuit rider. Examples of NOIs, Orders, etc. It was a helpful discussion. They seem to all be on the same page that this approach will be helpful for the town and helpful for the Commission. They want to understand when they need to file separate NOIs for vs. what they could use the blanket NOI for. This may be something that we discuss at our next meeting. Another solution may be to have a subcommittee that works with the DPW. It was left at: we will move forward in that direction using these documents as guidance. In the meantime, the DEP is hosting a webinar this Thursday that might help. Commission members who are available will attend and town staff is encouraged to attend.

Regarding this particular culvert: they thought they did due diligence and said that they did not realize it was a wetland resource area. According to Ben, it was failing and they removed it before we saw it. They said the reason they jumped on this one is because ambulances are using the road frequently due to an elderly citizen nearby. We basically agreed to give them an emergency certification today. We told them that we cannot discuss it tonight because it won't meet open meeting requirements. Brian has been emailed a request for this emergency certification and that is where it stands currently. We may start the process with the road advisory committee to plan for the other seven culverts that are in need of immediate repair. Jenny can reach out to road advisory committee to mention grant funding to assist with repairs.

The town expressed concern that they hire wetland specialists to identify E&SC needs for these projects, so Ben Metcalf asks why the specialists' version of E&SC is different from what we ask for? Basically: why does the Con Comm ask for different E&SC or more E&SC? Ex: specialist design creates a bid that is \$17k and our review/requests change it to \$21k. His opinion is that we are asking for too much and costing taxpayers. He wants to know is one professional's opinion adequate? Why does commission ask for more? This conversation got a bit contentious. The Commission discussed this and pointed out that our job as a commission is to review the wetland specialist's work; to improve upon it where possible, and to act in the interest of the wetlands protection act vs a client's interest. A paid consultant generally acts on behalf of the entity paying them.

The Commissioners discussed the purpose of the general NOI. It will be for the projects that are either replace in kind type things or low risk-type projects. The vision that Brian put out there: we want to create a long-term 5-year blanket NOI to help them complete work and pair that with annual operation planning. The planning is meet and discuss which projects are on the slate for the year so that we reduce surprises. The Commissioners agreed to set up a working committee to work outside commission schedule. We agreed that it should not be a quorum and the purpose will be to continue working on the general Order of Conditions and working group schedule. Members selected: Victoria, Jennifer, & Brian.

Gregory Hill & East Princeton dumping: Brian located a survey for the area and Bryanna has some examples of Notices of Violations. Bryanna will work on the draft. We are working on identifying the location of the dumping. We will hold off on writing any letters until we identify whose property the dumping is occurring on and whose property DEP staff and the Commissioners were on when they identified the violation and photographed it.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM

Respectfully submitted, Jenny Sanders