

**SOUTH HADLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 16, 2023**

Present: April Doroski, Vice-Chair; Bill DeLuca, Member; Garth Schwellenbach, Member; Tom Dennis, Member; Jess Schoendorf, Member; Louise Croll, Associate Member; Terry Rosenfeld, Associate Member; Rebekah Cornell, Conservation Administrator; and Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

As Chair Tolopko was not present at the meeting, Vice-Chair Doroski would act as chair. Acting Chair Doroski called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and reviewed the virtual meeting protocols.

Agenda Item #1 --- Open Public Forum

No members of the public spoke during the open forum.

Agenda Item #2 --- Minutes

Draft minutes of the August 2 meeting were sent to the Commission for review. A quorum of Commissioners were unable to approve the minutes so the item was tabled.

Agenda Item #3 --- Guest Presenter: Dylan Welch (Summer 2023 Community Forest Intern)

Dylan Welch, Community Forest Intern, was present at the meeting and shared a slideshow presentation. During recent months, Dylan Welch conducted assessments to evaluate the health of trees planted by property owners during a 2021 tree planting campaign funded through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant. The presentation shared findings and recommendations.

Agenda Item #4 --- 6:00 PM Public Hearing continuation to consider a request for an Order of Conditions filed by Robin Abbey for the expansion of the existing single-family home, patio and backyard landscaping as well as restoration of unpermitted Buffer Zone impacts that previously occurred under a filed RDA for this project. Located at 21 North Sycamore Lane (Parcel 53 Map 39)

Commissioner Schoendorf recused herself from the hearing as her employer had a professional relationship with the applicant.

The applicant, Robin Abbey, was present at the meeting along with Thomas Reidy, Counsel with Bacon Wilson PC; Steve Riberdy, Wetland Consultant with Boghuter Ecological Services LLC; and Mike Lui, Landscape Architect with Berkshire Design Group Inc.

Thomas Reidy, Esq. detailed the purpose of the Notice of Intent filing and history of conservation permitting on site. The Commission previously issued a Determination of Applicability for site work in 2020. At that time, the Commission approved site work for

construction of an addition, patio expansion, and removal of select trees. Within recent months, the Commission issued an Enforcement Order following the observation of additional unauthorized site work. The homeowner was now seeking to bring the project back into compliance. A new contractor to perform the work had been retained. Through their consultants, the homeowner worked closely with the Conservation Administrator to bring forth a proposal that sought to satisfy the requirements of the Enforcement Order and the local wetland bylaw. The current plan had been pared down from the initial submittal which limited the impacts to the 50-ft Conservation Zone but still afforded the property owner the ability to expand their residence. A number of site visits were held with the Conservation Administrator and some members of the Commission had also been on site.

Steve Riberdy, the applicant's wetland scientist, explained that the wetland system on site was more extensive than previously understood. As such, tree removal and site work had occurred in jurisdictional areas. A planting plan had been provided to mitigate the impacts of the unpermitted work.

Commissioner Schwellenbach attended the recent site visit and was pleased with the proposed revisions as they reflected the concerns addressed on site.

Commissioner DeLuca asked why a raingarden was not being proposed. Mike Lui responded that a stone pad had been installed for management of runoff. He added that he was not the engineer who drafted the plans but was representing the plan on behalf of his agency. Acting Chair Doroski attended the site visit and added that, based on conversions on site, it was unclear if the location had enough groundwater separation to allow for a raingarden so a stone pad was proposed instead.

Acting Chair Doroski asked where the roof drained currently. Administrator Cornell was able to provide a photograph which showed roof drains along certain parts of the roofline. However, it was unknown where the flow was directed. It was questioned if the proposed stone pad could accommodate the anticipated stormwater. The Commission could condition the requirement for adequate stormwater capacity and issuance of a Certificate of Compliance could be withheld if the applicant could not demonstrate such.

Carl and Selene Webber, 17 N Sycamore Knolls, addressed the Commission. They abutted the subject property to the north and observed that a fence would be installed along the shared property line. Mike Lui responded that the applicant anticipated keeping the vegetation near the fence location intact. The Webbers were concerned that the placement of the fence could impact a Sugar Maple on their property near the shared property line.

Mike and Joan Rosner, 9 Sycamore Park, addressed the Commission. They were concerned about a series of hazardous trees along the property line shared with the applicant. Steve Riberdy responded that tree removal in that area would be done but the specific trees for removal had yet to be tagged. Administrator Cornell added that she was in communication with the arborist who would be doing the work and did not see an issue with the removal of the identified trees of concern.

Commissioners discussed special conditions associated with issuance of Order of Conditions. Following stated concerns by an abutter, Commissioner DeLuca recommended adding language which identified that site work, including installation of fences, should not negatively impact trees within the Buffer Zone. Acting Chair Doroski recommended adding language to the special condition requiring reporting to also specify the need for photos of potential scouring relating to gutter runoff as well as photos documenting plant survivability.

Motion: Commissioner DeLuca moved to issue a waiver to allow installation of a retaining wall and related grading within the Conservation Zone. Commissioner Schwellenbach seconded the motion. Four (4) out of four (4) voting commissioners present voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

Motion: Commissioner DeLuca moved to issue Order of Conditions for DEP File #288-0487 with special conditions as discussed during the hearing. Commissioner Schwellenbach seconded the motion. Four (4) out of four (4) voting commissioners present voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

Agenda Item #5 --- South Hadley DPW Judd Brook Sewer Sliplining Project

John Broderick, Director of Public Works, was present at the meeting along with project consultants, Thomas Hogan and Michael Stein of Wright-Pierce Engineering.

Administrator Cornell explained that DPW was seeking to slipline the Jedd Brook Sewer Interceptor which could be considered 'general maintenance'. As such, the project could be considered as an activity authorized under DPW's OOC for general maintenance. The item was placed on the agenda to allow the Commission to consider the work and determine if the plans could be administratively approved under the existing OOC.

Commissioner DeLuca asked for the 'sliplining' process to be described. Mike Stein responded that the process of slipling included inserting a liner into the existing pipe. The process can be done from manhole to manhole and, depending upon the material selected, the liner adheres to the existing pipe.

Commissioner Schoendorf asked if waddles would be placed at the manhole covers. Thomas Hogan responded that they would.

Acting Chair Doroski asked for clarity on how the sites would be accessed. Mike Stein responded that most manholes were located in upland but any wetland crossings would be made using timber matting.

Commissioners reviewed special conditions associated with approval of the site plan.

Motion: Commissioner Schwellenbach moved to approve the site access plans prepared by Wright-Pierce on behalf of South Hadley DPW for the Judd Brook Sewer sliplining project with special conditions as discussed. Commissioner Schwellenbach seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) commissioners present voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

Agenda Item #6 --- Administrator’s Report

Administrator Cornell detailed the following items:

- *Newton Street* – Construction was underway on Newton Street (Route 116) for replacement of the culvert at Newton Smith Pond. Administrator Cornell was conducting periodic site visits to monitor the work.
- *Brunelle’s Marina* – Cleanup authorized under an Emergency Order was underway following recent storm events.
- *Farmer’s Market* – The Commission could consider setting up an outreach table at a future local Farmers Market.
- *Growing Wild* – The Growing Wild Subcommittee scheduled to meet next August 21 at 10:00AM.
- *Diversity Equity and Inclusion* – Commissioner Davis, who was not present at the meeting, was working with the Hampshire Bird Club to set up events in September.

Agenda Item #7 – Other New Business

Associate Member Croll thanked Administrator Cornell for her work and permitting guidance regarding the previous public hearing to issue Order of Conditions at 21 N Sycamore Knolls.

Associate Member Rosenfeld shared that recently planted milkweed on his property was showing signs of caterpillars which was encouraging as he had not seen butterflies during his time living the property.

Adjournment

Motion: Commissioner DeLuca moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dennis seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) commissioners present voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

Appendix

Document	Document Location
Dylan Welch Presentation	Conservation Files
NOI #288-0487 - 21 N Sycamore Knolls	Conservation Files
Judd Brook Sewer Slipping Project Plans	Conservation Files