

Town of Mansfield  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
Meeting of 18 April 2012  
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building  
**MINUTES**

*Members present:* Joan Buck (Alt.), Robert Dahn, Neil Facchinetti, Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann, John Silander. *Members absent:* Aline Booth (Alt.), Peter Drzewiecki Frank Trainor. *Others present:* Linda Painter (Town Planner), Grant Meitzler (Wetlands Agent).

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:33p by Chair Quentin Kessel. Alternate Joan Buck was elevated to voting member for this meeting.

2. The draft **minutes of the 21 March meeting** were approved as written.

3. **W1493 (Sabatelli, 306 Stearns Rd.)** The Commission declined to comment on this *fait accompli*.

4. **PZC Subdivision Design Process Referrals.** Recently adopted subdivision regulations require that subdivision developers do a Site Analysis to provide information about wetlands, slopes, stone walls, existing vegetation, and other features of the property before submitting a proposal and yield plan. The idea is to permit the PZC, the Commission, and other Town entities to make site-specific suggestions about development before the developer has spent a lot of money on a detailed subdivision plan.

Linda Painter reviewed site maps provided for two subdivisions: Beacon Hill Estates Section 2 (ca. 60 acres on Mansfield City Rd. adjacent to & northwest of the existing Beacon Hill Estates development) and Bovino Manor (ca. 23 acres between Puddin La. & Conantville Rd. west of Sawmill Brook). {Lehmann's e-mail comment to the Town Planner regarding the 04/10 Field Trip to these sites is attached.} In the course of discussion, the Commission agreed on the following comments & suggestions:

**Beacon Hill**

- a. The Commission is pleased that a "Scenic Conservation Easement" is suggested along Mansfield City Rd.
- b. However, "Potential Open Space" should not coincide with the undevelopable wetland. At the least, this wetland should be buffered with additional open space.
- c. The Commission suggests that the developer seriously consider clustering development in the front portion of the property, dedicating the wetland and the back portion as open space. This would eliminate a road or common-driveway crossing of the wetland and significantly enlarge the area's contiguous dedicated open space.
- d. To the extent possible, stone walls should be preserved. The Commission notes that there may be tension between preserving existing stone walls and clustering development in the front portion of the property.
- e. The Commission suggests buffering the short "existing trail" on the northwest edge of the existing Beacon Hill development with a conservation easement.

**Bovino Manor**

- a. It makes sense to protect Sawmill Brook in this reach by conservation areas on the steep slopes at the northeast edge of the properties.
- b. It would be desirable if open space dedications and easements on this property permitted

extending the Nipmuck Trail to Conantville Rd.

**5. Proposed revisions to PVRA/PVCA.** Ms. Painter explained that in the course of attempting (unsuccessfully) to reach a settlement in a suit brought against the Town's Pleasant Valley zoning regulations, the PZC reconsidered these regulations and decided to propose some changes. The major ones are: (1) setbacks along Pleasant Valley Rd. are reduced from 500 ft to 200 ft, (2) the percentage of prime agricultural land that the PZC may require be preserved is reduced from 50% to 40%, and (3) language regarding residential developments is revised so that preserving agricultural land satisfies requirements for open space and recreational facilities. A public hearing on the proposed changes is scheduled for 07 May at 7:30p.

**6. The Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE)** of the options in the Water Source Study for the Four Corners Area is due this month. **Ponde Place** developers may put off doing anything until the Town resolves its water supply issues—in hopes of tapping into new sources.

**7. Adjourned** at 8:58p.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 20 April 2012; approved 16 May 2012.

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**Attachment:** Lehmann's 04/12 e-mail to Ms. Painter regarding Site Analysis Field Trips

Hi, Linda,

It's a very good idea for the PZC to give developers some direction about open space dedications, clustering, driveway cuts, etc., before they spend a lot of money developing a yield plan. It's also a good idea for the PZC's comments to be informed by a visit to the property—in addition to seeing a map that includes relevant information about forest cover, wetlands, stone walls, large trees, etc.

However, I don't think that this past Tuesday's field trip was particularly worthwhile in this regard. The schedule did not permit the kind of thorough on-the-ground survey that should have been undertaken.

At the site off Meadowbrook Rd, we did not walk the property at all; what was learned by standing by the parked cars and looking at the excellent map supplied by the developer could have been learned more comfortably back in the Town Hall. The experience at Beacon Hill was slightly better, but again lack of time—and, I regret to say, lack of interest on the part of some PZC members—precluded anything resembling a thorough survey (we did not, for example, see anything of the large wetland that bisects the property).

I would suggest that in the future a realistic amount of time be allowed for this sort of site visit—enough to permit those who are interested to walk over the property and to get a grasp of its important features.

I also think it would be a good idea to identify individuals on the PZC, CC, & OSPC who are willing to do such a survey and to schedule the site visit around their availability, with others participating as they have time and interest.

Scott