

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 15 July 2015
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
MINUTES

Members present: Aline Booth (Alt.), Joan Buck (Alt.), Neil Facchinetti, Scott Lehmann, Grant Meitzler, Michael Soares. *Members absent:* Robert Dahn, Quentin Kessel, John Silander. *Others present:* Shatki Lane, Roger Lapierre, Brenda Shaw (Storrs Friends Meeting).

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:31p by Neil Faccinetti in the absence of Chair Quentin Kessel. Alternates Booth & Buck were designated voting members for this meeting. The agenda was reordered to accommodate visitors from Storrs Friends Meeting regarding W1554.

2. **IWA referrals.**

a. **W1554 (Storrs Friends Meeting, 57 Hunting Lodge Rd).** Brenda Shaw of the Storrs Friends Meeting (SFM) described the proposed project, locating its components on a large site map produced by Towne Engineering. SFM proposes to upgrade two parking lots. The lower one, adjacent to Eagleville Brook would be slightly raised, graded, and paved so that storm-water would drain away from the brook into a rain garden (instead of directly into the brook, as it does now). In unusually heavy rains, water from the lot would flow into the rain garden, seep into the soil, and enter the brook via an underground drain. The upper parking lot, adjacent to a wetland, would be enlarged and reconfigured to add two handicapped spaces; it would be graded and paved so that runoff is directed to an infiltration basin between the lot and the wetland. Booth, noting that the property is in a flood zone, asked whether the project was, in consequence, subject to any special requirements. Ms. Shaw indicated that DEEP had determined that it would meet whatever conditions the State imposes on development in flood zones. (The bio-retention system was designed by UConn's Mike Dietz under a DEEP grant.) After some discussion, the Commission agreed unanimously (**motion:** Booth, Buck) that:

If the project is carried out as described in the application, the Commission expects that it will have no significant negative impact on wetlands and indeed that it should reduce the impact of storm-water runoff from the facility's parking lots on adjacent wetlands, including Eagleville Brook.

Ms. Lane, Mr. Lapierre, & Ms. Shaw left the meeting. The Commission took up item 3 below before returning to IWA referrals

b. **W1553 (Hanka, 225 Mulberry Rd).** The applicants propose to install a 21-ft diameter above-ground pool about 55 ft from wetlands. The site slopes toward wetlands and will need to be leveled, but the whole job would probably take no more than one day, according to Meitzler. Facchinetti asked about the wetlands impact of the pool's water draining into the wetland, should the pool structure fail catastrophically. Meitzler said that DEEP does not consider pool water a threat to wetlands: the concentration of chlorine is very low and what there is dissipates rapidly. The Commission then unanimously agreed (**motion:** Soares, Buck) that no significant impact on wetlands is to be expected from this project, provided standard erosion controls remain in place during construction and until the area is stabilized.

3. The draft **minutes** of the 17 June meeting, with the correction of two typos noted by Meitzler,

were approved.

4. Water Systems Advisory Committee. Buck reported on the 24 June meeting of the Water Systems Advisory Committee, which receives information about the project to deliver Connecticut Water Company (CWC) water to Mansfield & UConn and may comment on aspects of this project to CWC and PZC/IWA through Town Planner Linda Painter.

- The DEEP has issued its final water diversion permit for the project. {A public information session on the permit was held on 30 June in the Council Chambers.}
- Installation of the water main will start with the final segment: from St. Paul's church on Rte. 195 to UConn's intake at W-lot and to Jensen's mobile park on Rte. 44.
- Information about the project is posted online at www.CTWater.com/Projects, where updates via email or text message may be requested.
- Tom Callahan announced that the steering committee for the State's water planning process would meet in open session on 30 June at UConn.

5. Fines for wetlands violations? Jennifer Kaufman's 29 June memo to IWA notes that Mansfield has no fines for violations of wetlands regulations (such as failure to secure a permit from IWA for work in the regulated area). Should there be? Booth thought there should be some fine for non-compliance, lest regulations be ignored. Facchinetti observed that fines could discourage reporting violations by people who acted in ignorance of regulations; fines should not punish self-reporting of violations. Meitzler suggested that establishing fines could change the nature of the Wetlands Agent's job from facilitating compliance to enforcing it – not a change he would have welcomed when he served as Wetlands Agent. Lehmann described lack of some sort of fine as unfair to those who play by the rules; if there is no fine, there is no disincentive for just ignoring regulations and proceeding with any project, including those that would not have been approved by the IWA. Soares suggested a discretionary fine of up to twice the permit fee for work done without a permit (or not complying with the terms thereof).

6. Eagleville Lake fanwort control. The herbicide treatment scheduled for 24 June was postponed to 07 July by heavy rain that would have quickly flushed it from the reservoir.

7. Adjourned at 8:26p. Next meeting: 7:30p, Wednesday, 19 August 2015.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 17 July 2015; approved 16 September 2015.