

**MINUTES  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
1 JUNKINS AVENUE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
CONFERENCE ROOM "A"**

**3:30 P.M.**

**JULY 9, 2014**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Steve Miller; Vice Chairman Mary Ann Blanchard;  
Members Allison Tanner, Barbara McMillan; Elissa Hill Stone,  
Peter Vandermark, Shelley Saunders; Alternate Kimberly Meuse

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:** Peter Britz, Environmental Planner

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**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. January 8, 2014
2. February 12, 2014

The approval of the minutes was postponed to the August 13, 2014 meeting.

**II. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

- A. 333 Borthwick Avenue  
HCA Health Services of New Hampshire, Inc., owner  
Assessor Map 240, Lot 2-1

Mr. Bill Duffy and Mr. George Pantelli were present to speak to the application. Mr. Duffy explained that this was a reapplication of an approval that they received approximately a year earlier and was exactly the same proposal as before. The proposal was to provide a first responder helicopter pad on the hospital grounds. He explained that the hospital would be upgrading to a level two trauma location in a few months so there was the need for quicker service. Currently, the helicopters land at Pease and patients are transported by ambulance to the hospital.

Mr. Pantelli stated that currently, the proposed area was a parking lot. They would lose 20 parking spaces to make room for the helicopter pad. He went on to say that the power lines were currently above ground but would be buried so as to not conflict with the helicopters. The front power lines would have large balls on them and beacons would be installed on the hospital and Liberty Mutual buildings as safety devices.

Ms. Tanner asked if the lighting would be on the whole time. Mr. Pantelli said that the lights would only operate at night on the buildings. He added that the lights would be baffled and would only shine upward.

Mr. Duffy explained that the helicopter approach would be up the main highways, Interstate 95 and Route 16. This was so the highway traffic would help to mask the helicopter noise.

Mr. Pantelli stated that the area outside the pad would be a turf area with stabilization mesh.

Vice Chairman Blanchard asked if the routing of the helicopters was according to FAA rules. Mr. Duffy replied yes and said that they have been in touch with the FAA and are in accordance with all of their rules and regulations.

Vice Chairman Blanchard pointed out that some shrubs and four trees were being proposed to be cut. She asked if they planned to replace the trees elsewhere on the property. Mr. Duffy replied no and explained that they have already planted a lot of trees along the front of the property along with stonewalls with other projects. They have pretty much taken up all of the available space.

Ms. McMillan asked how the vegetative areas would be maintained. Mr. Pantelli said that the prior approval was to provide best management practices and they would continue to propose it for this application.

Ms. McMillan asked what type of winter maintenance they were proposing on the pad. Mr. Duffy said the pad would be plowed.

Mr. Britz asked if the area around the pad was grid style impervious surface. Mr. Duffy replied yes.

Hearing no more questions, Chairman Miller asked for a motion. Ms. Tanner made a motion to recommend approval of the application as presented with the same stipulation from the prior approval:

- 1) That best management practices, as recommended by the Department of Environmental Services, are followed for phragmites control.

The motion was seconded by Ms. McMillan. There was no discussion and the motion passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

B. 220 South Street  
Kristina Logan, owner  
Assessor Map 111, Lot 1

Ms. Kristina Logan, owner, was present to speak to the application. She said that she bought her home in 1996. She is an artist and has been working and living in the home. She pointed out

that her work space was currently in the basement. She explained that she would like to turn the existing garage into useable studio space. She pointed out that on the survey she provided, she would be increasing the size by a couple of feet both lengthwise and widthwise.

Ms. Tanner asked if there was currently any paved areas on the property and if so, could it be removed. Ms. Logan said that it was paved on both sides of the house as the home is a two family home. She pointed out that one side had parking for two cars and that she could remove one paved parking space and replace it with crushed stone. She said it could cause a problem with plowing however.

Ms. Tanner asked Ms. Logan if she was proposing any plantings at the back of the property. Ms. Logan said she would be happy to plant in that area. Chairman Miller added that water quality is always a concern of the Commission. He said that plantings are great and there are guides on the City's website to offer ideas to homeowners. Ms. Logan said that she was open to working with that. Mr. Britz suggested that Ms. Logan bring a planting plan to the Planning Board showing what she might plant along the back of the property. At this point, the Commissioners gave Ms. Logan suggestions on possible plantings and the types of planting beds that worked best.

Hearing no more questions, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Ms. Tanner made a motion to recommend approval of the application to the Planning Board as presented with the following stipulation:

- 1) That an area of plantings be added to the southwest corner of the property to offset the impact of the new impervious surface in the buffer.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Blanchard. There was no discussion. The motion passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

C. 162 Mill Pond Way  
Mill Pond Way Condominium Association, owner  
Leah R. and James D. Berry, applicant  
Assessor Map 140, Lot 21

Ms. Leah Berry, owner of the property was present to speak to the application. She handed out additional materials to supplement what she originally submitted. She stated that she would like to construct a patio and two planting beds. She also wanted to remove seven limbs from existing pine trees on the property.

(Ms. Saunders arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Ms. Berry explained that the patio would be constructed of pavers with a crushed stone base. Chairman Miller asked if there were other pavers on the property. Ms. Berry said that there was just one other walkway that was constructed with pavers by another owner in the association.

Chairman Miller stated that he received a couple emails from concerned neighbors but added that he felt misinformation was the issue. He added that there were strong feelings in the neighborhood. Ms. Berry said that she loved her home and just wanted to make it more enjoyable and pretty. She did not want to destroy anything. Chairman Miller commented that the tree line could use some plantings and added that the Commission is always concerned about water quality.

Ms. Tanner stated that she had a couple concerns. She pointed out that one of the photos submitted showed oriental bittersweet and so she recommended removing it. She also asked if there was a reason to have such an expansive lawn. She wondered if she could include more plantings. Ms. Berry responded by saying that she would love to be able to plant more but she didn't think that she could so she wanted to propose something conservative. She too felt that plantings were much better than lawn. Mr. Britz pointed out that anyone can put plantings in without a permit as well as remove invasives.

Ms. McMillan asked Ms. Berry if she had access to the water. Ms. Berry said that there was a little path to the water but that it was not a big cleared area. Ms. McMillan said it was best to leave the pine needles on the ground to help limit erosion. Ms. Berry said that she did not plan to open it up when she trimmed the limbs.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Ms. McMillan made a motion to recommend approval of the application as presented to the Planning Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tanner.

Mr. Vandermark commented that they did not have any discussion about limb trimming. Ms. Tanner stated that she would worry about lollipoping the trees. She agreed that the pine trees were unsightly.

Hearing no other discussion, Chairman Miller called for the vote. The motion to recommend approval of the application as presented to the Planning Board passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote.

D. 416 Ocean Road  
Matthew and Katherine Menchen, owners  
Assessor Map 293, Lot 12

Mr. Matthew Menchen, owner, stated that he would like to put in a 12'x 8' wood storage shed and pointed out that the property was limited for available space. He showed the Commission an aerial photo of his property.

Mr. Menchen explained that they would excavate two feet down and would fill the area with a gravel base with a concrete block on top.

Vice Chairman Blanchard asked what would be stored in the shed. Mr. Menchen replied firewood. Ms. Stone asked if the house was heated with wood. Mr. Menchen replied yes.

Mr. Vandermark asked about the existing garden. Mr. Menchen explained that it would have to be taken out because it was on top of the septic mound and the shed would be installed just off to the side of the septic mound.

Mr. Menchen asked what type of plants could be planted on a septic mound. Ms. Tanner suggested ground cover, periwinkle, and decorative grasses.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Miller asked for a motion. Vice Chairman Blanchard made a motion to recommend approval of the application to the Planning Board as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stone. There was no discussion.

The motion to recommend approval of the application to the Planning Board as presented passed by a unanimous 7-0 vote.

E. 928 South Street  
Edgewood Manor, Inc.  
Assessor Map 221, Lot 87

Vice Chairman Blanchard stated that she would be recusing herself from the discussion and vote. Ms. Meuse voted in her place.

Mr. Mark West of West Environmental, Mr. Alex Ross of Ross Engineering, and Mr. Brian Ladd, representative of the Mark Wentworth Home were present to speak to the application.

Mr. West stated that the City notified the owner of a violation on the site. He explained that the contractor went overboard with gravel trying to refresh the site. He said that the parking lot sheet flows down over the gravel and into the wetland so it made sense to try to improve the water quality. Mr. Ross suggested a treatment swale to improve the water quality. They had thought about plantings as well but have changed their minds. There were lots of invasive species in the immediate area. Mr. Ross thought this was the best solution – to slow the water down, cool it, and then treat it.

Ms. Tanner wondered if signage could be installed to keep cars from parking in the area that would be used for snow storage. Mr. Ladd said they could use signs but he pointed out that plows might catch them. Mr. Britz suggested bollard and chains.

Ms. Saunders asked if the grass would be fertilized. Mr. Ross said they would want to make sure the grass was healthy and would be mowed. Mr. Britz pointed out that only slow release fertilizer was allowed. Ms. Saunders stated that an established lawn did not need fertilizer. It was only when you are trying to establish one.

Hearing no other questions, Chairman Miller called for a motion. Ms. Saunders made a motion to recommend approval of the application to the Planning Board as presented with the following stipulations:

- 1) Signage shall be installed to discourage parking in the snow storage area.
- 2) Only low phosphorous, slow release nitrogen fertilizer shall be used in the grass swale.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Tanner. There was no discussion.

The motion to recommend approval of the application to the Planning Board as presented with the following stipulations passed by a unanimous (7-0) vote:

- 1) Signage shall be installed to discourage parking in the snow storage area.
- 2) Only low phosphorous, slow release nitrogen fertilizer shall be used in the grass swale.

### **III. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to come before the Commission requiring action.

### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

At 4:45 p.m., it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Good  
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the Conservation Commission meeting on Sept. 10, 2014.