

**Town of Auburn
Conservation Commission
Public Hearing
May 3, 2016**

Members present: Jeff Porter-Chairman, Peg Donovan, Vice Chair, Diana Heaton & Alan Villeneuve, Members. Richard Burnham, Alternate.

Absent: Ed Fehrenbach, Member. Stephanie Hanson, Alternate.

Others present: Michael Rolfe.

Mr. Porter called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and introduced the Board members to everyone present.

NEW BUSINESS

Joe DeStasio – New Hampshire division of Trout Unlimited

Mr. Porter asked Mr. DeStasio to begin his presentation. Mr. DeStasio began by saying that he works for Trout Unlimited and was before the Board tonight to give a presentation on a project that they are proposing to do in the Town of Auburn. What they do is called large wood loading which is kind of like chop and drop and essentially what they do is go to stream channels that are devoid that are missing large wood which is wood that is a foot or more in diameter. Mr. DeStasio further explained the process of where in normal scenarios the trees grow too big, die and fall in and decompose of which contributes to the surrounding habitat. The hydrology of these stream channels have been heavily farmed and is missing this part. Mr. DeStasio stated that the parcel that they are looking at is the Edward and Velvet Fehrenbach property located on Pingree Hill Road. It is a small tributary where the headwater is located upon the easement and runs into Cohas Brook. Mr. DeStasio talked about the two (2) project areas upstream and downstream and the beaver pond center. Mr. DeStasio explained that trees offer two (2) benefits and the first being thermo exposure and further explained that small fluctuations in water temperature even less than a single degree can give the fish enough encouragement to just move on to other areas. What they are trying to do is go in and provide thermo cover by dragging it in. Mr. DeStasio pointed out that when you put large wood installations roughly 30 or 40, 50 feet along the stream ways and what it does is breaks up the hydrology and instead of having a large straight fast channel, with the wood installation it will slow the water velocity and back it up a bit and reengage the surrounding flood plains. This would be very beneficial in this type of scenario. The second benefit for the hydrology side of it would be the creation of ripple pool habitats and when you get these channelized tributaries they tend to grow deeper and deeper because the velocity keeps sweeping

the sediment and just goes deeper and by slowing it down you would prevent that from happening and it will create a ripple pool environment.

Mr. DeStasio talked about spawning behaviors and that the frogs and the baby fish like to stay in the small shallower lower velocity ripple environments and also in the deep cut banks where as the adults and the mature individuals will stay in the deeper pools. If they don't have those two (2) separate types of habitat between the immature fish and the adult fish then the adult fish just start eating the immature fish so it's not promoting a healthy breeding environment for these types of fish.

Mr. DeStasio stated that, in a nutshell, the two (2) biggest benefits of doing these large wood installations in these stream ways is (1) solar exposure prevention to try and cool the waters off to get the temperatures to drop a bit so it's not cooked by the sun on a daily basis and (2) affect the hydrology to reengage the flood plain and slow water velocity and create a ripple pool environment.

At this time, Mr. DeStasio passed out copies of the permit applications for the Board members to review. Mrs. Donovan asked if they stocked the ponds too. Mr. DeStasio answered by saying that they do not stock the waters themselves but do work with Fish and Game and explained that he has work directly with John McGee of Fish and Game who has been doing a lot of these large wood installations way up north for the past few years.

Mr. DeStasio further stated that part of the project is that they go out and that throughout the summer months and take monthly water samples and take parameter measurements which is basically checking the PH, temperature, conductivity, turbidity, dissolved oxygen content of which they take readings on a monthly basis prior to and post installations and they also take physical water samples that they take back to the water analysis lab at the University of New Hampshire and they perform a nutrient analysis and look for all the common species of nitrogen and ammonia, nitrate and nitrite and all the type of things that would affect the habitability for these tributaries for these fish. They will be going back every year and every two (2) years and taking photos.

Mr. DeStasio talked about a graduate student who was doing a project and that part of her project was monitoring a few of their sites with regard to nutrient cycling and nitrogen cycling. Mr. DeStasio gave a brief explanation with regard to this monitoring. Ms. Heaton asked a question with regard to increasing nitrogen. Mr. DeStasio stated that it could happen and the plants biodegrading and did not believe it would be created with regard to this project. Mr. DeStasio added that there really was not a lot of research done with these small tributaries at this time so basically what they are going off of is a baseline rather than going off of definitive factual information that they have gleaned from prior research. They are learning in the process right now. A brief discussion ensued with the Board members. Ms. Heaton asked Mr. DeStasio what exactly he was looking to obtain from the Conservation Commission. Mr. DeStasio indicated that what he was with the review process with these permits through DES with

a minimum impact review that typically is 90 days. If the Conservation Commission in the Town where the project is proposed signs off then it becomes a 30 day review. So it accelerates their field season and so if there are any pushbacks from DES or any hang ups about information that they would have enough time for the summer season to complete the project. Mr. Porter asked how these projects are initiated. Mr. DeStasio stated that Brooke Smart, his point of contact at NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) who goes around all of Southern New Hampshire and finds property owners that have property that could make good Conservation Easements. She basically acquires these Easements as Conservation Easements and then they try to find out what type of work they can do to restore, conserve these 100 year Easements. They go in with Fish and Game and do initial site assessments on each of these easements and they basically rank them. Basically, its NRCS that goes to them and say that they have these Conservation Easements and that they have walked it with Fish and Game and done some electro fishing to these small tributaries to establish the growth populations and they think that this type of work would be beneficial.

Mrs. Donovan asked if they approach the Easement holder. Mr. DeStasio stated that they do not approach the Easement holder that NRCS does and then they go from there. Mr. Porter asked what the benefit was to the owner. Mr. DeStasio asked what type of benefit. Mr. Porter informed Mr. DeStasio stated that he was unsure if this would be an overlap because the town already had a Conservation Easement on the Fehrenbach property and that Mr. Fehrenbach was a Board member to this board. A brief discussion ensued with regard to the Conservation Commission already in place and Mr. DeStasio indicated that he would speak with Brooke at NRCS and get that information for the Board. Mr. Porter stated that two (2) easements on the same property would probably not work well. Mr. Porter had a concern that it was double dipping on the same easement because the easement was already established. Mr. DeStasio indicated that it was Tax Map 2, Lot 28 is the Fehrenbach Easement that they are proposing to work on and that Tax Map 2, Lot 28-2 was also the Fehrenbach property that abuts the other one. Mr. Villeneuve asked if they were seeking the Board's approval. Mr. DeStasio said that they were looking for a signature from the Conservation Commission to shorten the application with DES to 30 days.

Discussion ensued between Mr. DeStasio and the Board members with regard to the process. Mr. Villeneuve asked what they did with the brush. Mr. DeStasio reiterated what he said above and added that they only use a chainsaw and that they do use a lot of the tops of the trees being the canopy branches and scrape type stuff and they use it to try to create more three dimensional net to these installations. It won't be a dam but in fact will catch a lot of the leaf litter and that's where nutrient cycling comes into play because you'll have all this dead plant matter getting caught by these wood installations. Mr. Villeneuve asked what happens if it does dam. Mr. DeStasio explained that they typically don't want them to dam and that they plan for them not to but if it does that you would pretty much see changes on the edge. Mr. Villeneuve asked how long they monitor them. Mr. DeStasio said that they would monitor it for two (2) years but would be looking at budget.

Mr. Villeneuve made a motion to authorize Mr. Porter to sign the Expedited Permit Application as presented tonight for Tax Map 2, Lot 28, Pingree Hill Road, Edward and Velvet Fehrenbach. Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion. A vote was taken; All were in favor and the motion passed.

At this time, Mr. Porter signed the permit application. Ms. Heaton asked Mr. DeStasio if it would possible to get an update on how everything was going. Mr. DeStasio stated that he could definitely update the Board as it progresses. Mr. DeStasio thanked the Board and exited the meeting.

**B.K. Bazan
223 Bunker Hill Road, Tax Map 8, Lot 12
Zoned Residential Two
Discuss Setback and improvements**

Mr. Porter asked if Mr. Bazan was present. Mr. Bazan was not present at tonight's meeting and Mr. Porter moved on to the next item on the agenda.

**Corey Joy
40 McQuestion Drive, Tax Map 2, Lot 5-4
Zoned Residential One
Discuss Conditional Use Permit Application
For Driveway**

Mr. Joy began by saying that he was recently in to speak with Mrs. Rouleau-Cote and Ms. Royce regarding this project. Mr. Joy informed the Board members that back in 2006 they came before the Board and received a Variance with regard to the building envelope being reduced down to 75 feet from a wetland. At this time, the Board tried to figure out the location of the property and Mr. Joy passed out copies of the proposed plan for him to build a home. Mr. Joy further indicated that he will be before the Planning Board for an Informal discussion as well. Mr. Joy explained that in speaking with Mrs. Rouleau-Cote that she believed that it would be in his best interest to hire a wetland scientist to delineate where the wetland was. Mr. Joy explained to the Board that back in 2004 the wetland was shown on his property and when the wetland scientist that he hired shows the wetland to be on the abutters property and that it was no longer on his property. Mr. Joy pointed out that he is able to maintain the 125 wetland buffer for the septic and the building envelope but is looking to go for a Conditional Use Permit for the driveway. A discussion ensued with regard to the driveway location. The Board suggested to Mr. Joy to look at possibly moving the driveway to keep it out of the 75 foot wetland buffer to a Level One wetland. Mr. Joy understood what the Board was asking and stated that he would go back to his engineer and see what they could do. Mr. Joy further pointed out that he was meeting with the Planning Board tomorrow night to go over the proposed plan to obtain input from the Planning Board as well.

The Board and Mr. Joy reviewed the plan. Mr. Joy explained that the abutter had two (2) building envelopes as he tried to build in the back building envelope and was unable and ended up building in the front. Mr. Joy stated that he was proposing to build a 2,500 square foot house and that the house fit within the building envelope and that there was no problem meeting the 125 foot wetland buffer with the building envelope. Mrs. Joy informed the Board members that the driveway was already there that was put in place approximately 10 years ago and was already established and it didn't make much sense to move it over to disturb another area and would not be cost effective for them to do that as well. Discussion ensued with regard to possibly moving the driveway. Ms. Heaton asked how far the driveway was from the wetland. It was noted that they were unsure of the distance and Ms. Heaton and Mr. Porter both suggested to Mr. Joy to possibly keeping the driveway out of the 75 foot wetland buffer and believed that they were workable ideas.

Mr. Porter further added for Mr. Joy to keep in mind about a deck or pool being within the building envelope. Mr. Joy understood what Mr. Porter was saying and would keep that in mind as well. The Board moved on to talk about the wetland again and Mr. Joy stated that he had hired Mr. Beauchemin. Mr. Joy reiterated that he was not looking to reduce the 125 setback for the building envelope but was just looking for permission to allow the driveway within the 75 foot buffer. Discussion continued with regard to the driveway. Mr. Joy recalled the reason for having a side entrance to the house was the fact of the pipe and stone septic system that would be installed which was designed by Peter Stoddard. Mr. Porter informed Mr. Joy that the recommendation would be to redirect the driveway out of the 75 foot buffer and you'll have conditional support from the Conservation Commission and Mr. Villeneuve also agreed. Mr. Porter also informed Mr. Joy that he would be present at the meeting tomorrow night for the Planning Board and would be able to speak.

Mr. and Mrs. Joy thanked the Board for their time and exited the meeting.

Mrs. Donovan asked what happened to the other applicant. Mr. Porter explained that what he was a no show and what he was proposing to do was clear all around the pond. Mr. Porter informed the Board that the house was located on the corner of Coleman Road and Bunker Hill Road. The Board stated that they could not approve something like this. Mr. Villeneuve added that, the Town of Auburn's Zoning Ordinance does not allow you to do that. If it is maintained then we allow you to continue to maintain it but if it's not maintained then it's not allowed.

OLD BUSINESS

Current Project Updates

PB and ZBA Notes

Mr. Porter moved on to talk about Mr. Booth's request from the Zoning Board was granted by the Board to build his garage.

Mr. Porter informed the Board about Anderson Way and that the Planning Board voted two (2) against and one granting and therefore Mr. Starace did not get the reduction. Mr. Porter went on to state that they are filing a request for reconsideration. Mr. Villeneuve explained that when someone files a request for reconsideration that they have to prove that there was a fault in the decision making or provide new information because you can't just reiterate the same old arguments and hope that there are different people sitting on the board. Mr. Porter believed that was the whole argument and believed that Mrs. Phillips would be there. Mr. Villeneuve asked who were the two (2) who voted against granting the reduction. Mr. Porter stated that it was Mrs. Marzloff and Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Grillo voted to approve and that Mr. Poltak did not vote.

Mr. Porter also added that the solar panels were approved for Mr. Geddes on Harvard Ave and that they did have a good plan for restoration. A brief discussion ensued with regard that they were moved and that a restoration plan was in place. Mr. Villeneuve noted that they had already impacted the wetland by cutting the over story they completely wiped out the under story because of the way the lot lies. Mr. Burnham agreed with Mr. Villeneuve as well as Mrs. Donovan.

Mr. Porter went on to talk about the Old Candia Road culvert that is being replaced by redoing the box culvert.

MINUTES APRIL MEETING

Ms. Heaton moved to accept the minutes of April 5, 2016 as written, Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Burnham, Mrs. Donovan, Ms. Heaton and Mr. Villeneuve all received letters informing them of their continued service on the Conservation Commission. With this in mind, Mr. Porter indicated that in order to allow someone else to serve as Chairman on the Conservation Commission Board they can nominate a new chairman. Mr. Villeneuve nominated Mr. Porter as Chairman and Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion.

Mr. Villeneuve moved to nominate Jeff Porter as Chairman of the Conservation Commission, Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion passed.

Mr. Villeneuve moved to nominate Peg Donovan as Vice-Chair of the Conservation Commission, Mr. Porter seconded the motion. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion passed.

ADJOURN

Mr. Villeneuve moved to adjourn the Hearing. Ms. Heaton seconded the motion. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously and the meeting stood adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will tentatively be held at the Town Hall, 47 Chester Road on Tuesday, June 7, 2016.