

**Town of Auburn
Conservation Commission
October 7, 2014**

Members present: Chuck Joy (chair), Jeff Porter, Alan Villeneuve, Peg Donovan, Ed Fehrenbach, Diana Heaton

Others present: Roman Bastek, Keith Martel and Keith Coviello

Meeting opens at 7:05 p.m.

5 Calef Road (Roman Bastek)

Would like to build a garage alongside an intermittent stream, that is between two stonewalls. Has about 27' from stonewall to driveway. Chuck said he needs to go before the zoning so the commission should do a site walk. Non-conforming lot to start, already has a paved driveway. Would like to put garage about thirty feet from the stream. Thinking a 30' x 30' or 28' x 28' to fill a gap between the driveway and a wood shed. Already an established dirt road where they would like to put the garage.

Discussed the scheduling of a site walk. Decided upon 6:15 p.m. tomorrow, 10/8/14.

**New Subdivision Proposal (Keith Martel and Keith Coviello –Long Beach Development)
Tax Map 8 Lot 42, off of Dearborn Road**

Just shy of forty –nine acres, two conceptual plans provided; a grid and a “cluster”. Martel talked about the project. Two isolated wetlands, neither of which are vernal pools. Grid design is nineteen houses, while the “cluster” is twenty – three.

A. Villeneuve asked how deep to lot one from the road? K. Martel answered approximately 100'. J. Porter asked how much land would be for open space and how much was wetlands? K. Martel said the plan does not meet the town's requirements for building a cluster development, only have 3.32 acres of wetlands and 3.38 acres of 20% or greater slopes, regulation calls for 20% of the land falling into these categories, they have 15 %. If created a cluster, would need 21.2 acres of unconstrained acreage they would provide 21.4 and about 28 acres of open space. Most of the building lots would be half an acre but would make them smaller if needed. A. Villeneuve sees this as a pretty steep lot while J. Porter noted that all of the slope head down to the wetland. A. Villeneuve did not like the idea of the houses by the road thought it did not hold with the “rural character”, does not want to see the cluster from the road. J. Porter did not want to see any wetland impact for a cluster, he feels this is more in keeping with the intent of cluster developments. P. Donovan expressed concern with the slope of several lots and noted lot 8 as an example. A. Villeneuve mused that the design shows very tightly packed houses, felt it would be better with fewer houses adding, that just because regulations allow for a certain amount of homes, does not mean that is the best design. J. Porter said he was very interested in mitigation because of the steep slopes, and expressed concern about salting the roads as an example. A. Villeneuve thought there was a level one wetland very near to this area. Commission looked at the wetland book compiled by Mark West and found that wetland #73, one of the two tier 1 wetlands in the town was in the area. They wondered about whether the finger of the wetland that flows into this lot is part of the tier 1 wetland which is one of the most important wetlands in town. If so, A. Villeneuve would want

some extra protection for this as all the land and thus the proposed house lots are flowing into this wetland.

The general consensus of the Commission was to support a cluster over a traditional grid for this particular lot. A. Villeneuve noted that this lot is less flat than Pasture Road and besides, the point is to protect land. D. Heaton who lives on Pasture says she has rivers flowing across her property during a rain, a lot of water moves through. And she could imagine the same for this subdivision. Chuck did some calculation and thought they did not quite meet the requirement for a cluster. Should have more constrained open space to make up the difference. Twenty percent or more of the parcel should be undeveloped/open space. Needs 26.4 acres of unconstrained land instead of 21.4.

Some general discussion about cluster versus grid and water mitigation. D. Heaton felt that increasing the number of houses with a cluster is counter to the intent.

General cluster subdivision discussion in regards to the planning board meeting 10/8/14

A. Villeneuve felt the town has not done a great job of enforcing the regulations that are on the books. C. Joy agreed saying his goal is to see the actual buffers and requirements on the books enforced as opposed to waived at the blink of an eye. J. Porter would like to see any lots with wetland setbacks removed from use in cluster developments that the wetlands should as a matter of course be kept out of the lots in cluster developments. C. Joy said that according to the Auburn building inspector, the whole idea of having wetlands outside of the lots is enforceable now, because it falls under the category of innovative land use. He added that in addition, a twenty five foot swath that runs along a road or under a culvert is not a contiguous parcel and should not be considered as such. Contiguous open space should have minimums and requirements set. J. porter went to a state wetlands scientists meeting, and noted that they suggested if have level t2/3 wetlands feeding into a level 1, then according to the state they should all be considered level 1. If there is impact from one level to another then the wetlands need the same level of protection for all. J. Porter said the state suggests staying away from the dissection of wetlands and instead they all should have the highest protection afforded by the highest level, because essentially they are the same system. This is the way the state is moving.

Minutes of September meeting

Several corrections were suggested and made

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected – A. Villeneuve

Second – P. Donovan

Motion to adjourn – A. Villeneuve Second – J. Porter

Meeting closes @ 8:30 p.m.