

**Town of Auburn
Conservation Commission
March 12, 2024**

Members present: Jeff Porter-Chairman. Peg Donovan, Vice Chair. Richard Burnham & Patricia Elwell, Members. Stephanie Hanson, Minutes recorded by Denise Royce.

Absent: Diana Heaton, Member.

Also Present:

Mr. Porter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and moved right into the Self-Storage facility expansion plan.

GENERAL BUSINESS

**All Purpose Storage Auburn, LLC
248 Old Candia Road/212 Depot Road, Tax Map 13, Lot 23A
Zoned Residential Two
Major Site Plan Review
(Expansion of the Existing Self-Storage Facility)
Wetland Buffer Reductions
Continued from March 6, 2024**

Mr. Ritchie began by introducing himself and saying that he is before the Board tonight on behalf of All Purpose Storage Auburn, LLC until tonight. Mr. Ritchie started by saying that the property is located in a Residential zone with existing storage buildings on it that were previously chicken coops and then converted in the past years to storage buildings. The parcel consists of 37½ acres with 375 feet of frontage on Old Candia Road and 380 feet on Depot Road. Mr. Ritchie explained that they are proposing to construct 19,750 square feet of additional buildings with approximately 3½ acres for boat and RV parking lot out back. They were before the Zoning Board of Adjustment for this project where they were granted a Variance to increase building coverage of the Residentially zoned building coverage of 5% as well as a Variance for expansion of a non-conforming use and they were denied a Variance for Contractor Bays onsite. Mr. Ritchie indicated that the wetlands were delineated by Chris Guida, wetland scientist from our office at Fieldstone Land Consultants. Mr. Ritchie asked the Board members if they had copies of the plans. Mr. Porter indicated that we had a big set of plans. Mr. Ritchie stated that he would run through what they had for wetlands and began on page 2 of 17 which shows the only Level One wetland on the plan. Mr. Ritchie talked about the manmade ponds

located on the property. Mr. Ritchie stated that they labeled the manmade ponds as Level Three due to the fact that they were manmade. Mr. Ritchie talked about the wetland pocket to the East and indicated that they have it listed as a 75-foot buffer, but it should be 25 feet. Mr. Porter asked how the soil was in that pocket and what the wetland scientist classified it as. Mr. Ritchie stated that they currently have it as a Level Three, but he would check on that to make sure. Mr. Ritchie stated that they would be impacting a couple of these wetland buffers and the first one being the manmade ditch to access the parking lot. Mr. Ritchie stated that it would still require 601 square feet of wetland impacts although it was a manmade wetland. Mr. Ritchie also stated that there would be 2,891 square feet of wetland buffer impact for that crossing and they are proposing to install an oversized culvert for that one and they do not need a state permit for that wetland crossing because it was a manmade structure. Mr. Ritchie pointed out that there were areas that already had gravel areas in the buffer that they are proposing to pave over at the request of the Planning Board to capture all that runoff that is currently going into the wetlands and treating it. Mr. Ritchie talked about the proposed parking area in the rear of the property to the north that is only in the buffer 2,389 square feet. They have a very minimal section by the pond that they would be curving it which would be approximately 10 square feet at the edge of the existing gravel to capture that runoff and treat it. Then they have an outlet to that basin 415 square feet of impact to the buffer for this pond. Mr. Ritchie indicated that that was all the impact they have and that he would be happy to answer any questions that the Board may have. Mr. Ritchie indicated that they were looking for any feedback from the Board and that they had submitted their plans to Stantec for review and had not heard back from them and believed the next Planning Board meeting was coming up soon. Mr. Ritchie pointed out to the Board that he was not a wetland scientist but that he would be happy to try to answer any questions to the best of his ability that the Board may have at this time and thanked the Board for their time.

Mr. Porter asked about capturing the runoff and infiltrating. Mr. Ritchie stated that they do not infiltrate as they have a large permanent pool volume to capture the runoff and store it for an extended period of time for overflowing to meet state standards for treatment. Mr. Porter asked about capturing any sort of spillage in the vehicle storage area. Mr. Ritchie indicated that the whole portion of the site will have curbing on the south side and six (6) catch basins along there. So all the runoff should be captured and it will all be diverted into the very large wet pond located near the parking area. Mr. Porter asked if they were capturing any type of hazardous material and what they would be doing with it. Mr. Ritchie believed it would be captured in their catch basins with silt sacks and it would all go to the wet pond. Mrs. Elwell commented that there would be no treatment. Mr. Ritchie explained that it was a large permanent pool volume where the sediment would filter down to the bottom and would overflow to the structure that provides treatment per state standards. Mr. Porter commented that, if you're capturing material into that wet pond, they need to know how you're getting it treated as you cannot let it sit on the surface and flow over. Mr. Ritchie believed there were oil separators that should be able to capture that. Mr. Porter indicated that, in order to get any type of acceptance from them

that they would need to see some sort of plans and what the designs look like. Mr. Porter asked about the manmade pond and asked how long that pond has been in existence. Mr. Ritchie was unsure. Mr. Porter also asked if it was now functioning more as a wetland as opposed to just a manmade structure because if it's been there for a long time that there are probably some inhabitants in there and is it now being classified differently. Mr. Ritchie stated that there were a few culverts flowing into it now and was unsure how active those culverts were as he had not been on the property. Mrs. Elwell stated that, if the wetland scientist in your office has done a review where is the report. Mr. Ritchie stated that they have not done a report yet that this was just a wetland delineation of the 7 standards, and he classified it based on those standards. Mr. Porter commented so you don't have a report. Mr. Ritchie stated that they did not.

Mrs. Donovan had a question about the blacktop and capturing the runoff from the blacktop because the blacktop is impervious and was unsure where it was going to go. Mr. Ritchie stated that it is all gravel right now and they have been to the Planning Board and there were comments from the Planning Board that they would like to see it paved. Mr. Porter pointed out that it was because this was a major plan change and because of the size and the use that it would have to be paved. A brief discussion ensued with regard to pavement and access doors to the backside of the buildings. Mr. Ritchie commented that it would all be paved and there would be curbing along that edge so none of it would be going down that hillside. Mr. Ritchie went on to say that the runoff would be captured in the catch basins, and it's piped along to one of the wet ponds. Mrs. Donovan asked how the water would be treated once it's caught. Mr. Ritchie stated that from an oil and gas question that he would have to look into that but for typical sediment it would be treated in those wet ponds. Mr. Porter asked who would be maintaining those ponds. Mr. Ritchie stated that the owner of the property would be maintaining the ponds and when they prepare a drainage report there will be a maintenance and inspection manual with BMPs onsite.

Mr. Burnham went through what is being proposed onsite with an addition to one of the buildings, two (2) proposed new buildings and the parking area at the rear of the property. Mr. Ritchie said that was correct. A brief discussion ensued with regard to the parking lot which would be long term rentals for boats and RV's. Mrs. Elwell asked if they would need to plow that area and also treat it with sand or salt. Mr. Ritchie believed there was snow storage onsite and anticipated that they would be plowing the isles so if you need to get to your vehicle that you could. Mrs. Hanson pointed out that page 5 had the snow storage areas on the plan. Mrs. Hanson asked what the existing stormwater management was at this time. Mr. Ritchie stated that it was just the existing manmade pond as there really isn't anything onsite right now. Mrs. Hanson asked if Stantec had commented on this yet. Mr. Porter said no as no check has been received yet.

At this time, Mr. Porter explained that he realizes that they are looking for a blessing from this Board with regard to the impacts and your plans but what you're hearing from him and a few members of the Board is that there are a few deficiencies on how you're managing these areas in terms of taking care of the runoff and how it's going to be captured and how it's going to be filtered. We would want to see this information before we make any type of determination. Basically, because you're going to be creating these paved areas and you have snow storage on top of wet ponds and all of your areas need to have better design aspects in terms of what you're going to do with the water. Mr. Porter reiterated that, until we see the plans they cannot really say yay or nay. Mrs. Elwell agreed and said that she would like to see a wetlands report. Mrs. Hanson commented that she felt that this was informational, and she would like to see Stantec's comments and additional information on the drainage and additional information on the wetlands. Mrs. Hanson also asked Mr. Ritchie if there was an alternative design. Mr. Ritchie indicated that originally, they wanted to do Contractor Bays and that was mostly limited to the front half of the site. Mr. Porter stated that it was denied by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mr. Porter asked what they would be doing with the storage buildings. Mr. Ritchie commented that it was for larger indoor boat and RV storage. Mr. Burnham asked if it would be a single-story building. Mr. Ritchie directed the Board to the last page which shows a rendering of what the two (2) buildings would look like. A brief discussion ensued with regard to the buildings and the RV and boat parking area. Mr. Ritchie directed the Board to page 2 of 17 which shows the proposed buildings. The Board wanted to know what classification the wetland closest to the parking area was and how close they were to it. Mrs. Donovan asked if they would be seeking a Variance to reduce the buffer. Mr. Ritchie did not believe they needed a Variance. Mr. Porter believed they would need one for the wetland crossing over the ditch. Mr. Burnham believed the parking area was in the buffer. Mr. Ritchie believed they needed to correct the setback to be 25 feet and not 75 feet but would look into it further to clarify that area. A brief discussion ensued with regard to the wet ponds and if they would be maintained and access to the wet ponds for maintenance purposes. Mr. Porter commented about the outflows out of the ponds and how they are going into the wetlands and mentioned that he wanted to see plans on how they would be managed. Mr. Burnham had a concern about the parking area and what kind of chemicals would be stored there and that would end up in this pond. Mr. Burnham believed that they would need some sort of plan regarding what they would do with the oils and/or chemicals. Mr. Porter added and the overflow plans for the pond areas. Mr. Porter believed that during Stantec's review that that would be taken care of.

Mr. Porter asked if there were any further comments from the Board members. Mrs. Hanson asked about the stormwater runoff from the roofs of the new structure, and would it be co-mingling with the runoff from the parking lot or would it be separate because the roof runoff would not be a high hazard. Mr. Ritchie believed that it would all be going into the catch basins and pre-treated.

Mr. Porter asked if the abutters had any comments. Ms. Keronen, who is the last house on Joan Drive asked about the pond. Mr. Ritchie pointed out the wet pond that he was talking about which was located on the other side of the property. Mr. Carr pointed out where his property was located on Joan Drive and believed that the pocket of wetland shown on the plan was a vernal pool and currently there has been an outflow coming from there and asked if anything would be done about that. Mrs. Hanson asked when the wetlands were delineated. Mr. Ritchie stated that they were done in the winter. Mr. Slango of 40 Joan Drive indicated that it flows continuously and that there was an area that was pretty steep. Mr. Slango did not believe that Manchester Water Works would like the idea of letting it overflow. Discussion ensued with regard to delineating the wetlands in wintertime and the flow of the water on the property. Mr. Burnham asked if they would be bringing fill in to make the parking lot as flat as possible. Mr. Ritchie said no that he believed that it was a 5% parking lot. Mr. Porter believed 5% was pretty steep. Mr. Ritchie talked about cutting less on the high side and putting in minimal fill on the low side. Mr. Burnham did not believe the curbing on the one side would be enough. Mr. Ritchie believed they were trying to keep it at a quarter acre per catch basin. Mr. Porter asked about the catch basins and what they would be doing in terms of getting it to the wet ponds. Mr. Ritchie stated that each catch basin would be connected and piped and would be closed drainage. Mr. Porter reiterated what they would be looking for is all of the details on the wet ponds and how they would be managed. What is the classification of the wetland close to Tax Map 12, Lot 23-18. Who would be doing the monitoring of all the wet pond areas. The access to wet pond areas. Mr. Ritchie noted that he also had snow storage and wetland report. Mrs. Hanson believed that they should definitely go back out there now to classify the wetland because if it is a vernal pool then the setbacks would be different because this is the time to go out there. Mrs. Hanson also mentioned an emergency spill prevention information which would be some sort of plan that should be in place for emergency spill incidents. Mr. Ritchie believed that they could include that in their maintenance manual.

Mr. Porter believed that what would end up happening is that we will look to continue this until April 2nd and once we see all the information requested then we can make our decision regarding if it's acceptable to the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Porter asked if there were any further questions from the abutters. Mr. Slango asked what the estimated number of vehicles that would be parked in that area. Mr. Ritchie stated 160 vehicle, RV and boat parking spots. They are 45 by 12 and 35 by 12 and some smaller 25 by 12 parking spots. Mr. Porter asked what the number of acres that would need to be cleared for the parking lot. Mr. Richie said 3½ acres total. Mrs. Donovan asked about the parking area and if there were rules and guidelines that people would need to adhere to in order to park their vehicles there. Mr. Richie stated that All Purpose Storage has done other facilities with storage units but they do have a contract that you would sign for the storage units so I can check to see if they have anything for parking. An abutter commented that they currently do not close the gate. Mr. Porter informed the

abutter that that would be taken up during the Planning Board process. The Board was concerned with regard to trash thrown into the wetlands.

Mr. Porter asked Mr. Ritchie if April was a sufficient timeframe for him to obtain all this information. Mr. Ritchie was unsure what the timeframe for vernal pools was. Mrs. Hanson said from here on to the next month. Mrs. Hanson asked if they were a NH Certified Wetland Scientist. Mr. Ritchie said yes. Mrs. Hanson asked Mr. Porter if Stantec was going to review this project. Mr. Porter said yes, once they received a check. Mrs. Hanson reiterated that she would really like to see their comments before. Mr. Porter mentioned the next meeting being in April. Mr. Ritchie stated that it should be enough time and he will let the Board know. Mr. Ritchie stated that he would hope to receive Stantec's comments soon. Mr. Elwell asked about lighting. Mr. Porter said that was a Planning Board issue.

An abutter asked Mr. Porter if it was up to the commission to consider the effects of projects like this on recreation because it is adjacent to some popular hiking trails and the rail trails. With that said, Mr. Porter asked Mr. Ritchie if they would be placing fencing around this property. Mr. Ritchie stated that right now they are not planning on fencing it in. Mr. Porter believed that they may want to consider it from a liability standpoint. Mr. Porter brought up the 55+ community off Exit 2 where they were encouraged to fence in the area where they have boat and RV parking which was also close to the rail trail. Ms. Keronen asked if this gets postponed to April 2nd will the March 20th Planning Board meeting still take place. Mr. Porter stated that they are still looking for this Board's recommendation and it may be heard but not considered and it may be continued at that point as well because we are still going to be looking for Stantec's review. Mr. Ritchie believed that there was still a lot to talk about at the Planning Board meeting and if it goes well and we get conditional approval that we still would need to come back before the Conservation Commission to receive the Board's recommendation. Mr. Porter commented that they would still be going before the Planning Board on March 20th and we will still be looking for input from Stantec and also the wetland scientist for that information.

Mr. Porter asked for a motion to continue this discussion until April 2nd.

Mr. Burnham made a motion to continue All Purpose Storage Auburn, LLC, 248 Old Candia Road/212 Depot Road, Tax Map 13, Lot 23A until the next meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2nd at 7:00pm. Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss tonight and therefore Mr. Porter asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURN

Mr. Burnham moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Donovan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting stood adjourned at 8:05pm.

The next Conservation Commission meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, April 2nd, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, 47 Chester Road unless otherwise noted.