

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 19 June 2013
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
MINUTES

Members present: Aline Booth (Alt.), Joan Buck (Alt.), Neil Facchinetti, Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann, Michael Soares. *Members absent:* Robert Dahn, Peter Drzewiecki, John Silander.

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:33p by Chair Quentin Kessel. Booth and Buck were designated voting members for the meeting.

2. The **draft minutes** of the 15 May 2013 meeting were approved as written.

3. IWA referral: W1521 (Newcity, Davis Manor Lot 17, Monticello Lane). {Lehmann participated in the IWA Field Trip to this site on 12 June; his report is attached.} A single-family home is proposed for a 0.92 acre lot on the corner of Davis Road and Monticello Lane. An extensive wetland along Monticello Lane to the NE extends a small distance into the property near the road; a proposed retaining wall would be about 40' from its edge. The proposed septic leaching field in the E corner of the lot would also be about 40' from an off-the-property portion of the same wetland, though its down-slope distance to the wetland is greater. After some discussion, the Commission agreed to the following **motion** (Lehmann, Buck): no significant impact on wetlands is likely from this project as long as construction activity is confined to the house-side of the ragged stone wall that parallels the NE boundary of the lot and standard erosion controls are in place during construction. All were in favor, save Booth, who wanted more information from the Wetlands Agent and abstained.

4. Mansfield Tomorrow Project. Buck attended a recent meeting of the Agriculture Focus Group, which has settled on goals for agriculture in Mansfield and is working on strategies to realize them.

Facchinetti and Soares attended a recent meeting of the Housing Focus Group to hear estimates of increased demand for housing due to UConn's planned expansion and the new Tech Park (1,100 new household units at 2.4 persons per unit by 2025, assuming UConn continues to provide housing for 70% of its students—2,800 new units if UConn houses only 50% of the new students). The Group then considered how to accommodate this increased demand without sacrificing things (farmland, open space, etc.) that make Mansfield a nice place to live. Two-acre zoning does not appear to be sufficient; high-density housing, concentrated in areas served by sewer and water, will be required. In discussion, Commission members suggested rebuilding some existing housing developments (Carriage House) to higher density, rebuilding some commercial areas (Grand Union plaza, East Brook Mall, etc.) on the Storrs Center model (businesses at street level, residential units above), and utilizing land at the Mansfield Training School now occupied by the vacant prison for high-density housing.

The project managers hope to have a draft of the new Plan of Conservation and Development, informed by discussion in the focus groups, ready for committee review in September, and a final version to the PZC in November to initiate the public hearing process.

5. Water Source Study. At a recent meeting of the Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee, Kessel (speaking as a private citizen) urged the Town to take over the Fenton and Willimantic wellfields in the event that the University (having secured water elsewhere) abandons them, in order to insure that the associated public water-supply watersheds are protected from

development.

6. Alternate UConn Master Drainage Plan. The DEEP and UConn now seem to agree on amending the Master Drainage Plan to address storm-water and pollution issues in the Eagleville Brook drainage through Low Impact Development (rain gardens, pervious pavement, etc.) at UConn instead of diversions to Roberts Brook (in the Fenton public water-supply watershed).

7. Agronomy Farm. Facchinetti reported that, while UConn has yet to divulge any more information about chemical use at the Agronomy Farm, a bill (H.B. 6706) passed by the legislature and awaiting the Governor's signature requires the DEEP to review pesticide protocols and groundwater monitoring at the Farm and to recommend any needed changes. Greg Haddad, Mansfield's Representative, was instrumental in moving the bill through the legislative process. The Commission commended Facchinetti for his persistence in seeking to determine whether pesticide use at the Farm threatens water quality in neighborhood wells.

8. CL&P Interstate Reliability Project. This project is ready to roll—the meetings now being held are just to inform people along the right-of-way about what is going to happen in their neighborhoods.

9. Adjourned at 8:46p. Next meeting: 7:30p, Wednesday, 17 July 2013.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 20 June 2013; amended 20 June 2013; approved 21 August 2013.

Attachment: 12 June IWA Field Trip report (Lehmann)

W1521 (Newcity, corner of Davis Rd. and Monticello La.) A single family home is proposed for this large corner lot. A large wetland lies NE of the property, impinging on it only in a small area near Monticello La. between the NE boundary of the property and a ragged stone wall that runs parallel to it back from the road. The end of a proposed retaining wall to raise the elevation of the front yard would be about 40' from this wetland. The septic leaching field in the E corner of the property would be about 40' from another portion of the wetland off the property, though the distance to this wetland along the slope of drainage is greater. I do not foresee a significant wetlands impact as long as construction activity is confined to the area SW of the ragged stone wall and standard erosion controls are employed.