

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 19 October 2016
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
(draft) MINUTES

Members present: Aline Booth (Alt.), Mary Harper (Alt.), Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann, Grant Meitzler, John Silander. *Members absent:* Robert Dahn, Neil Facchinetti, Michael Soares.
Others present: Allison Hilding, Jennifer Kaufman (Wetlands Agent).

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:30p by Chair Quentin Kessel. In the absence of two members, Alternates Aline Booth & Mary Harper were entitled to participate fully in the business of the meeting. IWA referral W1574 and the schedule of meetings proposed for 2017 were added to the agenda.
2. The **draft minutes** of the 21 September 2016 meeting were approved, with change of “will” to “could” in the final sentence on p.2 (item 3b, 6th bullet).
3. **IWA referrals.** {Meitzler participated in the 12 October Field Trip to these sites.}

a. **W1579 (Beall & Higgins, Woodland Rd).** The applicants propose a permanent stream crossing to gain access to their property (parcel 11.49.19 on Woodland Rd) for control of invasive shrubs. A 36-inch culvert would be installed over 18 cubic yards of rip rap, with another 55 yards of gravel used to achieve a stable roadbed on either side of the intermittent brook. In discussion, it was noted that (1) the application does not show the location of wetlands (as required) and (2) a temporary bridge (like those used in logging operations) would be sufficient for the stated purpose of gaining access to control invasives. The Commission agreed (**motion:** Silander, Booth) to comment to the IWA that:

This project may have a significant impact on wetlands, but the Commission cannot determine if this is so, since the application does not provide enough information about their location and character. If the applicants wish to proceed with a permanent brook crossing (as opposed to a temporary one), the Commission requests that a complete wetlands application be submitted to it for review.

All were in favor save Lehmann, a friend of the applicants, who did not participate in the discussion and abstained.

b. **W1580 (Hall for Wells, 513 Wormwood Hill Rd).** A 42x52 ft farm equipment maintenance building (steel construction on concrete slab) is proposed, to accommodate agricultural machinery now scattered around the Wells farm. The site slopes gently toward wetlands west of Wormwood Hill Rd and is within the upland review area. After some discussion, the Commission agreed (**motion:** Kessel, Silander) to comment that:

No significant wetlands impact is to be expected from this project, provided adequate erosion and sedimentation controls are used during construction and the catch basin is designed to minimize nutrient loading of wetlands.

All were in favor save Booth, a neighbor of the Wells, who abstained.

c. **W1581 (Evergreen Energy for Wollen, 205 Pleasant Valley Rd).** This application is

for a ground mounted solar array and geothermal well on a flat site within the upland review area. Twelve 4-ft deep boreholes would be drilled for the solar array's concrete piers, and two 375-ft geothermal wells would be drilled. Trenches would be dug to connect the array and geothermal wells with the house. Excavated soil (c. 38 cubic yards) would be stockpiled for backfilling; excess would be spread under the solar array. The Commission agreed unanimously (**motion:** Silander , Kessel) that:

The impact of this project on wetlands should be minimal as long as precaution is taken to place erosion and sediment controls around the excavation area and soil stockpile.

d. **W1574 (122-124 Thornbush Rd, LLC).** To satisfy floodplain regulations, the applicant proposes to move soil from an area outside the upland review area to create a hill within this area on which a mobile home would be placed. The Commission concluded that, while there may be better ways to address the threat of flooding (such as elevating the trailer on pilings), the proposed project does not raise wetlands concerns. It unanimously agreed (**motion:** Silander, Kessel) to comment that:

The impact on wetlands of this project appears to be minimal, as long as erosion is controlled during the grading operation and the site is adequately stabilized thereafter.

4. 2017 meeting schedule. Regular meetings in 2017 will be at 7:30p on the third Wednesday of each month.

5. State Water Plan. The Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is promoting development of a State Water Plan to provide “a framework for managing Connecticut’s water resources into the future.” Three public meetings have been announced: Norwich (Oct 25), New Britain (Oct 26), & Southbury (Oct 27). Soares will attend the Norwich meeting.

6. Conservation award. Joshua’s Trust has bestowed on the Commission a “Conservation Award” for fifty years of service. Perhaps it could be displayed in Conference B.

7. Storrs Lodges. For reasons not shared with the Town, the developers of Storrs Lodges have withdrawn their application for a wetlands permit at this time.

8. Adjourned at 8:39p. Next meeting: Wednesday, 16 November, 7:30p.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 21 October 2016.