

Town of Sheffield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
July 26, 2021
7:00 PM

Commission Members Present: Don Ward, Chairman
Ted Pitman
Arthur Batacchi, Jr.
Rene Wood

Others Present: Lori Neil, Administrative Assistant
Members of the Public

Chairman Ward called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

1. Public Hearing for Determination of Applicability, filed by Jeremiah Cronin for property on Oak Street, Sheffield, in accordance with the Provision of M.G.L. Chapter 131, §40.

The purpose of this RDA is for the construction of a new house. J. Cronin presented his application and state that while he was not the current owner of the property, he is interested in purchasing it and wanted to know if there were any wetlands or other Conservation Commission issues before he does so. The parcel has gravel deposits and is raised. J. Cronin said a corner of the lot was previously disturbed and he planned to restore that area to its original grade. The lot owner is Tyler Hils. While the lot does not have an assigned address, it is roughly across the street from 70 Oak Street.

Prior to the Commission meeting, Chairman Ward had visited the site with T. Hils and T. Pitman and R. Wood had made a scheduled site visit at which the Cronins were present. During that visit, T. Pitman delineated the 100' buffer zone by a stream that cuts through an edge of the property and redlined the 50' buffer zone on the site plan. The Commission reviewed the site plan, noting the line drawn by T. Pitman and that, from both site visit observations and the site plan, the proposed work does not go near this 50' buffer zone. There is however a small corner of the lot plan, as noted on the site plan, that would, so there was discussion of moving part of the building plan approximately 20'. Mr. Cronin indicated the wetlands have not been delineated. T. Pitman said the lot was in the Schenob Brook ACEC and the Commission would require a letter from Misty-Anne Marold of NH&ESP/DFW stating there were no concerns. This could be done by Mr. Cronin calling her or by filing a MESA application.

T. Pitman made a motion for a negative determination under #3, as the work described in the RDA, while within the Buffer Zone as defined in the regulations, will not alter an area subject to protection under the Act. Therefore, said work does not require the filing of a Notice of Intent, subject to the following conditions, attached to the negative determination: 1.) the applicant will file a MESA application by August 13, 2021, with a copy to the Conservation

Commission, and 2.) all parts of the applicant's construction will stay out of the 50 foot buffer zone near the stream. R. Wood seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

2. Public Hearing: Request for Determination of Applicability, filed by the Town of Sheffield for property located at 0 & 491 Berkshire School Road and 419 & 412 Berkshire School Road, Sheffield, in accordance with the Provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 131, §40.

The purpose of this RDA is to install two sets of two, rapid flashing, pedestrian activated beacons at each crosswalk. R. Wood described the packet. There was a site visit at this property. At 491 Berkshire School Road, the upper part is vegetative. The lights would go within the buffer zone with road fill next to it. R. Wood said it is possible that there is a better location for the crosswalks, and A. Batacchi asked why. R. Wood responded the current crosswalks may not have the best line of sight, as there are curves in these areas and people speed. She noted parents have been asking for such beacons since they were installed at three Rt 7 crosswalks near the Sheffield Village Center. T. Pitman added it was not a riverfront area and Chairman Ward mentioned, that while it is in the wetland buffer, it will not do any harm.

D. Ward made a motion to make a Negative Determination under #2, as the work described in the RDA is within an area subject to protection under the Act, but will not remove, fill, dredge, or alter that area. Therefore, said work does not require the filing of a Notice of Intent. A. Batacchi seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

3. Public Hearing: Request for Determination of Applicability, filed by the Town of Sheffield for property at 422 Berkshire School Road, Sheffield, in accordance with the Provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 131, §40.

The purpose of this RDA is to construct a new Town highway garage complex, with buildings, well, electrical service and septic system. It would include the town garage office, bays for trucks, equipment garage, fueling station, septic, well, salt shed and storage. The site plan was presented and reviewed by Marc Volk of ForeSight Land Services, the applicant's representative. Prior to the meeting, a site visit was conducted. R. Wood, who is a member of the Select Board, disclosed her filing of a Disclosure of Appearance of Conflict of Interest on this matter, as required by MGL C. 268A, §23(b)(3).

Discussion: While the overall site is flat, the selected site is elevated and would likely be built up. The salt/sand shed would require a catch-and-recirculation system by law. While most of the complex site will be compacted gravel, including the road, certain areas would have to be paved. Run-off was discussed and will be part of the site usage plan, which will be developed by an architectural firm and consultants. The Town wishes to know if the proposed site will receive Conservation Commission approval before investing any money on the actual building specifications.

Part of the site plans presented were done through GIS, showed natural heritage and wetland resources, and the site itself has been roughly flagged. M. Volk provided the Commission an email response from Misty-Anne Marold of Natural Heritage stating the area of proposed work

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

July 26, 2021

Page 2 of 3

appears to be fully outside of Priority Habitat and she would not anticipate a MESA filing being required for the site as shown in the preliminary drawing submitted. She noted a concern for a deciduous Special Concern tree and the town may wish to arrange for a field survey to locate the state-listed tree and its suitable habitat to inform any changes to the site configuration or future uses. The entire site is in the Schenob Brook Area of Critical of Environmental Concern and in the public water supply zone.

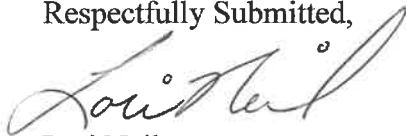
Various possible permits, including a possible Notice of Intent, and next steps were discussed. Chairman Ward asked the site to be flagged and discussion focused a ditch and the need to determine if it is an interment stream. M. Wolk will have a qualified specialist do the required wetlands flagging and further work on determination regarding the ditch before coming back to the Commission. All agreed the proposal is outside the buffer zone. Bob Kilmer reviewed the conditions of the current highway garage and that it does not meet current environmental standards. M. Volk described different aspects of possible issues and stated the Town is trying to do the project as efficiently as possible within Conservation Commission requirements.

T. Pitman made a motion to continue the public hearing until the next meeting or until required information was ready to be presented to the Conservation Commission. R. Wood seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

R. Wood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. A. Batacchi seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori Neil
Administrative Assistant

Documents reviewed at this meeting:

- Three Public Hearing Notices
- Sign-In Sheet
- RDA's from Jeremiah Cronin, the Town of Sheffield, and the Town of Sheffield and associated documentation.
- Email from M. Volk to Town Hall, showing email string with M-A Marold of NHESP/DFW, dated 7-14-21 at 11:49am