

Draft Minutes
Meeting of the Wetlands & Subsurface Committee
of the Tamworth Conservation Commission
July 31, 2012

Draft minutes to be reviewed and approved at a subsequent meeting.

Meeting began at 4:00 pm as a site visit at Juniper, off Washington Hill Road, Chocorua.

Present: Bill Batchelder, Ned Beecher, Richard Gerard

Also present: Jim Rines, White Mountain Survey (for the landowner)

Juniper (Washington Hill Rd., Chocorua) This site visit involved review of an application for a Special Use Permit under the Tamworth Wetlands Conservation District Ordinance on Tax Map 401, Lot 47. Mr. Rines explained the project - to replace a long plastic culvert that helps move water under the house driveway from a small, grassed wetland to an upland outlet location downslope. The Committee observed the minimal permanent impacts (~1 sq. ft.) and the necessity for the project (continued access to the house). There were no objections to granting the Special Use Permit, and the Committee agreed to recommend that the Planning Board grant it.

The meeting recessed to reconvene at 5:00 pm at the Town Offices.

Meeting called to order again at 5:00 pm at the Tamworth Town Offices

Present: Bill Batchelder, Ned Beecher, Richard Gerard

Also present: David Little, Sam Martin

Consultation on Chocorua Valley Lumber Buffer Waiver Application

Ned reviewed the key changes to the overall application for a Special Use Permit (SUP) and buffer waiver, as enumerated by landowner's consultant Greg Howard in a letter to the Planning Board dated July 25, 2012 (see page 6 of letter):

1. The area to be restored in wetland #1 was increased by nearly 14,000 sq. ft.
2. The application now includes 94,900 sq. ft. of temporary wetlands impact that will occur only during the restoration project.
3. The applicant has separated out 4,780 sq. ft. of temporary wetlands impacts from the total wetlands impact area and is applying for the SUP for this area under section E.1.a of the Ordinance.
4. The applicant has amended the application to include a request for a waiver for work in the 25-foot buffer adjacent to wetlands during the restoration process.

The Committee noted that the two consultants, Greg Howard and Rick van de Poll, representing the applicant and the Planning Board, respectively, are in agreement regarding the site restoration plans and the final outcome. This is important and reassuring, as they are the experts on the science of the work proposed.

The Committee was in agreement that the changes made to the application (as discussed above) appear to be consistent with the recommendations the TCC provided to the Planning Board and the Planning Board asked the applicant to consider. The addition of more area of restored wetland on the site is a positive step environmentally, as explained clearly to the Planning Board by Rick van de Poll on July 25th. The Committee agreed there is no reason for the Committee or Conservation Commission to reconsider its prior recommendation to the Planning Board regarding the application for an SUP due to these recent amendments to the application.

Ned asked for public input; none was given.

Ned stressed that the buffer waiver portion of the application is the one area that the Commission has not commented on, since this portion is new. The Planning Board is required by the Ordinance to consult with the TCC on buffer waivers, and this meeting is intended to provide for that consultation.

There was brief discussion regarding the fact that such buffer waivers are generally granted for areas immediately adjacent to wetlands in which work will be conducted, as it is impossible to get to the wetlands work without traversing the buffer areas. Ned also noted that the standard set by the Ordinance and by past practice sets a lower bar for granting a buffer waiver than for granting an SUP. Therefore, the Committee was inclined to recommend granting the waiver.

Vote: Batch made a motion to recommend to the Planning Board to grant a waiver for the buffer area impacts described in Greg Howard's letter of July 25th (Item #4, page 6) and the amended application. The motion was seconded by Rich. The motion carried 2 – 0.

Public input was sought again. David Little asked if the Committee was okay with the applicant's response regarding the Commission's recommendation to "consider requiring restoration of larger areas of wetlands (e.g. in areas #1 and #2)." Ned noted that larger areas of wetland *are* being restored under the current, revised application (~14,000 sq. ft. more restoration in wetland area #1). Further, as the Committee noted previously in this meeting, it does not find adequate reason to reconsider the Commission's recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the SUP application. The Committee is in support of granting the SUP and getting the needed restoration work started soon (when conditions are appropriate).

Adjournment: Bill moved to adjourn; seconded by Rich. Motion carried 2 – 0.
