

**Town of Becket
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 17th, 2017**

Commissioners in attendance: Alison Dixon (Chair), Cindy Delpapa, Karen Karlberg, Richard Pryor and Agent Mallory Larcom

Commissioners not in attendance: Barbara Brand

Members of the public: Mary Stucklen, John Engels, Dave McCusker, Sean McCusker, Bill Tosch, Greg Doot, John R. Boleng (CAD), Susan Engels, Mark Stinson (MADEP) and Herb Dickson

Chair Dixon called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM, introduced the Commissioners, read meeting guidelines and asked if anyone was recording the meeting.

Approval of the minutes from the September 19th, 2017 meeting.

Motion made to approve the minutes of the 19 September, 2017 Becket Conservation Commission with a correction of the 3194 Main Street address to 3235, (Karlberg/Delpapa). MSV with one abstention.

Public input and comment for items not on the agenda.

None offered

New Business:

Request for Determination of Applicability from Dave McCusker, for the repair of an existing septic system. **Project location is 3194 Main St., (Map 207, Lot 64).** Agent Larcom received an updated plan for the project today (10/17/17). D McCusker, applicant, was present. Commissioners visited the site. Agent Larcom explained the reorientation of the leach field on the revised plans likely brings the system out of WPA jurisdiction. The plan does not show mean high water in order to ascertain the 100 foot riverfront area. The proposed system will go in the footprint of the existing septic system and no trees will be cut. Motion made to issue a negative determination #3 for the repair of an existing septic system at 3194 Main Street, (Map 207, lot 64) with Becket Standard Conditions, erosion controls installed as shown on plan and, prior to work beginning, the applicant files revised plan with the Conservation Agent showing the 100 foot riverfront area delineation, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Request for Determination of Applicability from John Costello, for the removal of two willow trees in the buffer-zone to the bank of Greenwater Pond. **Project location is 3971 Jacob's Ladder Rd, (Map 201, Lot 23).** Commissioners visited the site. Neither the applicant nor a representative was present. The Commissioners confirmed the trees are large but questioned how much of a threat the trees posed to the house or the dam. Commissioners expressed concern about the loss of shade if the trees are completely removed leaving only lawn. Chair Dixon recommended the trees be trimmed in lieu of complete removal. Initially the tree removal was an emergency work request that was denied and an RDA was required. After additional discussion the Commission concluded the trees did not pose an imminent hazard. Agent Larcom reported the tree warden visited the site and did rule the trees as a hazard. An arborist has assessed the trees and an email was sent to Agent Larcom stating the trees may be hazardous stating the limbs could drop. Motion made to issue a positive determination #4 for work within a buffer zone at 3971 Jacobs Ladder Road (Map 201, Lot 23) that will result in alteration of the resource area, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Request for Determination of Applicability from Bill Tosch, for the removal of approximately seven trees in the buffer-zone to bordering vegetated wetland and the bank of Shaw Pond. **Project location is 545 Otis Road, (Map 204, Lot 150)**. Commissioners visited the site. Applicant B. Tosch was present. The trees proposed for removal are within the 50 foot buffer area and are also close to Route 8. Mr. Tosch reported he contacted Eversource Energy about the trees being a potential threat to their power lines. This call prompted a visit by Brian Tyler of Eversource who marked four trees, with the potential to impact power lines, for removal. B. Tosch's arborist is slated to remove the three remaining trees (double hemlock behind shed, double hemlock at top of drive, and a hemlock at base of drive). Commissioner Karlberg researched the removal of hemlocks and found dead trees offer valuable habitat. B. Tosch said he would be placing bird boxes on his property to offer bird habitat. K. Karlberg reported research by the Audubon Society show bird boxes do not offer an equitable replacement for the loss of the tree cavities. K. Karlberg raised the possibility of trimming the trees to reduce the hazard to buildings while retaining habitat value. B. Tosch reported he requested Eversource cut the trees at 20 feet thus leaving a significant portion of the trunk. Discussion about jurisdiction, what constitute wildlife habitat and the exceptions afforded utility companies to reduce hazards to power lines. Motion made to issue a negative determination #3 for the removal of three trees in the buffer zone of 545 Otis Road (Map 204, Lot 150), (Pryor/Delpapa). MSV with one abstention.

Request for Determination of Applicability from John Engels, for tree removal, the demolition and reconstruction of a deck, and the demolition of an existing chimney within the buffer-zone to the bank of Center Pond. **Project location is 190 Goodwin Rd, (Map 210, Lot 24)**. Commissioners visited the site. Four hemlocks adjacent to the house are proposed to be removed to allow the construction of a deck on the pond side of the dwelling. The deck will be within 20 feet of Center Pond. Two of the hemlocks, on north side, are quite large and shading the roof of the cottage. Preference is to use techno posts to support the deck if possible (rocks may prevent the use of techno posts). There is an existing platform adjacent to the pond slated to remain. Most of the lot is forested. Trees will likely be removed using a 'cherry picker'. No erosion controls are proposed but Commissioner Pryor recommended erosion control be required. Motion made to issue a negative determination #3 for the cutting to the stump of four trees and the installation of a 10 foot by 34 foot deck supported by techno posts, if possible, within the buffer zone of Center Pond at 190 Goodwin Road (Map 210, Lot 24) with Becket Standard Conditions and an erosion control barrier placed between the work area and Center Pond, (Pryor/Delpapa). MSV with one abstention.

Request for Determination of Applicability from Ofer Zaarur, for an area determination of two residential lots on Jacob's Ladder Road in planning for a future solar project. **Project location is Jacob's Ladder Rd, (Map 204, Lots 15 & 34)**. Commissioners visited the site. Commissioners noted the presence of a significant storm drain channel on the south side of Jacobs Ladder Road (lot 34) in addition to a small area of *Phragmites* spcs. No other wetland resource areas were noted on this parcel. A significant wetland area was found on Lot 15. Given the presence of resource area, any proposed activity on lot 15 will require the wetland resource areas to be delineated in conjunction with the appropriate WPA filing to the Becket Conservation Commission. Motion made to issue a positive determination for Jacobs Ladder Road Map 204 Lot 15, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV. Motion made to issue a negative determination #1 for Jacobs Ladder Road Map 204 Lot 34, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Request for Determination of Applicability from Craig Jones, for a septic system upgrade in the buffer-zone of bordering vegetated wetland. **Project location is 435 Benton Hill Rd, (Map 209, Lot 12)**. Commissioners visited the site. John Bowleng, representing the applicant, explained the project involves minor repairs to an existing on-site system. The work is outside of 50 foot buffer

of an intermittent stream and will involve buffer zone disturbance only. Four trees (12" ash, 12" maple, 8" ash, 10" maple) will need to be cut on this heavily wooded lot to prevent tree roots from impacting the proposed raised-mound septic system. Agent Larcom noted the wetlands delineation was not formally done by a licensed wetland scientist. Motion made to issue a negative determination #3 and #5 for a septic system upgrade within buffer zone at 435 Benton Hill Road (Map 209, Lot 12) with Becket Standard Conditions, (Karlberg/ Pryor). MSV.

Old Business:

Continued from 9/19/2017: Request for Determination of Applicability from Greg Doot, for the construction of a small deck and roof entry extension. **Project location is 343 Winter Drive (Map 219, Lot 82).** G Doot and property owner H Dickson present. G Doot reported the stairs are now relocated farther from the intermittent stream and wetland area. The project consists of a new 20 foot by 16 foot covered deck supported by 5 techno posts. The deck configuration has had a minor adjustment to accommodate the relocated stairs. Commissioners would like erosion control between the work area and the intermittent stream. Motion made to issue a negative determination #3 for the construction of a 20 foot by 16 foot techno post supported, covered deck with stairs at 343 Winter Drive (Map 219, Lot 82) with Becket Standard Conditions and the placement of erosion control between the work area and intermittent stream prior to work beginning, (Karlberg/Pryor). MSV.

Continued from 8/8/2017: Public Hearing: Notice of Intent from Sergey and Olga Kaletin, for the construction of a gravel driveway with a length of 1,400 linear feet and a width of 10 feet in the Riverfront Area of Yokum Brook with associated vegetation removal. **Project location is 0 Yokum Pond Road, (Map 409, Lot 3).** Neither the applicant nor a representative was present. Agent Larcom relayed the applicant requested a continuance. Commissioners visited the site and walked the proposed driveway noting there is an area of water seepage forming an intermittent stream prompting a request to delineate wetland resources at the site. Motion made to continue the public hearing for the NOI from Sergey and Olga Katelin for the construction of a gravel driveway at 0 Yokum Pond Road (DEP #102-0431, Map 409, Lot 3) to 21 November, 2017 Becket Conservation Commission meeting, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Continued from 8/8/2017: Public Hearing: Notice of Intent from Sherwood Forest Lakes District, for Lancelot Lake Dam Improvements. **Project Location is Sir Galahad Drive (Map 217, Lots 66 & 255).** Agent Larcom relayed the applicant has requested a continuance. Motion made to continue the NOI public hearing for the Lancelot Lake dam improvements at Sir Galahad Drive (DEP 102-0430, Map 217, Lots 66 and 255) to the 21 November, 2017 Becket Conservation Commission meeting, (Karlberg/Pryor)

Discussion of the Enforcement Order issued to Stephen and Geraldine Galliher for violations occurring at 1035 Benton Hill Road. Commissioners visited the site. Landscaping occurred in the riverfront area of Yokum Brook without a WPA filing. E Stockman, on behalf of the land owner, contacted Agent Larcom to request the deadline to file an NOI be extended to the December meeting. Some discussion ensued about the timing of work given the approaching winter. Motion made to amend the enforcement order for violations occurring at 1035 Benton Hill Road to extend the NOI filing deadline to the 21 November 2017 Becket Conservation Commission meeting, (Karlberg/Pryor). MSV.

Ratification of the Enforcement Order issued to Andrew Bleier for violations occurring at Yokum Pond Road, (Map 409, Lot 30). Commissioners visited the site. Agent Larcom explained the property had an existing logging road. This logging road was widened and trees were removed

within the riverfront area of Yokum Brook to create a driveway. There was a 'triangle' area near the brook with disturbed soil prompting Agent Larcom to order the emergency installation of erosion control for this area. Motion to ratify the Enforcement Order to Andrew Bleier for disturbance in the riverfront area of Yokum Brook (Map 409, Lot 30) requiring an NOI to be filed for the 21 November 2018 Becket Conservation Commission meeting, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Issuance or Ratification of any Emergency Certifications or Enforcement Orders not anticipated at the time of posting. Agent Larcom reported there are two emergency orders pending related to beaver activity. Agent Larcom visited one site with the health agent to consider measures to deal with beaver activity flooding the Becket motel and an adjacent yard. The property owner is concerned about flooding impacts to the septic system and his ability to sell the property. This is an emergency situation. The owner proposes the use heavy machinery to remove the beaver dam combined with trapping. Agent Larcom prefers the dam be notched, using hand tools, to allow for a controlled release of water as the dam is of modest size with a shallow impoundment. Another emergency request is anticipated in the next few days for beaver issues at Shaw Pond at the 'top' of the lake (vicinity of 71 Bruce Lane) causing flooding. The impoundment is too shallow for a beaver deceiver to be effective. Beaver trapping is already being done in the area. Motion made to issue an emergency certification for 71 Chester Road for the breach of a beaver dam using hand tools to notch the dam to allow for the slow release of impounded water, (Pryor/Karlberg). MSV.

Miscellaneous:

K Karlberg went to visit the construction site on Greenwater Pond where a new well is being dug. She reported the drilling company encountered difficulties prompting a change in the location of the well – now two feet farther from the resource area. K Karlberg reported observing significant splashing of the drilling slurry and recommends extra erosion control to contain the slurry. She noted the presence of construction debris and evidence of oil/gas leaking. Agent Larcom did not see any of these issues when she visited the site.

The Commission was apprised of some sad news regarding former Commissioner Mercedes Gallagher, also the force behind the Center Pond weed project and Becket Wild & Scenic River representative. Mercedes is seriously ill and has entered hospice. Meredyth Babcock is working on a way to honor Mercedes by finding a way to continue the Center Pond Weed Project.

Mary Stucklen introduced herself to the Commission. She is a science teacher and interested in serving on the Commission having seen a notice about openings in the B.E.A.T. newsletter. Ms. Stucklen is interested in pursuing a Masters Degree in conservation and entering the field in the future. She lives in Hinsdale. Chair Dixon explained the appointment process and encouraged Ms. Stucklen to submit a request to the Select Board.

Motion made to adjourn, (Pryor/Delpapa). MSV. Chair Dixon adjourned the meeting at 9:17 PM.