

MEETING
Tilton Conservation Commission
Tilton Town Hall
September 18, 2023
MINUTES

Present: Chuck Mitchell, Bob Hardy, Helen Hanks, Ken Norton, Paul Rushlow, Ben Wadleigh, and Kathi Mitchell
Guest: Cris Salomon

The meeting of the Tilton Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

- 1. The Preserve** – Cris Salomon discussed the amended plan for a pedestrian bridge to impact the wetland buffer. Piers will be driven into the buffer to support the bridge. A “small” excavator will be used and the bridge will be extended piece by piece. There will be lighting on the bridge, and wooden handrails will be installed. The walkway will be 7 feet wide and made of a composite material. The depth needed for the pilings is not known because no borings have been completed. Runoff from Route 3 will be directed into the wetlands. There will not be any trash receptacles at either end of the pedestrian bridge. No salt will be used. The plan is to shovel or use a small snowblower to clear snow from the bridge both during and after storms. There was a question about how the bridge will shade the wetland and buffer vegetation. The applicant believes that the pre-approved plan has a path that is too far to walk, especially in the winter. The proposed path would be shorter for guests.

After discussion, members of the commission made the following comments about the amended plan:

- *The TCC does not support the proposed construction of a bridge as it is an intrusion into a sensitive area containing wetlands, a wetland buffer, and a forested area; and, it is not really necessary. There is an already approved path around this sensitive area to the hotel from the parking lot(s).
- * A bridge would perhaps only shorten the distance to be traveled by 100 feet. Anyone with luggage could drop it off at the hotel entrance before returning to the parking lot.
- *The proposed bridge also includes a plan to construct a concrete path walkway through a forested area. Constructing the walkway would require excavating soil to enable pouring concrete, distressing the abutting root systems of the trees, and increasing runoff. Why not just have a gravel path?
- *It is naïve to think that those passing over the proposed bridge will refrain from throwing trash into the wetlands and buffer. Yet, it was explained that there are no plans to have any trash receptacles on either end of this structure. It would create additional disturbance to the wetlands if/when staff tried to remove the trash. The area behind BJs comes to mind.
- *We feel the bridge will be a hazard in the winter months requiring the use of sand/salt or some other snow/ice melting substance which would inevitably end up in the wetlands.
- *If the proposed structure is built, it should be closed for use during the winter months.

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*The Preserve has not conducted nor performed any geological borings to determine how deep into the ground the supporting 6"x 6" piers will need to be driven to properly support the bridge. We remember the issues with piers in wet areas at Walgreens.

It is expected that any lighting on the pedestrian bridge or the pathways would be downcast and would adhere to the Town of Tilton Zoning Regulations Section 2.4 Outdoor Lighting (pages 13-16).

2. **Minutes:** Bob made a **motion**, seconded by Ken, to accept the August minutes as presented. A majority voted in favor, and there were two abstentions.

3. Old Business:

- a) **Salmon Run** -
- b) **WRTA** –

3. New Business:

a) **WWN** – The Winnisquam Watershed Network authorized milfoil and water violet removal by Aqualogic over two days in July at Jay's Marina. They are requesting \$1540 from the Improving and Maintaining Lakes Capital Reserve account. That amount is 50% of the total since NH DES pays for the other half. Helen made a **motion**, seconded by Ben, to pay the invoice. All were in favor.

b) **Silver Lake Association** has been in email contact with the secretary about milfoil work on Silver Lake. Ms. Tessier indicated that they would be requesting \$3,450 as soon as the final reports were completed.

c) **TCC Budget for 2024** – After discussion, Ben made the **motion** to submit a budget for 2024 and Ken seconded the motion. All were in favor.

4. Correspondence:

a) NH DES Potential Violation 29 Wolf Road R 21 Lot 16 vegetation removal and work exceeding what was approved

b) NH DES File #2023-01895 Winnisquam Resort Condominium Assoc. 22 Contigiani Drive
More information requested

5. Other:

a) Continued concern was expressed about the conditions at Mike's Auto at 549 West Main Street. A **motion** was made by Ken, and seconded by Helen, to send the following comments to the Planning Board and the Selectboard for their consideration:

The requirements of the 2004 site plan approval are still in effect today and need to be enforced. Any new site plan needs to include all of the following provisions.

1. The detention pond needs to be reconstructed.
2. An oil-water separator needs to be installed to handle all run-off from areas where vehicles are located.
3. The wetlands and the wetlands buffer need to be re-delineated.
4. All vehicles must be parked outside the 20-foot wetlands buffer.

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5. Because the back part of the lot has been clear cut, any new site plan should include reforestation with non-invasive trees and shrubs to stabilize the soil and minimize future runoff.

6. The letter from NH DES dated January 20, 2020 – Case #1997-10060

“... groundwater at the site must continue to meet drinking water quality standards. The owner shall not undertake any activities which might result in Ambient Water Quality Standards being exceeded at the site.” The members of the commission expect that the drinking water standards are being met. Are copies of those test results available? Testing of the site should be conducted to be sure that the groundwater meets drinking water standards established by NH Administrative Rules Enc-Or 600.

Also, it would be in the town’s best interests for the Planning Board to check the zoning regulations regarding the definition of a “junkyard”

(page 5) and where junkyards are permitted to be located in Tilton (p.81).

b) There was a question about the commission’s recent request to the Selectboard to hire a fully-licensed wetlands scientist/hydrologist/engineer to determine how to deal with the erosion of the granite blocks on the Tilton Island which is endangering this historic site. NH DES suggested that this should be the first course of action. No one has heard anything from the selectboard on this matter.

Helen made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Kathi at 8:50 p.m. All were in agreement.

Respectfully submitted by Kathi Mitchell