

Wetlands Working Group
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of February 22, 2010

Members of the Peterborough Planning Board and Peterborough Conservation Commission held a joint meeting on Monday, February 22, 2010 at 7:30 a.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Town House. The purpose of the meeting was to continue recommendations for the preparation of an amended Wetlands Protection District Ordinance.

Members Present: From the Planning Board Dave Enos and Richard Freitas and from the Conservation Commission JoAnne Carr and Matt Lundsted. Also present was Francie Von Mertens, Conservation Commission Alternate.

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director; and Laura Norton, Assistant, Office of Community Development.

Chair Enos called the meeting to order to 7:34 a.m., stating that, in his opinion, the Group had come to the end of their work. They had done all they could do; the draft recommendations now move to the Planning Board where the final decisions will be made. Mr. Enos then asked if anyone had any concerns they would like to address today.

The discussion turned to page 5 of the draft, where Ms. Ogilvie had included a note explaining that an unresolved question had to do with the application of performance standards – are they used in every instance, or just when someone wants a reduction greater than they might have just through application of Table #1. All agreed that the performance standards are a part of the Conditional Use Permit process, but that they may still be used to achieve a greater reduction. The key is to build flexibility into the ordinance, and for it to be clear that the flexibility is there. During this discussion Ms. Ogilvie added language to this section of the ordinance that was intended to clarify this point.

The Group then reviewed a few examples of wetlands in town and how this ordinance would apply to an application involving those sites. Mr. Enos reiterated that the draft does provide flexibility and further, that there is language in the Master Plan that states that not all wetlands are created equally and that some may require more protection. The Group then discussed the hockey rink that had been brought up at the Planning Board informational meeting, and that that proposal would like fare better under the revised ordinance than the current one, where there is no flexibility built in.

Ms. Carr then asked that Table #1 be revised to include a reference to the NH DES Wellhead Protection Program be added to the Groundwater category.

Mr. Enos then directed the Group's attention to the language for an expedited review on page 8 of the draft.

The Group then discussed how this process would work and whether OCD staff could conduct the review, rather than having these simple projects go through the Planning Board process.

They agreed to add projects that have less than 2,000 square feet of disturbance to those that could go through an expedited review.

The Group then reviewed the approach taken relative to the Moosewood Report. Ms. Von Mertens stated that they needed to be able to answer with certainty how this report informed the recommendations. This was discussed and the Group concluded that they refined the data in the Report to reflect Peterborough's circumstances, and that they are confident the recommendations are geared toward what is best for Peterborough. Ms. Ogilvie stated that it was important to people to realize that Moosewood had not recommended the three tiers; they had suggested a possible tiering approach based on the most defensible science for a tiered approach, and had done that at the behest of the Town, when we thought this was the approach that would work for us.

Mr. Enos thanked everyone for all their hard work (7:30 am every Monday since the beginning of November, plus a few others) and reminded them of the Planning Board workshop this afternoon at 5:15 pm. Finally, he asked Ms. Ogilvie to include the Master Plan statement regarding wetlands in the Group's memo to the Planning Board.

The Workgroup adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ogilvie, Director
Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant