

Town of Lenox
Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 7th, 2023

7:30 PM

Lenox Town Hall

Members present: Neal Carpenter, Vincent Ammendola, Mark Smith, David Lane, Rose Fitzgerald-Casey, Richard Ferren

Absent with notification: Andrew Silver

Staff: Neena Martino

Others: Jim Scalise- SK Design, Mark Stinson- MA DEP, Peggy Ammendola, Heidi Ferren

1. Mazda Dealership (474 Pittsfield Road), site plan modification discussion

Jim Scalise of SK Design Group explained that there is a valid and current Order of Conditions and the property is under construction. The original plan contained 250 linear feet of retaining wall along the east, varying in height from 5'-10', which is very costly. Topographically the area is unusual as the site is lowered, creating a mound effect where the earth goes up then back down on all three sides so the retaining wall would only hold up 15' of soil that ultimately slopes down. Contractors were consulted on ways to save money. The recommendation was to cut the slope and manage the soil without the wall. Neighbors were contacted regarding options and it agreed upon to purchase property from them to annex and build slopes. Outcome is generally a win-win for all, on a monetary perspective. It also allows for additional parking spaces for the dealership. The limit of work line will not change and remains at 20'. Problems are that limit of work line moves along existing tree line, as was seen on the commission site visit, and will be under the drip line of 6 trees- 7 including a large white pine. It was suggested on site that the trees would be replaced 1:1 or 2:1. JS explained the landscaping design and the plan to leave stumps to avoid digging, which is better overall for the buffer zone.

Discussion regarding the trees ensued at the meeting. It was decided that 6 to 7 replacement trees would be sufficient

The commission decided this was a minor change to the plan and there was no need for an amended order. RF moved to approve, VA seconded. All were in favor

2. 64 Bramble Lane, Request for Determination of Applicability

Jim Scalise of SK Design Group, on behalf of applicant Susan Griffis, explained that she owns a half-acre parcel on Laurel Lake, in the buffer zone. The proposed project is the demolition of the current deck on the north facing side of the house and the construction of a new one in its place. The deck is 25' from the lake and will be constructed with helical piles to eliminate the need for excavation. Straw wattles will be placed around the construction zone as protection. The existing piers will be cut flush and the helical pile will go in next to them.

The commission put forth the condition that all the old wood is removed. DF moved to approve, VA seconded. All were in favor

3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes July 20, 2023- no changes. Motion to accept RFC, seconded by DL – MS abstains, all in favor

Minutes August 17, 2023- spelling change on an attendee's name. Motion to accept DL, seconded by VA- MS abstains, all in favor

Other business- discussion ensued regarding the Conservation Agent job posting. Many agreed that a shared position among neighboring towns would be best

Adjourn- RFC made a motion to adjourn at 8:07pm