

Town of Blandford
Conservation Commission Minutes
September 9, 2019 6:00 PM

Commissioners in attendance: John Piper, Dick Gates, Colleen Conner

Commissioners not in attendance: Jon Letendre

Also Present: Eric James (CS Energy), Kurt Kimm (CS Energy), Prateek Tare (CS Energy), Jackson Alberti (Foresight), Carter McCann (Syncarpha), Graeme Dutkowsky (Syncarpha), Valerie Cooper (Abutter)

Review Previous Meeting Minutes

New Business

Conducted a Public Hearing to address a Request for an Amended Order of Conditions for the Chester Rd. / Syncarpha Solar Site (DEP File # 111-0053). The Public Hearing was opened at 6:02 PM with a quorum of commissioners in attendance. Chairman R. Gates gave an overview of options before the Commission regarding this Request: 1) Take no action as the Commission is not obligated to act on a Request for Amended Order of Conditions and require the applicant to comply with the original Order. 2) Agree to issue an Amended Order. 3) Make a determination that the project changes are significant and require the Applicant to submit a new Notice of Intent.

Jackson Alberti of Foresight presented the Commission with a new set of project plans including sheets C-1 stamped for submittal to the Planning Board and dated 9/4/18, Sheet C-2 with a latest revision date of 9/6/19, Sheet C-3 with a latest revision date of 8/31/18, Sheet C-4 with a latest revision date of 8/30/18, Sheet C-5 dated 8/30/18 and Sheet C-6 dated 8/30/18.

There was discussion about what plans were considered final for the original Order of Conditions. R. Gates confirmed that the Commission had contacted Foresight through its Peer Review Consultant (Tighe and Bond) and that it was confirmed that the set of plans dated 7/9/18 were the Final Plans. It was also reiterated that the original Order specifically references the plans dated 7/9/18 as the Final Plans.

Jackson Alberti then gave an overview of the project changes that had been constructed/installed within the 100 ft wetland buffer zone including: 1) a subsurface conduit. 2) Boulder piles. 3) (Fewer) solar panels. 4) A turnaround at the access road.

There was discussion about the Memorandum prepared by Stockman Associates that provides a Buffer Zone Impact Review related to the boulder piles that have been created within the wetland buffer zone. In summary, the document recommends that one of the four boulder piles (located at Buffer Zone Area A) be removed or redistributed into smaller piles to allow natural re-vegetation and wildlife passage. The applicant/CS Energy indicated that they would be willing to either move the pile out of the buffer zone or remove the boulders from the site.

The Commission inquired about permanent drainage swales that have been installed within the buffer zone since they were also not shown on the 7/9/18 plans. After some discussion, it was determined that the swales would also need to be addressed in an Amended Order of Conditions.

The Commission then voted to accept the Request for an Amended Order of Conditions and that an Amended Order would be prepared by the Commission.

An abutter to the project (Valerie Cooper) asked if the Commission would be taking similar action as The Planning Board had (Stop Work Order). The Commission responded that the Amended Order of Conditions would be the action it was taking.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:01 PM

Continuing Business

Discussed overall status of Chester Rd, North Blandford Rd., George Millard Rd., Otis Stage Rd. And Curtis Hall Rd. Solar Projects.

Continued discussion about hay harvesting and hunting permits at town-owned Conservation properties.

Discussed status of Long Pond Conservation Land.

Discussed status of Fontaine Farm Acquisition (Gibbs Rd.) by Springfield Sewer and Water.

Additional Items