

Conservation Commission Public Hearing Minutes – July 22, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:20 PM **Location:** Remote

Members Present: Tom Ruskin, Chair; Toni Bandrowicz, Vice Chair; Colleen Hitchcock; Jonathan Grabowski; Monica Tamborini; Monica Lagerquist

Members Absent: A. Randall Hughes

Staff: Molly O’Connell, Town Planner; Marissa Meaney, Land Use Coordinator

The public hearing of the Conservation Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm.

The public hearing was video recorded.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

- 1. Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA): 39 Pleasant View Rd.** – filed by Brian Colleran for manual removal of Japanese Knotweed invasive species followed by herbicide application. (Map 10, Lot 57).

Brian Colleran gave presentation before the Commission. T. Bandrowicz explained that this petition has prompted the Commission to release general guidelines for knotweed removal for future reference.

J. Grabowski inquired whether petitioner had considered using vinegar or coffee for removal. Mr. Colleran noted that vinegar only the root and is instead looking for a solution that will penetrate the rhizomes.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue negative determination for project as defined, with the condition to conduct follow up visit. M. Tamborini seconds; unanimously approved.

- 2. Notice of Intent (NOI): 48 Blodgett Ave** – filed by Jordan Ostroff c/o John Dick for renovation of existing patio, construction of additional patio and hot tub, and installation of stepping stone path. (Map 32, Lot 57)

J. Dick gives presentation to Commission. Only question was if the new patio would push out closer to the seawall, to which the answer was no.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue OOC with condition that no heavy equipment be used. M. Tamborini seconds; unanimously approved.

- 3. Notice of Intent (NOI): 10 Palmer Rd** – filed by Tom Groom c/o Scott Patrowicz. Request to conduct land grading to fill area around house to bring structure out of AE floodplain, construct retaining wall, and substitute existing patio surface with new deck. (Map 33, Lot 13D)

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue OOC consistent with BMPs proposed in NOI, under the condition that all work be performed on lawn side of property. Additional condition in perpetuity to maintain the retaining wall. J. Grabowski seconds; unanimously approved.

- 4. Notice of Intent (NOI): 14-16 New Ocean St.** – filed by Calyx Peak, Inc. c/o Allen Engineering. Request to construct commercial retail space that will house marijuana dispensary. (Map 3, Lot 3)

Michael Dryden of Allen Engineering provides presentation before Commission. T. Bandrowicz confirms that applicant has met with the Building Commissioner to discuss requirements for Coastal Flood Overlay District.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to issue OOC under condition that applicant maintain compliance with conditions set forth by Planning Board and Building Department as they related to the Wetlands Protection Act. M. Tamborini seconds; unanimously approved.

- 5. Amended Order of Conditions: 22 Northstone Rd.** – filed by Christine Casey c/o Hayes Engineering for construction of porch with associated stairway, along with activities that were previously permitted. (Map 32, Lot 45 B-2)

Peter Ogren of Hayes Engineering provides presentation to Commission.

MOTION: T. Bandrowicz to amend original OOC, correspondent to filing and plans submitted by Hayes Engineering. J. Grabowski seconds; unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Approval of June meeting minutes

MOTION: M. Lagerquist to approve June meeting minutes. T. Bandrowicz seconds; unanimously approved.

2. Knotweed policy discussion

MOTION: T. Ruskin to approve pilot program with changes as discussed, including submission of photos and conducting of follow up site visits. T. Bandrowicz seconds; unanimously approved.

3. Balloon letter

The Commission would like to consider the prohibiting of decorative balloons on conservation land within the Town, including the Harold King State Forest and Linscott Park. The letter penned by T. Bandrowicz has received some support, but most concerns are regarding Linscott Park.

Lorna O'Hara, Executive Director of Balloon Council, based in Middletown, NJ, was present for the discussion. She suggested that the Commission could focus on balloon education, and encouraging people to change their behavior when it comes to proper disposal of balloons.

Carolina, local small business owner, was also present, and stated that she relies on balloon decorations as a part of her business.

T. Bandrowicz stated that whether the balloons are filled with helium or not, there is documented evidence that they are damaging to the environment. If voted upon, this change would not govern the usage of balloons on private properties, nor the beaches.

MOTION: T. Ruskin to approve prohibiting of balloons on local conservation land until the September 2021 meeting, where the Commission will take up the item again after receiving information from the Balloon Council. J. Grabowski seconds; unanimously approved.

4. 100 Philips Beach Ave – Staff at Town Hall received photos from neighbor that homeowner at 100 Phillips Beach was conducting unauthorized digging on banks located on his property. Town Planner Molly O’Connell conducted site visit with Toni and attempted followed up by sending letter to homeowner.

Julius Sokol, homeowner’s attorney, was present for the meeting. He addressed the digging, which has since been suspended, but was done in an attempt to alleviate the mosquito problem on the property. He would like to submit a minor activity permit, but T. Bandrowicz mentioned that this scope of work does not qualify for minor activity permit. Commission will follow up on this matter.