

Holyoke Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes 09/23/2021 (Remote via Zoom)

Conservation Commission Members Present: Michael Dodge (Chairperson), Bernice Bowler (Vice Chairperson) Jeffery Horan (Joined 7:08 PM), Mary Moriarty, Rosemary Arnold, John Perdrizet

Conservation Commission Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Yoni Glogower (Holyoke Conservation and Sustainability Director), Alexandra Maysonet (Conservation Commission Clerk)

Members of the public present: Rob Dion (resident), Neil McElway (Resident) Erika McElwey (resident), Adam Mulcahy (resident), Don Oyer (resident), Alan Weiss (Consultant), Joseph LaFreniere (Applicant)

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Dodge called the public meeting to order at 6:18 PM. He explained the protocols for remote open meetings.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowler to take Items 3 and 4 out of order to allow time for Commissioner Horan to join. The Commission voted unanimously with one absent (Horan) to take Items 3 and 4 out of order.

2. Request for Certificate of Compliance – Order of Conditions (DEP 186-0191)

Applicant: Stephen Cormier

Location: 194 Apremont Highway (MBP 187-00-010 and 011)

Director Glogower provided Commissioners with background on this project. He explained that the work for a septic system was approved in an Order of Conditions by conservation back in 2004, but the Applicant never returned back to request a Certificate of Compliance. With the property newly changing hands, the new owner is requesting the Certificate of Compliance.

Director Glogower stated that he and Vice Chair Bowler had a site visit on 09/16/2021 and found the site to be in compliance with the exception some debris in the buffer zone that needed to be removed. Glogower stated he received confirmation as of 09/21/2021 that all debris had been removed. Commissioner Perdrizet asked if the septic itself had to be re-inspected. Director Glogower stated that no further review was required by the Conservation Commission.

The Commission voted unanimously with one absent (Horan) to approve the Certificate of Compliance for this item.

3. Formal Vote – Approve minutes from 7/8/21 and 7/22/21 meetings

The commission voted unanimously with one absent (Horan) to approve the minutes from 07/8/21 and 7/22/21, as provided by the Conservation Director.

4. Public Hearing (continued) – Notice of Intent (DEP 186-0290)

Applicant: Revampit, LLC

Representative: Cold Spring Environmental Consultants, Inc.

Location: 461 Mountain Road (MBP 190-00-030)

Description: Construction of a single-family home within Buffer Zone of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands

Chairperson Dodge invited Representative Alan Weiss to review the changes to the site plans and alternatives analysis. He provided added detail on erosion control measures to be undertaken during well drilling, identified individual trees to be removed, and the viability of piping city water to the site from Rock Valley Road. He further stated that based on information from the Holyoke Water department it would be practically and financially unfeasible to bringing city water underground on Mountain Road, and that reorienting the house would be impossible while complying with

Vice Chair Bowler asked about the scrap metal items that need to be removed, what equipment will be needed, and how far will it be from abutters. Alan Weiss stated all items will be manually removed and that there was a verbal agreement with the abutter to allow this to take place. Commissioner Arnold asked Alan Weiss if he had considered not building on the lot. Alan stated that it has been considered a property lot for over 50 years. Applicant Joe Lafreniere stated when he bought the lot of the previous owners it was agreed that the lot was being sold as a buildable lot, so it won't make sense to leave the lot as is. Director Glogower reminded the Commission that the scope of their alternatives analysis didn't include requests to not do the project, only to ensure that it was being done in a way that minimizes impacts to wetland resources.

Chairperson Dodge opened the discussion to comment from the Public. Resident Neil McElway, abutter to the proposed project, notified the Commission that the debris that needed to be removed belong to him and he has no problem with removing it, if Commissioners agreed. He also asked for clarification on the distance of his septic tank to the proposed well. Alan Weiss reviewed the well and septic structures on both properties, and stated that the Board of Health would be responsible for the final approval on locations.

Rob Dion, a member from the public, asked what the circles on the site maps represented. Alan Weiss stated the circles represent a 100 foot radius from where the wells are to the abutters. Commissioner Moriarty asked about the trees and boulders, and where they would be installed. Alan Weiss stated the boulder will be next to the trees with 50 feet apart along the 50 foot buffer line, as shown on the updated site plans.

With no further questions from Commissioners or the Public, the Commission voted unanimously to close the Public Hearing for this Item.

The Commission discussed whether there was enough information provided to vote on the Variance for work. They determined that a vote could proceed so long as conditions were set in place for the Applicant to return to the Commission in the event that any of the well or septic locations needed to be relocated due to Board of Health requirements. The Commission voted to approve a Variance for work within the 50 foot buffer zone for the well, and that the Applicant had met all conditions required

under the Holyoke Wetlands Protection Ordinance, with four (4) in favor and two (2) abstentions (Arnold and Horan)

The Commission voted to approve the project as presented and amended with five (5) in favor and one (1) abstention (Horan).

Director Glogower reviewed the draft special conditions with the Commission. A motion was made by Vice Chair Bowler and seconded by Commissioner Perdrizet to approve the Order of Conditions as amended. The vote carried with five (5) in favor and one (1) abstention (Horan)

5. Mail/other items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Director Glogower shared that the Major had appointed Chelsea Gazillo to serve on the Conservation Commission, and that she would be interviewed by the Public Service Committee on 10/4/2021 prior to a full confirmation vote by the full City Council.

6. Adjourn

The commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:56 PM.