# *Topsfield Conservation Commission*

## Minutes of Wednesday, December 18, 2013

Topsfield Library Meeting Room

**Present:** Jennie Merrill, Chairperson; Cheryl Jolley, Vice Chairperson; Holger Luther; Jim MacDougall; Jim Carroll; Lana Spillman, Administrator; and MaryAnn Tuxbury, Minutes Secretary.
Absent: None (2 vacancies on the Commission)
**Other Attendees:** Mark Gatti; Joanne Leary; Larry Beals, Beals & Associates; and Dick Gandt.

The meeting was called to Order at 7:07 p.m.

**HEARING:**
**RDA: #2013-19: 19 South Main Street, (Map 40, Lot 086), Gatti**
Mark Gatti and Joanne Leary, the new owners, were present for this hearing. Jolley read the legal notice aloud. The applicant wishes to raze the existing barn/shed and replace it with a new structure on the same footprint. The existing and proposed new structure are/would be within the Bylaw Riverfront Area of Cleveland Brook and in the Buffer Zone.

Spillman reported on her site visit of 12/16/13. She stated that the existing structure is in poor condition and looks as if it's going to collapse. She suggested to the Commission that a limit of work area be established behind the structure. She recommended to the Commission that the hearing be closed and that a negative determination be issued, with the usual conditions.

Merrill asked if there was anyone from the public that wished to speak in regards to this application. There was no one.

A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Jolley) to close the public hearing. So voted unanimously.
A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Jolley) to issue a negative determination with the usual conditions. So voted unanimously.

**OTHER:**
**AOoC: #307-0658: 22 Evergreen Lane (Lot 18) & 5 Hickory Lane (Open Space), (Map 50, Lots 32 and 39 respectively), discussion with Larry Beals**
Larry Beals was present for this discussion.
Spillman reported on a site visit she had done in November of several lots in the Hickory Beech Subdivision with Greg St. Louis of Beals Associates and Dan Symes. She stated that none of the lots owned by Symes are ready for CoCs/signoffs. She reviewed her notes from the site visit and reported that Lot 18, #22 Hickory Lane is not ready for a CoC. The areas in front of the house look good, and the silt sock is still in place. There has been significant clearing of the understory beyond the limit of work area behind the house. The concern is that lawn would creep further into the Buffer Zone if the silt sock is removed. Spillman believes that native restoration/plantings need to be done so this area doesn't turn into lawn; she suggested planting 4 – 6 native shrubs.

Beals stated that he would do a sketch plan for the restoration and forward it to Spillman for her approval. Luther stated that the Conservation Commission will want to approve this sketch plan. Beals stated that he doesn't want to have to return for another meeting, and would prefer if the Commission would allow Spillman to review/approve the sketch. Spillman suggested that she could forward copies of the sketch plan to the Commission members for their comments and/or concerns before approving it. The Commission had no objection to this suggestion.

Spillman reviewed her notes of the site visit again and reported on the Open Space Parcel at 5 Hickory Lane. She stated that the boardwalk and the trail that has been constructed so far look good. The Conservation Commission has concerns that this trail leads to nowhere, and there is no access to the upland island, "Pine Island". There is an intermittent stream there, which flows most of the year.

Beals acknowledged that TCC minutes record a vote to require a second bridge/crossing and he discussed his ideas for installing a bridge for the stream crossing, which could be an Eagle Scout project. He stated that if there was not an Eagle Scout interested, he could have his son do the work. There was some discussion on whether or not this bridge could be an Eagle Scout project. There was some discussion about the parameters of the bridge. The bridge is to be no longer than the table (5 feet), with a width of 4 feet, and with a 1/2 inch gap between the planks.

**REQUEST:**
**Corrected AOoC: #307-0703: 34 Gail Street, (Map 40, Lot 028), Morrison & Morrison**
There was no one present to represent the applicants.
Spillman stated that the correction is to some language that she had mistakenly included in the findings. She had drafted a corrected OoC.

A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Carroll) that a corrected OoC be issued as drafted by Spillman. So voted unanimously.

**HEARINGS: (Cont.)**
**Wetlands General Bylaw Regulations – Proposed Revisions:**

- **R:10-2. Definitions**
- **R:10-4. Presumptions of Significance and Performance Standards**
  - **Stormwater Management**

Jolley read the legal notice aloud. Merrill stated that the Commission will be reviewing just the first two (2) sections tonight.

Merrill read each word and its proposed definition aloud. The new words mostly are related to drainage/stormwater management and soil types. Any changes suggested to any of the definitions were discussed by the members and noted by Spillman for further edits in the final document.

When the Definitions section was done, Merrill then read aloud the Stormwater Management Section, to be added as section R:10-4. k. Stormwater Management Each subsection was

discussed by the members and any changes suggested were noted by Spillman for further edits in the final document. Hyperlinks have been added to provide background and references.

A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Carroll) to amend these regulations as verbally amended tonight. So voted unanimously.
A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Jolley) to have the effective date of these new regulations as January 1, 2014. So voted unanimously.

**OTHER: (Cont.)**
**FY2015 Budget – discussion**
The TCC receives salary and wages from the General Fund. Luther stated that Town staff, including Spillman will be getting a 2% COLA, and she also will receive a once-a-year longevity payment; Doody will be getting the 2% COLA and a step increase (contingent on satisfactory performance). He stated that he had checked with the Selectmen on this, and that this is consistent with their recommendations.
Spillman added that for the Minutes Secretary position, she suggests the 2% COLA and step increase (likewise contingent on satisfactory performance). Pay for this position will come from the General Fund and/or the Bylaw Revolving Fund.

A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Carroll) to approve the FY2015 budget as proposed. So voted unanimously.

**MEETING MINUTES:**
A motion was made and seconded (Luther/Jolley) to approve the November 6, 2013 meeting minutes, as amended, and the November 20, 2013 meeting minutes, as amended. So voted unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**
There being no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made and seconded (Luther/Carroll) that the meeting be adjourned. So voted unanimously.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

MaryAnn Tuxbury,
Minutes Secretary

*Minutes approved at the TCC meeting on January 8, 2014*

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.