



CONSERVATION COMMISSION/
INLAND WETLANDS AND
WATERCOURSES AGENCY

LYME TOWN HALL
480 HAMBURG ROAD
LYME, CT 06371

LYME CONSERVATION COMMISSION
INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES AGENCY

April 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

The Lyme Conservation Commission, acting as Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, held a Virtual Regular Meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Armond, Chairman, Sue Hessel, Beverly Crowther, Patrick Crowley, Tom Reynolds, Roger Dill, Ben Kegley, Christine Darnell (alternate member present but not seated), Ross Byrne, ZEO, and Jennifer Thomas, Secretary
Absent Member: Steven Kurlanksy (alternate)
Several members of the public were also present

REGULAR MEETING

Allan Dodds Frank and Lilian King, 622 Hamburg Rd., Tax Map 31 Lot 3; Discussion of Notice of Violation and their remediation plan.

Present: Allan Dodds Frank, Lillian King, and Christine Darnell

Site walks performed by Crowther, Crowley, and Kegley

Darnell recused herself during this portion of the meeting.

Crowther stated that she visited the site and saw bare soil, with some areas covered with straw.

The area is clearly a flood plain and the invasive plants were pulled out by the roots.

Byrne said that he authorized the owners to smooth the area out and cover with hay and seeds prior to the meeting in order to keep potential erosion at bay until a remediation plan was submitted. The area has been a field for many years and until recently had been mowed.

Armond said that if this activity had been proposed in August, the commission would likely have permitted and applauded the homeowners' efforts. This time of year there is potential for flooding and erosion and so the soil must be covered immediately. There are mat products made of coconut husks, some impregnated with seed, that can be used to cover the area.

King stated that the invasive plants were removed last December when the ground was frozen with the intent to restore the natural waterfront meadow.

Frank stated that they self-reported the infraction after they learned that they needed permission to cut down invasive plants in their field and would like the commission to discuss whether the mats would be necessary because of the high cost they would incur.

King stated that they are working with Darnell and would like to cover the ground but they understand that it is not the best time to plant yet.

Armond agreed and reiterated that this is exactly the reason the mats are needed now.

King stated that they have hay down now and the water flows towards the side of their property and not directly into the Eightmile River.

Hessel inquired whether haybales can be used but Byrne stated that this would not be effective on this property.

Armond stated that he has no issue with the planting plan presented to the commission except that it cannot be completed during the spring and so action must be taken in the short term. Armond asked Byrne to clarify how large the area is and Byrne stated he recalls the area to be about 200 ft x 40 ft. The coir mat quote received for reference was \$230.00 for a 180 ft x 6 ft mat.

King explained the contour of the land and how the water goes into a swale which leads to the stream that flows into the Eightmile river.

Dill stated that the mats would likely cost around \$2,000.00 and a 3- or 4-inch rain is not uncommon during the spring.

Frank inquired whether boulders could be placed to divert the water along the field. Armond stated a plan by an engineer would need to be submitted with an application to the commission, which would likely require an outside review.

King stated that staking down a mat would not be possible in this location and suggested the remaining commission members should visit the site to get a clear understanding of the property.

Hessel asked if Darnell has used mats for this type of application. Darnell stated that she has seen the mats used mostly in commercial locations and is not in favor of the seed impregnated mats because they tend to leave a gridded type of appearance to the grass. A way around that would be to bring dirt in on top of the mat and seed that. Darnell was hoping to avoid the mats because of the costs involved and bringing dirt to that area would be prohibitive.

Kegley pointed out that the area looked fairly level and questioned if contours had been plotted.

Frank stated there is probably a two-foot or less difference between the highest and lowest points, but a contractor has not plotted the area.

Kegley questioned whether the coconut coir logs or blocks could be placed along the contours to make dams. Kegley also stated that the soil is sandy with a gravel base and not a silted soil.

Dill questioned whether the area is currently stable.

King stated the edge of the river has trees in it and the water flows into a natural stream so it has not been washing out.

Dill suggested that the remaining commission members could be given more time to visit the property if the site is currently stabilized and then another meeting can be scheduled. The owners were agreeable to this.

Crowley stated that the soil is bare and that any moisture coming down would cause movement to the soil and so it does need to be covered as soon as possible and Crowther agreed.

Armond asked that Darnell develop a stabilization site plan drawn to scale and submitted to the Zoning Enforcement Officer within the next week or so and then a follow-up meeting will be scheduled to continue this discussion. Site visits can be scheduled with the homeowners during this time as well.

Darnell re-entered the meeting as an alternate member.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on Invasive Plants

The commission and ZEO discussed the issue of invasive plants and what would warrant commission review versus simple ZEO approval. The commission also discussed potential

outreach or educational resources that might be used to engage and educate homeowners to best practices and restrictions on cutting within the regulated area.

NEW BUSINESS-None

APPROVAL OF OUTSTANDING MINUTES

Armond called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2020 Special Meeting. Crowther made the motion, seconded by Hessel, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Thomas, Secretary