



Meeting Minutes - Chilmark Conservation Commission
September 21, 2023 (9 am) via Zoom

Commissioners present: Candy Shweder (Chair), Sandy Broyard, Stephen Kass, Sarah Khedouri, Gary Mottau, Chris Murphy, Jane Rabe

Commissioners absent: Joan Malkin

Staff: Carolyn Stoeber

Public in attendance: James Clancy (Eversource), George Crawford, Walter Gold, Val Locker (Tighe&Bond), Amanda Houle (Tighe&Bond), Reid Silva, Billy Dillon, Kris Horiuchi

The meeting was called to order by Candy Shweder at 9:00am. Ms. Shweder designated Associate Member Jane Rabe as a voting member for this meeting.

Request for Determination of Applicability

Applicant: George Crawford for Daphne & John Cunningham + 7 Gates Farm

Address: 50 Beach Road (AP 2-2)

Representative: George Crawford

Project: Placement of five 10" diameter concrete foundation piers within the buffer zone to accommodate a minor house addition and deck addition.

Site visit conducted: September 19, 2023

Documents shared: site plan

George Crawford introduced the project, a renovation of an existing house with roof and window replacement and minor additions. As much of the siding as possible will be retained and most of the renovation is occurring inside the house. Mr. Crawford then shared the site plan and showed the portions of the proposed addition that occur within the buffer zone. The sonotubes and piers will be hand-dug, but they are consulting with the engineer to determine if all are needed or if some of the support can be cantilevered from the building. All of the construction equipment and access to the site will occur on the side of the building outside of the buffer zone. The dumpster is also located outside of the buffer zone on the southeast side of the house. The siltation barrier is already in place, as seen in the site plan. The commissioners had concerns about debris from the roof demolition. Mr. Crawford and the builder, Walter Gold, confirmed that the debris that falls into the buffer zone will be picked up daily and the dumpster will be covered. Mr. Gold continued that the roof demolition will not be conducted during high winds and they will strip onto tarps. A safety officer will be assigned to be sure everything is picked up daily and every effort will be made to protect the site. The commissioners questioned whether the edge of the lawn is marked and noted it should be at least 25 feet from the wetland. Mr. Crawford confirmed that while it is not currently marked, permanent delineation will be installed at the edge of lawn to avoid the mowing area encroaching into the wetlands.

Action: A motion was made, and seconded, for a negative determination of the RDA with the regular conditions, the 25 foot demarcation from the wetland, and the precautions during roof deconstruction. Passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Request for Determination of Applicability

Applicant: NSTAR Electric Company dba Eversource Energy

Address: from 45 Menemsha Crossroad to the intersection of Menemsha Crossroad and Middle Road

Project: installation of new electrical conduits and manholes connecting the existing Eversource facility located at 45 Menemsha Crossroad to the intersection of Menemsha Crossroad and Middle Road.

Site visit conducted: September 19, 2023

Documents shared: site plan (fig 4 in the RDA submission)

Amanda Houle, representing Eversource, presented the site plan and, answering a question posed by the commissioners, confirmed the trenching will occur in the road. Two conduits no larger than 5 inches will be placed under the road. The 2-3 foot trench necessary for installing the conduit will cross the two streams that bisect Menemsha Crossroads. In order to cross in these areas without affecting the culvert or streams, excavation will include use of a steel plate to distribute weight and protect the culvert and various erosion controls. Ms. Houle described the proposed erosion controls to be installed to protect the streams and vegetated wetlands from migrating fill material, especially during a rain event. In addition, if there are any other drainage features within the roadway, silt sacks will be installed to prevent any material from entering. Any excavated fill from the road will be live-loaded into a truck, reused to backfill the trench, and then any excess material will be removed from the site and disposed of in accordance with all applicable regulations. Ms. Houle explained the proposed work will include approximately 700 feet of temporary impact within the buffer zone.

The commissioners noted that there is a gravel-filled trench assisting the drainage along the road that, if disturbed during the proposed work, must be fixed. Ms. Houle confirmed that everything will be restored to existing conditions. The commissioners inquired who would be doing the work and when work would commence. James Clancy explained that the permitting process is usually completed before the job is bid out to a contractor, but because of the size, he anticipates a contractor from the Island or the Cape will be used. In response to other inquiries from the commission, Mr. Clancy noted that while they are trenching, they will install conduit in case it will be needed in the future and the project is part of an overall reliability project to shore up service in this area that seems prone to power outages during storms. Ms. Houle detailed the backfilling process, and in response to concerns about the backfill, the commissioners discussed requiring the trenched material be segregated so that the pavement would be separated from the rest of the fill to be disposed of properly. The commissioners requested further information about protecting the culverts and Eversource representatives expanded on the details available in the submission and emphasized the need to make a field determination for whether or not metal plates are to be left in place to protect the culvert or if they can be used only temporarily to distribute weight around the culvert.

Action: A motion was made, and seconded, for a negative determination of the RDA with the standard conditions, and including restoring any gravel trenching for drainage, protection of the culverts and use of siltation and erosion controls as presented, and ensuring pavement is segregated and carted away and not used as backfill.

Passed by roll call vote with one abstention. Chis Murphy, absent between 9:22am and 9:30am during discussion, abstained.

Admin/ Discussion:

Reid Silva does yet not have a plan beyond what was presented at the 8/3/23 meeting with Carlos Montoya. He has hand sketches that need to be formalized into a plan with four quadrants that he will submit by the end of the week. The drainage plan presented at the 8/3/23 meeting was shown to identify the quadrants where the planting remediation is needed. One quadrant was presented with minimal restoration needed, one quadrant requiring switchgrass and other areas require removing invasives to plant wetland bushes. The invasive plant removal done by Gary Mottau has reduced the amount of new plantings that will be required. The drainage parts of the remediation plan presented on 8/3/23 have been bid and awarded and construction will begin soon. Reid suggested using the Wetlands Protection Fund to pay for the planting; but in a conversation with Carolyn, Bill Rossi offered that there is money for the plantings needed for remediation in the budget. The commissioners emphasized that when the excavation equipment is in the area to construct the additional drainage, it would be most cost-effective to remove the roots of some of the invasives at the same time. The details of the drainage plan were discussed at length. Reid will submit the vegetation remediation plan and no further approval or action is needed.

The Order of Conditions for 18 Austin Pasture is subject to review and approval of the landscape plan by the Conservation Commission. The landscape plan and detail for the boundary of the mowed area were presented by Kris Horiuchi who explained the two areas subject to the Conservation Commission jurisdiction. The area around the garage will revert back to the current upland vegetation and there will be a retreat of the mowed area in the regraded section near the house with an area of about 15 feet that is mowed annually between the lawn and the abandoned area. The markers to delineate the boundary of mowing was discussed at length. 8 inch granite cobblestones were shown in detail. A revised plan showing the cobblestones 4 inches above the ground and 10 feet apart will be submitted and recorded and become part of the permit for this site.

Action: A motion was made, and seconded, to approve the landscape plan as presented with modification of the granite cobblestones to be 10 feet apart and 4 inches above ground.

Passed unanimously via roll call vote.

Action: A motion was made, and seconded, to pass the minutes of September 7, 2023 as presented. Passed unanimously via roll call vote.

The commissioners would like to discuss the site visit protocol at the next meeting.

With nothing further to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:31 am.

Respectfully Submitted by Carolyn Stoeber
Minutes to be approved at the 10/3 Conservation Commission Meeting