

Conservation Commission Smoke Street Subdivision Site Walk May 10, 2016

The following members attended a site walk on the above date at 4:30 PM: Sam Demeritt, Raelene Shippee-Rice, Liz Kotowski, Paul Miliotis and Susan Mooney. Others in attendance were Peter Landry, Landry Surveying; Brendan Quigley, Gove Environmental Services; and Richard Snow of Candia, Candia Conservation Commission and the Lamprey River Advisory Committee.

The property is located along the Little River side of Smoke Street and is identified as Tax Map 10 Lot 4-1. An application is before the Planning Board for the 20.331-acre parcel to be subdivided into five (5) lots, identified as Map 10, Lots 4-1, 4-1A, 4-1B, 4-1C and 4-1D. The parent parcel has at least 2000 feet of frontage along the Little River and Critical Wetland #9. Lots 4-1A, B, C and D will have a little over two (2) acres each, Lot 4-1 will be over 11 acres. Lot 4-1 will not be subdivided further because so much of the property is wetland and is not fit for building.

Because of potential impact on the Little River Watershed, agents for the applicant attended the Commission meeting held on May 9, 2016 and presented the project to Commission members and the attending and viewing audience.

All participants entered the property via the potential driveway of Lot 4-1A and headed north through lots 4-1B, 4-1C and 4-1D, noting the test pit areas and potential house sites. From Lot 4-1C the group headed east toward the Little River to inspect the two vernal pool areas, one of which had at least 10 egg masses (salamander?). There is a rocky embankment behind several of the potential house sites that should offer some protection from runoff and intrusive activities for the vernal pools, other wetlands and the Little River. We walked to the Little River behind Lots 4-1C and D and then headed up back toward Smoke Street along the back of buildable area Lot 4-1. We were told that there is an area of invasive plant species in the upland area of Lots 4-1A, B and C. The species are multiflora rose, European buckthorn and bittersweet (not Japanese knotweed nor purple loose strife, both of which can out compete wetland plants very rapidly). The plants had not leafed out yet but we did not note any named plants where we walked, rose, buckthorn or bittersweet, all of which are easily recognized by their morphologies. The tree canopy will eventually over shade the first two; bittersweet can be uprooted and destroyed.

The site walk was completed at 5:27 PM.

Commission members were reassured that the house sites will be located near the front of the parcels along the road, and we encourage the builders to site the houses in front of the septic areas in order to minimize driveway lengths and impacts to the Little River watershed. The Commission encourages the builders and homeowners to retain as much tree cover as possible, particularly outside of the buildable areas to buffer runoff and contaminants into the watershed, and to monitor for invasive plant species. Additionally, it is equally important to maintain the topography of the lots, which also contribute to the health of the wildlife and supporting habitats.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Mooney, Secretary

These minutes were accepted as read at the meeting held on June 13, 2016.