

Chatham Conservation Commission
ONSITE notes
101 Geranium Drive
February 1, 2012 at 11:30am

Members of the Commission present at the onsite included Dee Dee Holt, John Geiger, Jackie Meany, Stephanie Hamilton, Steve Kuzma, Bob Lear and Paul Chamberlin. Also present were John DeSousa, representative of the applicant and Conservation Agent Kristin Andres.

The Commission walked the footpath over the dike, observing the flowing water from the upper abandoned bogs to the irrigation pond, ultimately to Oyster Pond. It was noted that an area that was to have been previously planted as mitigation for a patio was void of woody shrubs. As the members walked the trail to the west, a small vernal pool was observed amongst the pine trees. Once in the area of the barn, John DeSousa joined the group at 11:40am. Mr. Chamberlin departed at approximately 12 noon.

The site to the west of the wetland is well forested with pitch pine and oak. Along the path, there are wild blackberries which Mr. DeSousa says his client wants to cultivate and the barn will facilitate the storage of equipment and mowers. The Agent reminded all that if the applicant wishes to alter any of the area, even if for agricultural type purposes, a notice of intent must be filed which Mr. DeSousa understood.

Questions were asked why there were two proposals, noting that the one over the wetland was something the Commission would never consider permitting. Mr. DeSousa explained that it was part of an alternatives analysis under the limited project status.

It was clear that creating a drive over the easement from George Ryder Rd South would require less disturbance to the site and its vegetation. A commissioner requested that Mr. DeSousa consider realignment of this access way to avoid further disturbance, which he said he could do. Additionally, the slight relocation of the barn would also serve to minimize disturbance. The surface of the driveway would likely be something like shell; asphalt would not be necessary. There would have to be retaining walls in the steepest slope coming over the easement.

It was asked whether a driveway was even necessary. Mr. DeSousa replied that access would need to be created for the purposes of constructing the barn and that the applicants wished to use the barn for storage. It was also asked if the easement had any restrictions (eg) was for purposes of maintaining the bog. Mr. DeSousa said that it was his understanding that the applicant had full legal use of the easement.

On the way back across the property it was pointed out that someone in the neighborhood had cut 2-3 trees that were IN the wetland on the property without permission or authorization. A police report had been filed. It was surmised that the culprit might be one of the abutters to the north and west had done it for view purposes. One of the oaks was readily visible from the path.

Commission members departed the site at approximately 12:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Andres, Conservation Agent