

FARMINGTON PLANNING BOARD
153 Farmington Falls Road
October 19, 2020 – 6:00 pm.
Minutes

Planning Board members present: Clayton King, Lloyd Smith, Craig Jordan, Jeff Wright, and Judith Murphy.

Alternate members present: Linda Brown and Michael MacNeil.

Members unable to attend: Gloria McGraw and Mike Otley.

Others present: Town Manager, Richard Davis; Code Enforcement Officer, Steve Kaiser; Code Assistant, Kate Foster; representing Atlantic Salmon Federation, Project Manager Maranda Nemeth; and abutters Terry and Pat Mooar.

Mr. King opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

1. Designate alternate members, if needed

Mr. King designated Mrs. Brown and Mr. MacNeil as voting members for this meeting in the absence of regular members.

2. Review minutes of September 14, 2020

Mr. Smith made a motion to accept the minutes of September 14, 2020 as written.
Ms. Murphy seconded the motion.

7 – Affirmative
Motion carried.

3. 20-FP-01 & 20-SZ-02
Atlantic Salmon Federation / Maranda Nemeth
U30-25+26 / Residential
Removal of Walton Mill Dam and Park Improvements

Mr. King introduced the applications and asked for a motion.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to accept the floodplain and shoreland applications as complete.
Mr. Wright seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative
Motion carried.

Ms. Nemeth introduced herself and stated there has been little change to the plans since she made her preliminary presentation at the September meeting, adding that the Town approved the project in 2018.

Mr. Jordan stated his question from the last meeting has been addressed about the runoff of the oil and trash residue. He asked where there will be some maintenance, have the people who designed it discussed how much will need to be done.

Ms. Nemeth replied that it has been discussed, but it really depends on how much debris builds up on the storm grates, adding they will need to be checked after each storm like other storm drains in town.

Mr. Davis said he has talked with Town Public Works Director Phil Hutchins about maintenance of these storm drains, and Mr. Hutchins said it won't be any different than any of the other drains in town and won't put any extra burden on them.

Mr. MacNeil asked if there were going to be certain hours the park would be accessible.

Mr. Davis replied that all the town parks are closed from 11pm – 4 am. He added that all the lights for the path and the pavilion are on a timer.

Mr. Wright apologized for not being present for the preliminary presentation at the last meeting but he's very impressed with the plans.

Mr. Smith asked if these were final plans or just revised to add the storm drain plans.

Ms. Nemeth stated these are revised, and not final but very close.

Terry Mooar who is an abutter from across the park was present with his wife Pat Mooar. He said the last time they drained the pond there was a horrible smell of rotting vegetation and asked what's going to be done about that.

Ms. Nemeth said they will start draining the pond through the existing gate right after ice out, much of the sediment will be removed as the pond drains through the gate, and dormant existing vegetation will spread on the remaining exposed sediment as it warms up – all of which will help reduce the odor factor.

Mr. Mooar asked if they were going to help with the vegetation and do some planting.

Ms. Nemeth stated they want to give the native vegetation a chance to grow for a year or so to see what comes back on its own and will continue to monitor over the next five years. She added they've spoken with the Town's Conservation Commission, and they'll work with landowners to ensure growth on the banks of their properties.

Mr. Mooar asked about the wildlife such as the geese, ducks, cranes, frogs, and turtles that use the area for nesting and living, and what would happen to them.

Ms. Nemeth replied that the wildlife will change some and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (MDIFW) has been involved in the project and done habitat review. She acknowledged that the former pond area will revert to being like the adjacent upstream and downstream areas.

Mr. Kaiser asked if the remaining sediments, muck, and silt will just settle and stabilize on its own or if any active measures will be done to control it.

Ms. Nemeth stated they want to take a passive approach and let the banks settle and grow on their own.

Mr. Kaiser asked Ms. Nemeth if she could repeat her comments from the last meeting about transplanting the fresh-water mussels for the Mooars.

Ms. Nemeth said they'll relocate as many fresh-water mussels as possible, and a lot of the smell the last time the stream was drained was likely due to rotting mussels. She added that opening the gate right after ice out will help reduce odor and allow waterfowl a chance to relocate before nesting.

Mrs. Mooar asked about the turtles, specifically large snappers.

Ms. Nemeth replied that snapping turtles didn't need relocation as they were not endangered, and they'll relocate themselves anyway to a suitable habitat.

Mr. Davis added that the turtles will more than likely move further south into the Sandy River.

Ms. Nemeth stated most wildlife can move on their own where mussels cannot.

Mrs. Mooar asked how much the site is going to be opened up and how far the lighting is going to cover, because she doesn't want the lights shining into her house at 11 pm.

Ms. Nemeth said the lights are soft, low voltage, and localized to the path, parking lot, and pavilion. She added that it is up to the Town to set the timers.

Mr. Davis added they will be assessing when to set the timers to turn on and off and the lights will be "cut-off" type directed to only light up specific areas and nothing else beyond.

Mrs. Mooar asked where the placement of the pavilion was going to be in reference to her house.

Ms. Nemeth said she could meet the Mooar's at the park to show them where everything will be if they'd like.

[The slideshow from the preliminary presentation will be sent to the Mooar's via email.]

Mr. Mooar asked where the dam material was going.

Ms. Nemeth said the stone from the dam will be used in landscaping.

Mr. Kaiser commented that there will still be a lot of water left after the dam is removed which will be good habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Ms. Nemeth said there would be expanded emergent wetlands after the dam is removed. Mr. Kaiser asked what will be done if beavers try to re-dam the area.

Ms. Nemeth replied that spring and fall rains usually takes care of beaver dams due to the amount of water and velocity, and MDIFW will keep an eye on this.

Mr. Mooar asked if the added parking is going to cause more of an issue on this bad corner of the road, where there are already problems with visibility.

Ms. Nemeth said there's nothing that can be done about the entrance location, but they are raising the elevation so it doesn't drop as much for better visibility.

Mr. Davis added that Department of Transportation has been consulted and has done a preliminary approval of the four parking spaces being added on the side of the road, with guardrails being installed as well. He added that the park entrance will be separated from the abutting property driveways.

Mr. Smith asked if all the money had been raised for the project, and also what would happen if they are not able to start or finish the project in the allotted time.

Ms. Nemeth stated they haven't finished raising all the money and once they get a contractor they will know better how much more is needed. She added that they won't start the project until they are positive they can finish it.

Mr. Kaiser said they have a year to complete the project, which can be extended a year with good cause. They have constraints like bird nesting and fish spawning, and if they need more time they'll just come back to the Board for same.

Ms. Nemeth stated they have other legal agreements to see the project through, and have an agreement with the Town to make sure the project is completed.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. King called for a motion to approve the applications.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to approve the floodplain and shoreland applications as submitted.

Mr. MacNeil seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative
Motion carried.

Mr. King asked how they relocate the mussels.

Ms. Nemeth replied they're relocated by hand and moved in buckets.

4. Other Business

Mr. Kaiser stated Willow Springs is still working on their plans and should be coming in before

the Board at the November meeting.

Mr. Jordan asked about a two-story metal building being built on the Fairbanks Road by Jack's Trading Post and that it seems like it doesn't meet the setbacks.

Mr. King said he had called Mr. Kaiser previously about it, feeling the same.

Mr. Kaiser replied that he has checked the site before and after the slab was installed and it met setbacks.

Mr. Smith asked if this was like the same situation that had happened previously with Dennis Pike who owned both properties but they were separate lots so he had to go to the Appeals Board for a variance due to the fact that he couldn't meet the setbacks.

Mr. Kaiser said he will check it again but is pretty sure in this case the lots are combined, where in Mr. Pike's they were not.

Mr. King said he would appreciate that.

Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Mr. Jordan seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 – Affirmative
Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kate Foster.

Planning Board

Date