September 17, 2016

Present Conservation members: Gordon DeWolf
Richard Provencher
Brian Silva
Christine Long
Eric Tunley

DEP Circuit Rider: Judith Schmidth

Board of Health: Jason Paquette
Melvin Dorman

Logger: Kevin Chobot

Residents: Mary Jane Haesche
Tim Nolan
Martha DeWolf

SITE VISIT: WEST BROOKFIELD LANDFILL, 88 WIGWAM ROAD

The site visit/meeting began at the Landfill entrance at 9:18 a.m.

Richard Provencher said that we are here today specifically to go over the environmental impact of the cutting of the logs in the wetland area. We have asked DEP Circuit Rider Judith Schmidth to give us her assessment.

Mary Jane Haesche asked that while we are here was there the possibility of seeing the rest of the logging area just to justify that the trees cut there were not in a wetland and the answer was yes we could.

Judith Schmidth said she had spoken to Solid Waste Department and there had been a recent inspection of the swales. Cleaning of the swales around the landfill, the Board of Health can do without going to the Conservation Commission.

The group walked down the hill noting a wetland area with two trees cut down at the edge of the wetland and one in the wetland area. We then walked up the hill and then down to Bradish Brook where there was a tree lying across the brook and one lying aside of the brook. Logger Kevin Chobot said was going to remove the trees over the hill north through landowner’s property of which he will obtain permission. Mary Jane Haesche
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asked how many more trees will be cut and the answer was eleven. She asked that they be tagged.

While walking, Conservation Members talked to Circuit Rider about Land Engineer versus Wetland Engineer preparing plans. She told us that if we felt that we needed more information than what the Land Engineer supplied, we could require the applicant have a Wetland Engineer do the plan at the applicant’s expense.

We walked the area where the water comes from the landfill and overflows down the hill. There was evidence of erosion and Circuit Rider Judith Schmidth recommended check dams be placed down the hill to slow the velocity of the water coming down the hill.

After the site walk, everyone gathered at the landfill gate. It will be necessary for the Board of Health to submit a plan to the Conservation Commission to remove the trees safely. Taking them out by hand or a team or horses would be the least impact on wetlands. If vehicles were to be used, there must be a restoration plan. Logger Kevin Chobot said the area is dry now and there would be no damage and taking out by hand would not be financially beneficial for him. Richard Provencher said that financial hardship was not a Conservation issue and not a factor in making a decision. Judith Schmidt said there are forest cutting guidelines, which tells you how to restore damage and how to deal with slash. Gordon DeWolf said there is a great deal of looseness in the buffer zone and this should not be torn up and if so, needs to be restored. Brian Silva said that the trees should be removed with minimal impact as possible in the buffer zone. Gordon DeWolf agreed. The trees that have not been cut are to be tagged. The Board of Health will submit a plan for removal of the trees. This will be on the agenda for our next Conservation Commission meeting October 5, 2016.

Circuit Rider Judith Schmidth said the Board of Health has the right to appeal if they do not like our decision but would hope that we could agree as DEP is way behind in the appeals and it could be a long time before it would be resolved.

We thanked Circuit Rider Judith Schmidth for coming today.

Our meeting ended at 11:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long, Secretary