

**APPROVED**

**ADAMS CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, December 2, 2021  
6:00 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman James Fassell, and Commission members Steve Melito, Jeff Randall, David Lipinski, Matt Burdick, and Natasha Bordeaux

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Emily Stockman, Stockman Associates; Brian Rhodes, iBerkshires.com; Eammon Coughlin and Donna Cesan, Town of Adams; Gene Crouch and Michael Petrin, VHB; David Rhoads, Town of Adams Board of Health; Joseph Nowak and Howard Rosenberg, Town of Adams Board of Selectmen; and Administrative Assistant Isaiah Moore

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Fassell called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The board members need to approve the minutes of August 26 and November 4, 2021

A motion made by Member Lipinski seconded by Member Melito to approve the minutes of November 4, 2021 as written. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

A motion made by Member Lipinski seconded by Member Randall to approve the minutes of August 26, 2021 as written. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

**NOTICE OF INTENT:** Filed by VHB on behalf of the Town of Adams, the proposed project involves construction of the 9,180 square foot Greylock Glen Outdoor Center with an access drive, parking for sixty-four (64) vehicles, patios, access walks and other amenities, and installation of a new 350,000-gallon water tank at 0 Thiel Road (Map 218, Parcel 5) with a twelve (12) inch service line to the Outdoor Center for domestic water supply and fire suppression.

Chairman Fassell began the meeting by introducing the Town representative Donna Cesan.

Ms. Cesan gave a brief history of the project mentioning that the 6.5 million dollars from the state toward the site that Governor Baker mentioned in August. Ms. Cesan also mentioned that the project brought forward tonight has been in the works for over a decade before introducing Mr. Gene Crouch from VHB.

Mr. Crouch rose to speak to the commission with the assistance of a visual aide behind him showing the maps and diagrams related to what he spoke on. Mr. Crouch began by explaining that all of the charts and graphs he was going to be referencing were also in the NOI request packet that had been sent to the commission prior to the meeting. Mr. Crouch began the presentation by explaining where different landmarks were located on the map, showing where downtown Adams was, where Thiel Road led to, and the project site including a concrete pad that is currently on the property and the utility work that will be done leading to it.

Ms. Cesan interjected to explain further that the concrete pad was the foundation of an old maintenance shed that was removed previously. Chairman Fassell asked if that was where a previously proposed development site was supposed to be and Ms. Cesan explained that it was not exactly at that location but would've been slightly further down the path.

Mr. Crouch continued with his presentation first looking at the community center part of the project. Mr. Crouch went on to explain that map showed where around the site are the wetlands that had been flagged. Mr. Crouch pointed out a pond, a riverfront line, the 100-foot buffer zone. Mr. Crouch went on to point out and explain the power line part of the plan, showing via the map where the powerline would run. The next part of the presentation by Mr. Crouch was focused on the seven (7) water draining basins. Mr. Crouch explained that the basins will collect all the run off. The basins will be sheet basins with the exception of two that will have a pipe inland. Mr. Crouch showed the path the water would take on the map by adding arrows pointing the direction of the flow. Mr. Crouch pointed out that the water from various locations on the map would run to the different water draining basins.

Mr. Crouch proceeded to show the commission the utility plans for the development via a map. Mr. Crouch showed the commission where the power would be drawn from by the development. The same was done for the sewer lines showing that both would be connected to and then drawn from preexisting infrastructure. Mr. Crouch and Mr. Petrin, then explained the plan for the water lines. The plan was said to have two water lines, one for fire and one for domestic. Mr. Petrin said the reason for this was that because the water tank was not going to be full while only servicing one building then the water needs to be drawn from a non-stagnate line. Mr. Crouch showed on the map that there will be pipes that wrap around for future campgrounds.

Mr. Crouch moved on to discuss the erosion controls for the site. The described plan said that between the work area and any wetland that there would be erosion controls. Mr. Crouch mentioned that in addition to the erosion control that there would also be a couple outland pipes providing extra erosion control located strategically on the construction site. Mr. Crouch explained that there were going to be a few trees that were going to be coming down but that the design team tried to avoid that as best they could. Mr. Crouch also mentioned that there would be a few clusters of trees that would be preserved and maintained.

Mr. Crouch moved on to talk about the water lines and systems. He began by explaining where the water tank was going to be located via the visual aide behind him. Mr. Crouch explained that there was a gravel road that went to the concrete platform that the water main would be on and that the water pipes would be buried under that gravel road. Mr. Crouch explained that there would also be a utility power line under the gravel road as well, connected to the water tank. Mr. Crouch said the powerline would be underground starting at the pavement of the site but that it will be above ground via poles before that point. Mr. Crouch said the powerline will be crossing a brook but the line will be above ground at that point so the brook will not be altered in any way. Mr. Crouch then explained that when the Hoxie Brook and another stream connect that that is when the law considers them a perennial stream, this was important to show that the riverfront line would not extend up into where the work was going to occur. Mr. Crouch pointed out an isolated wetland that comes up behind the tank site, and explained that it will be up to the construction crew to figure out how to build there as it will be a tight site. Mr. Crouch explained that a crane would be needed for supplies and that there would be a staging ground. Mr. Crouch explained that there was a spot where an isolated wetland would be impacted. There was not a guarantee that the wetland would be impacted but the contractor would have the option of using the space if needed. Mr. Crouch assured that if there were any alterations to the wetland that after construction, the wetland would be restored. Mr. Crouch also explained that the while not under the state purview there would be a federal one so there would be paperwork filed with the core of engineers that would also be sent to the Adams conservation commission. Mr. Crouch said that in that paperwork they would show a restoration plan for the affected wetland area. Mr. Crouch showed that the water line would connect to the capped waterline that is already in Theil Road.

The discussion then shifted to the crossing of the Hoxie Brook. There is currently a large sturdy cast iron culvert used to cross the brook. Mr. Crouch said that the culvert should be sturdy and should not be a problem but expressed worry about the gravel road that runs over it. To alleviate those worries Mr. Crouch explained to the commission that there would be large pads put over the culvert to help distribute the weight of the various vehicles driving over it. Mr. Crouch also explained that during construction there would be a temporary heavy-duty bridge to span over the culvert. Mr. Crouch said the bridge would just sit on the ground while in use and when the construction is done it will be picked up and carried away. Mr. Crouch explained that the bridge is not mandatory and up to the contractors but it would be required that the contractors explain what they would do to protect the gravel road during the bidding process.

Member Jeff Randall asked how big the culvert was.

Mr. Crouch responded that the culvert was 6 (six) to 8 (eight) feet.

Member Randall then asked the condition of the culvert.

In response, Mr. Crouch explained that the culvert was going to last for at least 100 (one hundred) years because it is so thick.

Member Natasha Bordeaux asked how steep the banks were for the Moxie brook as she expressed her concerns that if the bridge was to be put up that stress might be too much for the banks to handle.

Mr. Crouch explained that the bridge is far longer than the culvert itself with his estimate on the length of the bridge being 60 (sixty) feet alleviating Member Bordeaux's concerns.

Member Bordeaux then proposed the question of how the various vehicles would be able to maneuver in the area with a semi-truck being the example, she asked if it would have to back up there the whole way or if there would be enough room to turn around once they got up there.

Mr. Crouch reported that there had been turning studies done and that there will be space to turn around up there with a semi or other vehicle when considering the proposed impacted wetland.

Member Randall then asked if the wetland being close to the concrete where the water tank would go was cause for concern of any erosion happening.

Mr. Petrin explained that the current concrete pad was going to be removed and replaced with new foundation that would better protect against erosion Mr. Crouch added that the new pad would be thicker and sturdier but in the same place and not be expanding.

Mr. Crouch then showed the commission what the site looked like from an aerial view via his visual aide. Mr. Crouch summarized his presentation, pointing to the different areas that he had talked about during the night.

Member Randall asked for clarification as to what wetlands were going to be impacted, and the pointed out that there was a small portion of riverfront near one of the basins.

Mr. Crouch explained that he had originally missed it but before the meeting had realized his mistake and had come up with a solution. Mr. Crouch explained it is allowed to put the basin there if it can be shown that it is needed and it is. Mr. Crouch explained that his solution was to come back with a restoration plan to replace and replant a current grass area thus, providing improvement to the riverfront area.

Chairman James Fassell asked Adams Selectman Joseph Nowak for his thoughts on the project and Mr. Nowak shared the history of the site and explained that he and the environmental community support the plan in its current form.

A motion by member David Lipinski, seconded by member Jeff Randall to accept the notice of intent as presented with the condition that the developer is going to come back to the conservation commission with a plan of restoration near that storm water basin to review and approve at some point in the future passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

**REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY: Filed by Stockman Associates on behalf of Christopher Diesz (128 East Road), is requesting determination of whether the work depicted on the plan(s) referenced is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. The proposed project involves construction of a 3,500 square foot accessory building, invasive plant species control and hazard tree removal.**

Chairman James Fassell began by introducing Emily stockman.

Ms. Stockman began by explaining the situation of the client. Ms. Stockman explained the client had recently bought a piece of adjacent land which contains a jurisdictional intermittent stream and a two hundred riverfront area and that the building on the newly acquired land will in part encroach within the buffer zone to the wetlands. Ms. Stockman explained that the woodland is dominated by invasive plants and that the request would have a minor impact to native species. Ms. Stockman explained that the invasive species removal would be done manually exclusively.

Member Bordeaux asked if the client was planning on taking down of the invasive plants in one season.

Ms. Stockman responded that no it would be a long-term relationship.

Ms. Stockman also explained that the other part of this request was that there were some dying trees as a result of the invasive species that need to come down because they are threatening to fall on either the clients building or their neighbors house.

Member Randall asked if there was a plan to plant any new trees as the invasive trees are disposed of.

Ms. Stockman responded that it would be a reasonable condition that there is a one to one planting of a native fruit bearing shrub for every native tree taken down.

Member Randall asked if there was going to be a driveway and if so why it wasn't included in this request for determination.

Ms. Stockman explained that the client had not fully finalized all aspect of their plan but wanted to get in front of the commission to figure out what resources areas he had available.

Chairman Fassell asked if there were any other comments, there were none.

A motion by member David Lipinski, seconded by member Steve Melito to determine the request as a negative three with conditions and the condition of replanting of native species of

fruit bearing shrubs for each invasive tree removed within three years, passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0.

### **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:**

- Specialty Minerals release of Calcium Carbonate into Hoosic River (Nov. 16)

Member Bordeaux explained to the council the situation and that there was no damage done to the river.

- Finding a new consultant for Commission

The council discussed the process of how to hire a new consultant needing to go through a public process. They listed a few names that they thought would be interested.

- Finding new Commission member

The commission members shared names of potential replacements urging the desire of diversity of having someone not from the agricultural community though not saying that it was a requirement just that it would be a plus.

- Training course available

Town of Adams community development director Eammon Coughlin explained that there was an opportunity of becoming a certified conservation commission member.

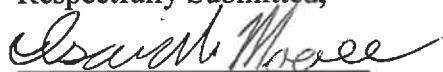
- Next meeting – NOI for 1 Cook St., proposed town park near rail trail and Coal & Grain elevator building.

**REVIEW MAIL:** National Grid and MDAR- Letter regarding the twenty-one (21) day herbicidal application plan and request for the commission to review the YOP maps to ensure wells will not be impacted.

**MACC-** Letter giving the commission advanced notice that the membership dues and thanking the commission for being part of the association.

**ADJOURN:** A motion made by Member Lipinski, seconded by Member Burdick to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 P.M., passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



3/7/22

Date