

August 4, 2010

Special Meeting

6:00 p.m. Town Pavilion, School Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Bedini, Mr. Bohan, Mrs. Hill, Mr. LaMuniere, Mr. Wadelton

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Ms. Cheney, Mr. Martino, Mr. Papsin

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Ajello, Mrs. J. Hill

A Commission “workshop” was held so the commissioners could discuss general wetlands issues and procedures. Topics included the following:

Agricultural exemptions:

It was noted that although gardening is an exempt activity by right, the Commission has the discretion to determine whether a proposed activity qualifies. Several commissioners thought, for example, that activities associated with Schoellkopf’s gardens would qualify as an agricultural exemption. It was felt the Commission must be objective and consistent and review each case on its own merits.

Activities and “Improvements” around Lake Waramaug:

The commissioners generally voiced their concerns about the protection of the shoreline. Several issues were discussed and the following points made.

- 1) Engineered plans should be required. The Commission’s attempts to work with applicants using sketch plans has led to misunderstandings and unauthorized work.
- 2) The letter of approval will be revised to include instructions to the property owners that contractors must be given both the motion of approval and a set of the approved plans. (This pertains to all permits, not just those for properties on the lake.)
- 3) Guidelines/Town Ordinance:
Several commissioners will begin to work on a set of guidelines or functional set of directives for the types of activities the Commission will permit around the lake. It was thought this was needed because the Commission’s current policy of permitting only activities that cause minimal impact to the shoreline was not specific enough. Once this has been prepared, the Zoning Commission will be asked for its input and cooperation. It was hoped that the two Commissions would work together to coordinate their regulations and/or work on a town ordinance regarding the limitation of activities around the lake. A professional, such as a limnologist or Tom McGowan of the Lake Waramaug Task Force, will be consulted.
- 4) Specific concerns around the lake:
Putting further restrictions on the use of pressure treated materials, limiting the size of both docks and concrete anchor blocks, limiting the length of stonewalls and “hardened” shoreline along the lake, etc. were considered.

Applications in which there is an intervener:

It was noted the Commission should always address the claims by the intervener for the record before the close of the public hearing.

Length of Commission meetings:

What could be done to shorten the meetings was discussed. It was decided:

- 1) The Commission will not work on sketching plans/engineering for applicants during the meeting, nor will discussion of an application be tabled so that an applicant could go out of the room, revise a plan, and return to discuss it later in the meeting.
- 2) Applicants will be encouraged to submit their applications well before meetings so that Mrs. Hill will have time to review them for completeness.
- 3) Applicants will be advised that although officially received by the Commission, incomplete applications will not be discussed at meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,
Janet M. Hill
Land Use Administrator