

ACTON PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes

DATE: May 2, 2013 (approved May 15, 2013)

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Chip Venell – Chairman
Tom Cashin – Vice Chairman
Jessica Donnell
Arthur Kelly
Robert Smith – Alternate
Gavin Maloney – Alternate

Members absent: Yoli Gallagher

Also present: Ken Paul, CEO; Brenda Charland, Recording Secretary; Virginia DeBoer, Video Recorder; Linda Schier, Jeanne Achille and Dustin Johnson from Acton Wakefield Watershed Alliance; Daralyn Clark, Herb Clark, Eric Dawalga, Percival Lowell, Jack Kelley, Dennis Long, Richard Nass, Paul Poyant, Lorraine Yeaton

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 7:00 p.m.; he then convened the Public Hearing to review the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance relative to Storm Water Management. The Chairman introduced Linda Schier and Dustin Johnson from Acton Wakefield Watershed Alliance.

Ms. Schier presented slides outlining the importance of implementing storm water management. She stated that “what happens on the land affects the water”. Usually, 50% of rainwater soaks into the ground; 40% evaporates and 10% gets into the water bodies acting as a phosphorus export. Mr. Johnson presented slides depicting typical local erosion stabilizing projects that he has designed for property owners. He explained that the permitting process begins with a simple site plan, which can be acquired from the town’s website, with photos of the problem area and a brief description of the plan to control the storm water runoff.

The Chairman reminded citizens that the proposed amendments will only apply to new projects in the Shoreland, Resource Protection and Commercial B zones.

Dennis Long inquired about engineering projects. Mr. Johnson responded that most projects are not complicated nor costly and that the Acton Wakefield Watershed Alliance offers design assistance to property owners as well as labor in installing the project. There are many resources available to property owners to help determine which practice to use and how to design it for the specific project.

Mr. Long also asked what permitting and enforcing would cost taxpayers. Mr. Paul explained that the fees generated by permits would initially defray the cost to the Department; the selectmen fix the fees.

Mr. Long also stated that the DEP now requires all contractors who do projects within the Shoreland Zone to be DEP certified. The Chairman reminded him that the contractor’s erosion control efforts are to ensure protection during the construction process and does not address permanent on-site erosion prevention.

Mr. Lowell stated that the owner of the property should be allowed to generate all the paperwork for a project without having to seek professional assistance.

Mr. Kelley noted that the efforts of the ASYCC and the AWAA, coordinated with the YCSW, has made a difference in the water quality so he doesn't understand why more regulations are necessary?

Mr. Poyant asked, referencing section 6 of the Ordinance, how phosphorous is calculated. Linda Schier responded that there is a web-based tool that the state is developing, though it is quite complicated. But she felt that the DEP is working on making it more user friendly.

Mr. Long inquired about which towns have implemented a storm water management ordinance. Ms. Schier responded that many towns are working on developing an ordinance. Ms. Donnell noted that many towns have been working on and implementing portions of storm water management practices.

Mr. Percival suggested that when a non-conforming lot is listed for sale, the town should buy it, split it in half and offer it to abutters, thereby systematically eliminating non-conforming lots.

Ms. Schier made a final statement that the citizens in Acton, Shapleigh and Wakefield have been doing an excellent job in working collaboratively to improve the quality of the lakes; however, many of the new projects that would be subject to the proposed amendments are not on properties owned by citizens who have ownership in these efforts.

Hearing no further questions or comments, the Chairman closed the Hearing at 8:20 p.m. and opened the Planning Board meeting.

1. **April 4, 2013 Minutes:** Motion made by Mr. Smith; seconded by Ms. Donnell to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

Old Business: Storm Water Management - the board discussed how to offer information regarding the proposed amendments at town meeting, possibly asking Linda Shier to present a slide show and offer handouts to the citizens. The order of the articles on the warrant was also discussed. Mr. Vennell will meet with the selectmen to request that the storm water article be at the beginning of the warrant.

2. **New Business:** None
3. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.