

Sherborn Conservation Commission



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MEMO

TO: Sherborn Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)
FROM: Sherborn Conservation Commission
DATE: May 12, 2021
RE: **Comments on (A) Tetra Tech April 29, 2021 ZBA letter on “Wetlands Protection Recommendations (Letter 3)” and (B) the Smolak & Vaughan May 7, 2021 Letter**

A. The Conservation Commission has the following comments in response to the peer reviewer **Tetra Tech (TT) April 29, 2021 letter** to the ZBA regarding the Commission's ongoing comments on the Coolidge Crossing project.

1. Stormwater Management – Impervious Surface

The TT opinion that there are groundwater quality benefits to the current design compared to porous asphalt is important factor.

The Commission also acknowledges the TT view that porous asphalt would “have negligible impacts on the extent of the alternation”, which is what the Commission is trying to reduce. The higher initial and maintenance costs of porous asphalt is an issue beyond the Commission’s purview, but it is recognized as a concern for the ZBA.

2. Stormwater Management: Long-Term Pollution Prevention Plan (LTPPP)

The Commission acknowledges the TT support for conditions related to the following three activities.

(a) Deicing and Deicing Material Storage

TT supports conditioning the type and amount of deicing chemical, but no specific guidance is provided. As to types, the Commission has recommended that deicing products will not include sodium chloride and preferences for limiting use to magnesium chloride due to less chloride and less overall toxicity and for acetate-based deicers compared to calcium chloride. As to amount, the Commission has noted that all deicers have some negative impacts on wetlands and groundwater and their use should be minimized; therefore any recommendations by TT as to amount/quantity would be appreciated.

TT suggests that the conditioning of the specified program include that it can be modified in the future for safety or for new developments. This is a practical measure and it should include coming to the Commission for approval of program changes.

There should also be a condition on how and where any onsite deicing material is stored, such as in a covered area where spillage can be easily controlled and cleaned up.

(b) Snow Disposal:

TT recommends that snow storage be located in an area covered by the stormwater management system as well as in compliance with the Mass DEP snow disposal guidance. The Commission agrees with such ideas with the added qualifications:

- compliance with Mass DEP guidance is tied to whatever the latest guidance is and not limited to the current one; and
- storage location is outside of the 100-foot wetland buffer zone to the extent possible and if in the buffer zone the distance to wetland resources is maximized.

(c) Lawn, Garden and Landscape Management:

TT supports conditioning of pesticide and fertilizer use. As before, the Commission proposes the following:

- In the NAZ, no fertilizers and pesticides/herbicides will be applied.
- In the outer buffer zone, only "organic" slow-release nitrogen and no pesticides.

It is acknowledged that some initial fertilization might be an issue, which can be addressed further during the wetlands permitting process.

3. Wildlife Habitat

(a) The addition of two wildlife crossings is a positive change to the plans. At this point, the Commission thinks that further work on the details of these crossings and any other wildlife habitat measures can be best left to the wetlands permitting process.

(b) TT supports the Commission condition of adding dimmers to the approximately five lights whose lighting overlaps the NAZ so that there is at least have the option to lessen exterior lighting in buffer zone areas.

4. Landscape Plan for Jurisdictional/Buffer Zone Areas

The Commission acknowledges the improvements proposed to the landscaping plan for the wetlands buffer zone. Some comments are that these buffer zone improvements in some areas can be expanded and made contiguous with wetland resources and with each other as well as expanded. The amount of area to be revegetated with a focus on wetland values and functions should be maximized, especially in the 50-foot no-alteration zone. A related issue is that the protected buffer zone should be demarcated by fencing and/or some markers. There is also the overarching issue of plant selection and density for buffer zone landscaping.

As noted by TT, further review of the landscaping specifics can be best handled during the Commission's wetlands protection permitting process.

B. Smolak & Vaughan May 7, 2021 Letter on Local Regulations regarding Fill and Stumps

The Commission acknowledges that the Applicant is not requesting the waiver of the local regulations related to 5.3 Fill and 5.4 Stumps and that they can be included in the permit. The Commission is amendable to the Applicant's request for a modification of the one-week advance notification under the Fill regulation to a shorter period.