

WEST TISBURY  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
January 23, 2024

The meeting was held via Zoom in accordance with the Governor’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A sec.20. Public participation will be via remote participation (Zoom) pursuant to M. G. L. Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

**Present:** Fred Barron, Geraldine Brooks ,Whit Griswold, Angela Luckey ( arrived at 5:20), Chris Lyons, Ernie Thomas, and Michael Turnell

**Absent:** Peter Rodegast

**Staff Present:** Maria McFarland

**Also present for all or part of the meeting:** Bryan Collins, Adam deBettencourt, Stan Humphries, George Sourati, and Jack Vaccaro

Whit Griswold called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Ernie, seconded by Fred to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2024 meeting as amended. Roll Call Vote: Ernie -aye, Fred – aye, Geraldine -aye, Michael-aye, and Whit – aye.

**Continued Public Hearing**

**SE79-452:** a public hearing under the requirements of G.L. Ch.131 § 40, as amended, and West Tisbury Wetlands Protection Bylaw and regulations to consider a **Notice of Intent** filed by Sourati Engineering Group, LLC, for a project to remove an unpermitted revetment from the 1960’s and replace it with a 267’ rock revetment, flanked by 50’arrays of fiber rolls and gabion baskets on the north and south ends of the revetment to protect an existing circa 1930 cottage at **271 John Cottle Road ( Map 6 Lot 6) owned by Paul’s Point Area Realty, L.L.C.** Sand nourishment is also proposed. Access to the site will be via an existing driveway on **245 John Cottle Road ( Map 6 Lot 7.2), owned by Harrowby Property Co, LTD, and 257 John Cottle Road ( Map 6 Lot 7.4)** owned by Dunster Realty, L.L.C. A 690 ft temporary construction access road on the beach is proposed between the existing driveway at 257 John Cottle Road and the site of the proposed shore protection. Michael Turnell recused himself from this project.

George presented a revised project plan. He explained that the Commission did not like the originally proposed project as described above. The Commission had two consultants who provided comments and recommendation on how to improve the project.

George took the concerns of the Commission, the recommendations made by Greg Berman Woods Hole Sea Grant Coastal Processes Specialist and Stan Humphries of ECR Consulting the two consultants the commission engaged to assist in their review and the Natural Heritage and Endangered s Program letter dated July 5, 2023, ( the “NHESP letter”) and made the following changes to the project plan.

George said they were able to incorporate all of Stans recommendations in the new design.

Stan Humphries, the Commission's consultant was also present. Prior to the hearing tonight, Stan submitted updated comments and recommendations on the revised plan to the Commission.

The revised plan shows the following changes:

- Reduction in length of the stone revetment by 58 feet or by 21%.
- Changed the elevation of the rock portion of the revetment and the fiber rolls to elevation 10.
- Changed the access to the beach to go over the coastal bank on the west side of the house rather than along the beach. This eliminates the need for 670 feet of access over a coastal beach. The NHESP letter raised concerns about nesting habitat.
- Added two rows of coir logs and plantings on top of the rock revetment. They would be covered with sand and planted
- Reconfiguration of the existing stones so that the revetment is more inland. It will create a 9-12-foot beach at high tide. Currently, there is no beach in front of the revetment at high tide. .
- The revised plan shows more detail on the plantings to be used.
- Elevations: to keep the profile of the revetment at Elevation 10. Only 5.5 feet of the revetment will be visible from the water.
- Planting protocol is now detailed on the plan.
- Reuse at least half of the existing stones. Not a lot of excavation to get the toe stones in place. Wave action will not move the toe stones.
- Purpose of the project is primarily to save the house which is approximately 16 feet from the top of the bank. A benefit of the project is gaining beach in front of it.

Issues Discussed:

- Lack of information on moving the house back from the bank. Camp has been renovated. Owners don't want to move the house back. Consultant suggested that the applicant submit something to demonstrate that it is not feasible to relocate the house.
- Alternatives of do nothing or do repairs and add the fiber rolls.
- Concern about the access road going over the bank. Mini excavator on the beach.
- Consultant's letter supports the revision.
- Revisions have to be approved by NHESP
- In Whit's opinion the existing revetment has not failed. Its been there for 70 years. Gaps behind the stones can be filled. George noted that both consultants agreed that the revetment is failing.
- Geraldine and Fred don't think the project is environmentally friendly.
- Stan asked George to confirm that the riprap is causing the end effect erosion and that the proposed coir logs and gabion baskets at each end of the revetment are to help stop / slow down the erosion of the bank.
- Stan also asked George if the erosion at the top of the bank landward of the riprap has been ongoing and it is something redoing the revetment is trying to address.
- George replied that there is no filter fabric under the stones which would help keep the sand in place. During storms, when waves hit the existing rip rap there is resettlement. The sand below the boulders escapes between the voids and that's what's caused the settlement over the years.

- Whit asked George if it is possible to repair rather than replace the rip rap. George replied that repairing it is not the best solution but it can be done.
- Maria pointed out similar projects that have been approved by the Commission.
- Whit said he would entertain a revision to the project to do repairs to the rip rap and add the gabions/ coir logs.

George asked to continue the hearing so that he can talk with his client to see if the client is willing to either move the house or change the project to be a repair of the rock revetment.

With the consent of the applicant, a motion was made by Ernie, seconded by Angela to continue the public hearing on this matter to February 27, 2024 at 5:25 PM. Roll Call Vote: Angela – aye, Ernie - aye, Fred – aye, Geraldine -aye, and Whit – aye.

### **New Business:**

**James Pond/ Notice of Intent (NOI):** Whit updated the members. A draft narrative of the NOI has been prepared by Brad Chase of the Division of Marine Fisheries and edited by Maria. The town will hire a consultant to work with Johnny Hoy, the Herring Warden on getting the NOI processed, as Brad Chase cannot handle this process. Whit described the current conditions. He said that it was possible that the Riparian owners may participate in covering the costs. No action was taken.

### **Old Business:**

**Map 39 Lot 8/216 Middle Point Road:** Review of revised project plan to show where the property owner would like to place the mechanicals (an air conditioning condenser, a generator behind the garage and an underground propane tank.) All three are in the Buffer Zone to LSCSF (aka flood zone). Maria said she asked George to have the condenser and generator placed off the ground. The special conditions say that there will no placement of propane storage tanks underground.

Maria didn't have a copy of the regulations so she couldn't site the section of the regulations regarding the tanks.

Whit said it was fine provided the equipment will not be seen by the neighbor on that side.

Angela asked if the tank can be kept above ground. The board approved this request without taking a vote.

**Map 7 Lot 26.3 / 7 Cottle Lane/ violation:** Vineyard Surveying and Engineering will prepare a site plan. No action was taken.

**Conservation Restriction (CR)/ Merry Farm LLC/Joint meeting;** Maria explained that the Select Board conditioned accepting this CR on Mr. Dubard finding an entity to be the co-holder of this restriction with the Town. Mr. Dubard was unable to meet this condition. Therefore, there will not be a joint meeting at this time. No action was taken.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria McFarland  
Board Administrator  
APPROVED  
2/27/20204