



Roxann Wedegartner  
Mayor

City of  
**GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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**John Griffin, Chair**  
**Rachel Lindsay, Vice Chair**  
**Erika LaForme**  
**Fletcher Harrington**  
**Travis Drury**

**Agent: Cassie Tragert**

**GREENFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**Greenfield Department of Planning and Development**  
**20 Sanderson Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**Greenfield MA 01301**

The meeting was called to order by Rachel Lindsay at 6:37 PM with the following members:

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rachel Lindsay, Vice Chair  
Erika LaForme  
Fletcher Harrington  
Travis Drury

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Griffin, Chair (with notice)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Cassie Tragert (Agent)  
Sam Kaepfel 11 Westwood Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Julie & Roy Schonbrun 25 Westwood Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Mark Kasinskas (Eversource) 108 Leigus Rd. Wallingford CT 06492  
Rachel Loeffler (Berkshire Design) 741/743 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Steve Horton (Center School) 741/743 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Kevin Campbell (Center School) 741/743 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Jonathan Roberge (Eversource) Seldon St. Berlin, CT  
Alice M. Baker 735 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield MA 01301  
Larry & Deborah Hill 107 South Parrish Rd. Winchester NH 03470  
Mark Darnold (Berkshire Design) 741/743 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield MA 01301

**6:37 PM Administrative Matters: Approval of Meeting Minutes from 12/13/2019**

**Motion made by Erika LaForme to approve the meeting minutes from December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 as written.**

**Motion seconded by Rachel Lindsay**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**6:40 PM Administrative Matters: Approval of Documents:**

Certificate of Compliance: DEP # n/a – 36 Log Plain Road – solar array.

Mark Kasinskas of Eversource explained that the Notice of Intent was originally submitted by Citizens Energy and was approved in May 2017. The project was transferred to Eversource and was approved by the Commission in April 2018. Agent Tragert and Rachel Lindsay attended a site visit with Mark Kasinskas on 1/7/2020. Kasinskas clarified that the seeding mix used was a common solar array low-grow mix. Some areas were spot treated with contractor mix, but the majority is the original mix. Changes from the original plans submitted included:

- 2 areas along the access road where rip rap was added approximately at-grade to help stabilize the road. The wet areas were occurring due to changes in the topography created by off-road vehicle use by the previous property owner, not from hydrology on the landscape.
- Changed shape of the turn-around area and resulted in a shift in the limits of the access road to accommodate that.



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- Increased size of equipment pads by a few square feet.
- Added utility poles along access road which were not on the original plans, but was indicated as being necessary in the future during the original Notice of Intent hearing.

Rachel Lindsay explained that the placement of the fence and signage were found to be appropriately installed on the site visit and addressed a question that had been raised by Eversource as to whether limbs from trees within the Wetland Buffer Zone that are hanging over the fence into the solar area could be removed. It was determined that the Operations & Maintenance Plan would be updated to state that that is permissible as long as only limbs are removed. If it is determined that an entire tree needs to be removed, then the property owner will need to come before the Commission for approval of its removal. Rachel Lindsay reminded the applicant to be aware of all on-going conditions that do not expire upon the issuance of the Certificate of Compliance (such as no mowing within the jurisdictional areas around the property, etc.).

**Motion made by Erika LaForme to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 36 Log Plain Road.**

**Motion seconded by Rachel Lindsay**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**6:50 PM Public Hearing: Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation: DEP # 168-335 – Single family home; 375 Leyden Road**

Agent Tragert notified the Commission that she received a request from the property representative, Peter LaBarbera, to continue this hearing to the next Conservation Commission Meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Motion made by Rachel Lindsay to continue the hearing until January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Motion seconded by Fletcher Harrington**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**6:53 PM Public Hearing: Notice of Intent: DEP# 168 - 0336 – 741 & 743 Bernardston Road (Assessor’s Map R14-46 & R14-71), Center School new building**

The Commission reviewed the Notice of Intent permit application submitted by Charlie Spencer of Greenfield Center School, Inc. for proposed construction of a new school building and associated athletic fields/parking facilities. Disturbance associated with the project includes proposed alteration of 1,400 square feet located within Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, their buffer zone, and the 25-foot No Disturbance Zone. Rachel Loeffler (RL) and Mark Darnold (MD) of Berkshire Design presented the plan for the project and were accompanied by Steve Horton (SH) and Kevin Campbell (KC).

*Commissioner Questions (not verbatim):*

Fletcher Harrington: Will you be lining the wetland replication area?

Rachel Loeffler: Currently not proposing to line the wetland replication area.

Rachel Lindsay: Is the cross section to scale?

Rachel Loeffler: No, primarily it is conceptual to depict how they will protect the existing wetland while new soil will be added as replication area.

Rachel Lindsay: Have you done groundwater testing at the proposed site of the replication area? There is concern that there may be unsuitable soils in that area chosen.



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Rachel Loeffler: No, not in that exact location, but there has been test pits done in other areas of the property. They have found that the ground water level is highly variable throughout the site. It is safe to assume that since the area is directly next to an existing wetland then it is likely to succeed.

Fletcher Harrington: What seed mix is proposed to be used along the entry road?

Rachel Loeffler: There are two types of mixes to be used, one is for current forest areas and one is for current meadow areas. The mixes have been designed to be adaptive to future conditions due to climate change and reflect natural successional forests.

Fletcher Harrington: What is the history of the site and past uses?

Rachel Loeffler: There is only anecdotal information that the area may have been used to collect gravel from the landscape and some of the features of the landscape indicate similar work in the past. There may have been old roads on the hill area and the last property owner ran a veterinarians office that had horses on the property.

Rachel Lindsay: What is the number of trees to be removed and what is the plan to compensate for the loss in the landscape plan. Was this also a factor for the carbon foot-print calculations?

Rachel Loeffler: The calculation was based on final forest canopy amount as well as meadow area left intact. Surveyors identified specific trees in less forested areas, but denser forested areas were marked for total general area. The calculation for amount of change between the amounts before and after construction can be provided upon request.

Fletcher Harrington: How will existing paddock area be used?

Rachel Loeffler: There are no plans currently. There has been talk of utilizing it for agricultural programming in the future.

Rachel Lindsay: In currently receding pasture areas, will there likely be impacts to those transitional areas near the forest? Is there a plan for reforestation of trees lost from the buffer zone in other areas?

Rachel Loeffler: The school plans to use an outdoor kindergarten approach in which the students are outside each day and so will be utilizing the outdoors, but no major construction related to that is currently in the plans. They plan to utilize the students to replant appropriate trees along the road as a lesson on forestry/restoration and replace any successional areas lost.

Rachel Lindsay: There are five areas on the plans where the Greenfield City Ordinance Chapter 423 designated "No Disturb Zone" is impacted. Why is that and do alternative exist?

Rachel Loeffler: The placement reflects the minimal amount of impact possible to still accommodate the stormwater standards and minimize the necessary amount of grading while still maintaining the features the school needs. The changes to the culvert size discussed tonight would also reduce the amount of impact to the No Disturbance Zone once implemented. Deer fencing could be placed around all No Disturbance Zones to keep people out.

Rachel Lindsay: What will happen to the existing gravel road?

Rachel Loeffler: It will be left in place as a walkway for pedestrians and also to reduce the amount of impacts from construction. It will not be used for vehicles. A swale will intercept any flow from the new road and re-direct it to the lower elevation areas so as not to impact the gravel road or the abutting property.

Travis Drury: Will the dumpster have any measures to contain leaks and/or keep out animals?



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Mark Darnold: The school will not have a cafeteria and so the dumpster will not have the large amounts of waste that is usually associated with a school.

Rachel Lindsay: In the past the Commission has requested that an estimate of trees over 12 inches within the entire site that will be removed be submitted and then a 1:1 tree replacement plan be submitted. The replacement trees would just be based off of number of trees.

Rachel Loeffler: Could a square footage of trees be used instead of measuring individual trees?

Rachel Lindsay: An average density could be calculated and then used to determine the replacement instead of the individual count.

Fletcher Harrington: Is the crushed stone for the main gravel road held together with another material?

Steve Horton: No, it's just a crushed stone with a gravel sub-base. It can be plowed, but it needs to be maintained periodically.

Rachel Lindsay: Will sand or salt need to be used in the winter?

Steve Horton: Sand negatively impacts the road and so wouldn't be used and salt wouldn't be necessary either because it will negatively impact the road too. So no salt or sand will be used at any point. The road has been designed to be level so that it will not need to accommodate icy patches near inclines/declines.

Rachel Lindsay: Is there a snow storage plan or designated area for snow?

Rachel Loeffler: The area in the center of the road circle could be used as well as a few other areas to ensure it remains outside of buffer and no disturbance zones.

Agent Tragert: Snow Storage Plans are typically a part of pre-construction meeting requirements and not necessary to be presented at this time.

*DEP Comment Responses:*

**Response 1** – Mark Darnold: The wetlands as marked in the Order of Resource Area Delineation was determined to stop immediately before and after the road area with no stream indicated connecting the two areas. DEP is arguing that since a culvert exists, it is determined a stream according to regulations. If the Commission agrees and considers it a stream, the school will need to put in a crossing that is larger than what is currently proposed. The current proposed culvert is larger than necessary from an engineering standpoint, but if the Commission would like it to meet the Stream Crossing Standards it could be done.

Erika LaForme: Is there a culvert there now? Or how big was the one that used to be in place?

Rachel Loeffler: Yes, but it is currently dilapidated and likely non-functional such that it is impossible to tell how large it originally was.

Rachel Lindsay: Would the level of the road need to be raised to accommodate a crossing that met the Stream Crossing Standards?

Mark Darnold: No, it is necessary already to fill the area by 14 ft to keep the road level, so there will just be a larger culvert filling that space. It would have an open, natural bottom and will be an increased cost to the applicant.

Rachel Lindsay: Is there a cross section of the current proposed crossing in the details?

Rachel Loeffler: Not in the details, but in the supplemental information there are cross sections showing the crossing. The current dimensions are 2ft by 5ft. A quick guess is that a crossing that would meet the stream crossing standards would be 5ft by 10ft.

Fletcher Harrington: Are there details for the retaining walls?

Mark Darnold: The crossing was designed to have smallest footprint possible that will also allow there to be guardrails



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along the top.

Erika LaForme: Will that impede wildlife passage? How far do the guardrails extend beyond the retaining walls?

Mark Darnold: the guardrails will end immediately at the retaining wall edge. They will not extend beyond the retaining wall. Wildlife should still have access across the structure.

Fletcher Harrington: Is the stream usually flowing?

Mark Darnold: No, perhaps in a heavy rain event, but not consistently at all.

Rachel Loeffler: It meets the definition of an ephemeral stream and the slope is very gradual. It flows even less than an intermittent stream essentially.

Fletcher Harrington: Was there evidence of erosion around the broken culvert?

Mark Darnold: No apparent erosion on/around the road was found likely indicating very low flow levels when it even does flow. A 5ft by 10ft culvert would be more than enough to accommodate it especially with a natural bottom. Utilizing the larger open bottom culvert will likely decrease the amount of impact to the wetlands than previously calculated.

**Response 2** – Mark Darnold: This comment is remarking the irregularity of the fact that in our proposed plans, the road is depicted as getting wider at the point of the crossing as opposed to narrowing as is typical with road/stream crossing designs. The reason for this is that a 5ft wide sidewalks will be included on either side of the road for the length of the crossing only to allow pedestrians to safely walk down the entry road. Everywhere else on the road, pedestrians will have space to simply step off the road when cars approach and there will be no sidewalk.

Rachel Lindsay: Is it necessary to provide these walking areas on both sides of the road? Could you have pedestrians limited to just one side and reduce the width of crossing area altogether?

Mark Darnold: Yes, it could be done without having walking space on either side and consolidating all walking to one side of the crossing. It has been done before on other projects and it would allow the width of this proposed crossing to be reduced by 5ft. The south side would likely be the one that is left in the new plans.

Erika LaForme: Will that create a hazard for students if they have to cross the road to reach the walkway?

Rachel Loeffler: They will already need to be crossing the road to access the school from the parking lots and additional safety measures (signage, crossing guard, etc.) could be put in place. Reducing the width of the culvert by reducing the width of the road could also increase availability to wildlife passage for larger animals like deer.

**Response 3** – Rachel Loeffler: During the wetland delineation, salamander eggs were found in the pool and so it is likely that it is a vernal pool that could be certified as such. The school wants to protect and utilize the vernal pool as a teaching tool for the students. The school is open to any recommendation from the Commission on how to best manage the vernal pool area. The plan also includes providing passageways separate from the drainage system to allow upland amphibians access to the vernal pool area on the other side of the property. In regards to the mowing Mark Stinson was concerned about, the area used to be near a paddock and so may have been mowed in the past, but the school has no plans to do any mowing and will protect the vernal pool however necessary.

Fletcher Harrington: Are there any trail installations proposed?

Rachel Loeffler: There are some existing trails on the site, but there may be trails installed in the future (possibly made by the students). The current plans do not include the addition of any trails on the property.

**Response 4** – Rachel Lindsay: Most wetland replications fail because the replaced hydrology is not usually fully understood and the hydrology of the selected replication site is not fully understood either. As a result, the Commission should have a condition that requires more hydrologic testing done in wetland area to be lost and area that has been selected for replication. Establishing how much groundwater levels fluctuate over the year would be a good way to determine if the selected site is suitable for successful wetland replication.



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Mark Darnold: Is this additional research something that could be stipulated in the order of conditions to occur during construction as long as it is completed before replication work begins? Perhaps with the requirement to check in with the Commission before beginning replication work?

Erika LaForme: Are there other areas that could be more suitable to replication?

Rachel Loeffler: The planned replication area was chosen partially because of its accessibility. There are other areas that have potential as being sites for the replication, but accessing them would require much more disturbance to the ground, vegetation, and tree clearing. The area is also relatively flat making it easier to facilitate water retention and the neighboring test pits done seemed to indicate it would be a good location. If the width of the road is reduced as described earlier, then the amount of disturbed wetland would be reduced as well which would be a benefit to the net wetland amount at the end of the construction.

Agent Tragert: Could groundwater levels be tested directly at the proposed replication site before attempting the replication?

Rachel Lindsay: The testing need only be done by hand to sufficiently determine the hydrology to satisfy the Conservation Commission as opposed to the more involved testing done using backhoes etc.

Agent Tragert: We would make this testing and replication site determination a pre-construction condition as opposed to a post-construction condition to try to increase the replication areas chances of success and still allowing for approval of the project tonight. The understanding being that the applicant will likely need to come before the Commission again in the future to discuss the replication details.

**Response 5** – Mark Darnold: DEP appears to be suggesting that one stormwater discharge level spreader be shifted so that it does not impact the 100ft Wetland Buffer Zone at all. That can be done and then there will then be no stormwater discharge into the resource areas, but the design will remain meeting the stormwater standards even though they will no longer be beholden to them. The shift will result in the need to raise the elevation of that level spreader which may change some of the grading, but it should be obtainable. The applicant asks that this change be an added condition on the approval of the project so that it may be passed tonight. The next part of the DEP comment addresses the fact that the wetland delineation has a “gap” as a result of the wetland curving off the property where they are not legally allowed to delineate. They created their design based on the assumption that the wetland area continues and have designed to accommodate the Wetland Buffer Zone that would result. Next for the emergency overflow, though it is not required, the basin has been designed to accommodate 100-year rainfall events. As an added safety measure the emergency overflow was included and it can be easily moved to accommodate the DEP concerns and that would not change any other major components of the plan. The applicant requests that this also be an added condition for approval at tonight’s meeting as opposed to recreating the plans to reflect this change and needing to continue the hearing.

Rachel Lindsay: By moving the level spreader over, will that affect the overall grading needed for the soccer field?

Mark Darnold: We only will be moving one end of the spreader and the calculations show that the slope of the pipe can be changed to the degree necessary without losing function or requiring a large change to the grading plan.

Rachel Lindsay: For the gap in delineation, was the abutter unwilling to allow delineation on their land?

Mark Darnold: It was not discussed at the Order of Resource Area Delineation hearing and it wasn’t the main focus of the delineation at the time. The abutter was not approached for access and the gap is about 100ft.

Agent Tragert: The abutter in question is shown as the Greenfield Redevelopment Authority, but either way, it seems that the concern is that the wetland would extend into the area of work. That, however, seems unlikely.

Rachel Loeffler: The surveyor walked the gap and did not find wetlands there and they just don’t know where the wetland buffer zone would be exactly as a result.

Rachel Lindsay: We could ask as a condition that the gap be considered buffer zone to err on the side of caution and then ask that that area be included in the calculation of impacted Wetland Buffer Zone area.



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**Response 6** – Mark Darnold: Stormwater Handbook Volume 2 Chapter 2 is what was used exactly to design the detention recharge water quality basin. It is the opinion of the engineers that DEP is mistaken in their comment because the Stormwater Handbook reference indicates otherwise. The requirement for pre-treatment does not apply here either because the only impervious area is the roof area, which (because it's not going to be made of metal) does not require pre-treatment. The basketball court and accessible parking are the only other impervious surfaces that discharge into rain gardens and do require pre-treatment. It is stated that a gravel diaphragm and over 10 ft of sod is sufficient for pre-treatment and those measures are detailed in the plan set.

Rachel Lindsay: What is the maintenance for the rain garden? It will need to be included in the conditions that it is maintained.

Mark Darnold: There is an included suggested Operations and Maintenance plan in the submitted documents which does outline that maintenance schedule and procedures.

Rachel Lindsay: The collection area for the basin cannot be larger than 15 acres.

Mark Darnold: The collection area is only 10.1 acres.

*Public Comments:*

Roy Schonbrun (25 Westwood Road) – The access road way was described in the opening presentation as reducing the carbon footprint of the project. This resident wanted clarification on how that is the case. They also asked what vehicles will likely be using the road. Rachel Loeffler explained that using a pervious road material used much less carbon to produce/install as opposed to traditional paved road. It will not actively sequester carbon, but it will reduce the overall carbon emissions resulting from the construction of the school. As for road usage, there will possibly be a small bus in the future but currently all students will be brought to school by their parents. There is no cafeteria at the school so there is unlikely to be many large trucks making deliveries.

Fred Pike (written comments submitted, read by Agent Tragert) – Mr. Pike had a question regarding the alternatives proposed which the Agent was able to provide clarification on before this meeting. Pike also sought clarification on the cut/fill quantity, overall fill quantity, and the quality/type of fill needed. Steve Horton: The project was designed to minimize the amount of required cut/fill necessary as much as possible. They have calculations available of the cut/fill amounts and can be provided on request. The fill material quality tests found that quality on site was very good for fill use.

*Special Conditions:*

Continuing the hearing and allowing time for new plans to be generated that reflect the previously discussed design changes for the Commissions consideration would be ideal and continuing the hearing would also the applicant time to respond in writing to the DEP comments and discuss with Circuit Rider Mark Stinson about the discrepancies.

The Greenfield Center School project has experienced unforeseen delays in this process already, though it was clarified that it is not the responsibility of the Commission to accommodate this. The school asked the Commission to take into consideration the impact continuing the meeting would have on the project as a whole. The applicants are trying to not miss the ideal bidding time period which would drastically affect the overall costs, and they would like to time the completion of the school so that the students can start there at the 2021 school year without having to disrupt their regular school hours. Conditional Approval by the Conservation Commission is the first step in the City permitting process and Conditional Approval tonight would allow them to remain on schedule.



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**Motion made by Rachel Lindsay to close the public hearing for the Notice of Intent for The Greenfield Center School at 741/743 Bernardston Road.**

**Motion seconded by Fletcher Harrington**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**Motion made by Erika LaForme to approve the Notice of Intent and issue an Order of Conditions for The Greenfield Center School at 741/743 Bernardston Road with special conditions.**

**Motion seconded by Travis Drury**

**The Conditions include, but are limited to:**

1. **The culvert at WFD1 shall be sized to meet the Stream Crossing Standards.**
2. **The 5ft pedestrian path is eliminated on the north side of the road at the culvert at WFD1.**
3. **The emergency overflow for the detention basin shall be moved outside of the Wetland Buffer Zone.**
4. **The level spreader that the detention basin discharges out of shall be moved outside of the Wetland Buffer Zone.**
5. **The deer fence surrounding the soccer field shall extend along the east side to wrap around the field outside of the designated 25ft No Disturbance Zone.**
6. **A pre-construction plan will be submitted to Conservation Commission that show conformance with all Conditions and that will include additional test-pit information showing high-water levels that support wetland replication if changes to mitigation plan is determined to be required as well as scaled section of mitigation area with updated micro-topography and planting plans.**
7. **A pre-construction plan showing a 1:1 ratio of trees over 12 inches to be removed to the replanting of trees shall also be submitted to the Conservation Commission.**
8. **A pre-construction snow storage plan that is in compliance with the DEP Snow Disposal Guidance as well as Greenfield City Ordinance shall be submitted to the Conservation Commission.**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**Motion made by Erika LaForme to approve for the Notice of Intent for The Greenfield Center School at 741/743 Bernardston Road with respect to the Greenfield Wetlands Ordinance Chapter 423 with the same Conditions as listed above.**

**Motion seconded by Fletcher Harrington**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**11:15 PM Enforcement Updates & Other Business**

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- Enforcement updates
  - Former Wedgewood Gardens, Kimball Drive (Map 48-24) – Unauthorized fill of Riverfront Area.
    - Enforcement order was signed by the Commission and will be delivered by the Agent to the Greenfield DPW.
- All other agenda items tabled until the next meeting due to time.

**11:20 PM Project Monitoring & Site Visit Scheduling**

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- **Tabled to next meeting.**
  - **Set Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020**
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**Meeting Adjourned at 11:30 PM**

**Motion made by Rachel Lindsay to adjourn at 11:30 PM**

**Motion seconded by Fletcher Harrington**

**No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cassie Tragert  
Conservation Agent

John Griffin,  
Chair