

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
CONSERVATION BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
MARCH 23, 2010**

The March 23, 2009 regular meeting of the Conservation Board was called to order by Chairman Gary Meixner.

Attendance: Shoshana Hantman, Dr. Edward Merker, James Moriarty,  
Gary Meixner

Absent: Gloria Rosenzweig

**Guests:** **Town Board**/Richard Clinchy

**Announcements:**

The Conservation Board has two vacant seats available for a two-year term of office.

Board member Gloria Rosenzweig emailed the C.B. Secretary to inform her that she would not be able to attend the meeting tonight.

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**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Shoshana Hantman and seconded by James Moriarty to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2010 regular meeting of the Conservation Board. All members present approved.

Board member James Moriarty amended the Conservation Board Minutes for March 9, 2010 on pages 6 and 9, and memo #10-04.

**Old Business:**

- A)** Town Property for Cell Tower/No property available/Conservation Board knowledge of this situation/Ms. Rosenzweig will look into this matter and give a report: (GR)

The Conservation Board members tabled discussion on the above subject matter concerning the use of Town property for construction of a cell tower until the next meeting.

Board member Gloria Rosenzweig will research the information available and promote some discussion among the Board members regarding possible alternatives.

A report will be forthcoming at the next Conservation Board meeting.

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**Old Business:**

- B)** Town Board/Resolution, dated January 19, 2010/Refer proposed Town Code Changes/to appoint representative in addition to Town Engineer for administrative enforcement and approval of Chapter 156/Tree Preservation; and Chapter 167/Wetlands; to Conservation Board and Planning Board for comment: (RC)

The Conservation Board is awaiting information from the Supervisor's office regarding the back-up paperwork necessary for the Board to make a comment on the Town Board resolution as requested.

C.B. Secretary Ms. Davis asked Town Board member Clinchy (a guest at the meeting tonight) if he had a chance to look into the situation regarding the backup paperwork for the Town Board resolution.

Mr. Clinchy responded that he was under the impression from conversation that Supervisor Murphy's office was going to forward to the Conservation Board the necessary backup information. He explained that the resolution was written because Guy Gagne (former Town Engineer) would not be available due to retirement and the Town would need additional staff in order to help handle the workload. To simplify the process the Code was rewritten to address this situation. Ms. Davis mentioned to me that the resolution appeared to be lacking in steep slopes said Mr. Clinchy.

Mr. Clinchy noted that Supervisor Murphy was going to have her staff forward a copy of whatever documents were needed to help clear up any misunderstanding by the Board (last week). He thought that the C.B. would have been given a copy of the backup information by this time. He reiterated that the resolution was mainly to reflect the change from Guy Gagne, Town Engineer to the use of his former assistant Steve Woelfle by promoting him with a new title that of Principle Engineering Technician, and allowing him to proceed.

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**Old Business:**

**B) Town Board/Resolution:**

Some discussion ensued regarding administrative reviews and the significance of decisions being made without the input from the Conservation Board as a Board.

Chairman Meixner noted that the Town Engineer along with the administrative review team members were responsible for the approval process, but the actual application no longer came before the Board except as an FYI report from a designated Board member who attended the administrative review team meeting.

Town Board member Clinchy asked if the recent re-write by the Town Board had somehow effected the rights of the Conservation Board to make a comment on the administrative reviews.

Ms. Davis responded that the Board did not understand the wording as it was not clear and that is why they asked for back-up information in order to make a comment to the Town Board as requested. She noted that there usually is some attached information that clarifies the change in Town Code; sometimes it is the proposed re-written code changes.

The Conservation Board is not able to comment on the resolution that is not clear said Ms. Davis. Once there is clarity in some form then the Board members would be happy to give their comments as requested by the Town Board.

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**Old Business:**

**B) Town Board/Resolution:**

Board member Dr. Edward Merker inquired as to whom makes the decision about whether or not an application is administrative.

Ms. Davis responded that usually the Town Engineer was the person who decided and that is why the Board made sure that a Conservation Board member was on the review team. Prior to this change in Code and the creation of the administrative review team the Conservation Board received all of the administrative applications for comment and they did so at their meeting.

Chairman Meixner said that the creation of the Administrative Review Team appeared to be better for the applicant because the administrative applications (which are less significant than Planning Board) seem to move along at a better pace than previously witnessed by the Board.

Mr. Clinchy advised the Board that he would contact Supervisor Murphy to request the back-up information for the Conservation Board. He asked if the information should be sent to the C.B. Secretary for disbursement.

Chairman Meixner responded yes to Mr. Clinchy. He explained that C.B. Secretary Ms. Davis would then forward the information to the Board members when it was received.

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**Old Business:**

**B) Town Board/Resolution:**

The Board members thanked Mr. Clinchy for his availability and insight and took no further action at this time.

**C) Term expiration/Conservation Board Members/Board member Charles Friedberg and Board member Dr. Frank Lapetina/2-letters/revised/sent:**  
The Conservation Board Secretary Ms. Davis informed the members that the draft letters were revised according to the Board's recommendations and subsequently mailed to Mr. Friedberg and Dr. Lapetina.

Mr. Charles Friedberg was sent the following letter from the Conservation Board members.

\*

The Conservation Board for the Town of Somers would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the years that you have volunteered on the Board. Your input was greatly appreciated and we will never forget you.

The Board members are also grateful for the use of your iPhone at the meetings and your outstanding attendance record. Thank you for the time that you have generously donated to the Town.

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**Old Business:**

**C) Term expiration/C.B.:**

Good luck to you in your future endeavors. It has been a pleasure working with you.

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Dr. Frank Lapetina was sent the following letter from the Conservation Board members.

\*

The Conservation Board for the Town of Somers would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the many years that you have volunteered on the Board. Your valuable wisdom and expertise were greatly appreciated and we will never forget you.

The Board members are also grateful for your participation and attendance at the Administrative Review Team meetings. Thank you for the time that you have generously donated to the Town.

Good luck to you in your future endeavors. It has been a pleasure working with you.

\*\*

The Board members took no further action at this time.

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**Old Business:**

**D) Town Board appointments (2) to the Conservation Board for a two-year term:**

C.B. Secretary Ms. Davis announced that according to her recent discussions with the Supervisor's office, the Town Board has not been able to obtain two new Board members to date.

Board member Dr. Edward Merker inquired about advertising.

Ms. Davis responded that Supervisor Murphy informed her that they started advertising about one month ago.

Board member James Moriarty commented that the need for two Board members did not show up on the cable TV channel as an advertisement recently.

The Board members suggested that Ms. Davis should email the Supervisor's office and have them place the notice regarding the need for two Conservation Board members on the cable channel for Somers, along with the associated details of the post.

The Board members took no further action at this time.

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**New Business:**

- A)** Guest: Town Board Member Richard Clinchy:  
Town Board member Richard Clinchy joined the Conservation Board meeting after his attendance at another meeting at the Town House. He had asked to be placed on the agenda as a guest in order to introduce himself as the liaison to the Conservation Board from the Town Board and to respond to recent inquiries regarding the Town Board resolution for comment from the Conservation Board.

Mr. Clinchy inquired about the number of vacancies on the Board and asked if there were two.

Chairman Meixner responded that there were two, but it would soon be three vacancies.

Board member Dr. Merker asked about the process and was wondering if there had been any candidates applying for the vacancies on the Conservation Board.

Mr. Clinchy responded that there was an applicant for the Ethics Board, but not for the Conservation Board. He shared with the Board that he had asked the applicant if he would consider another Board, such as the C.B. The candidate who was interviewing responded that he would take it under advisement but his time constraints would be a huge factor.

Discussion ensued among the Board members with reference to any possible candidates to take the seat(s) of the two members whose term ended in March.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

Chairman Meixner took this opportunity to discuss the Somerstown Shopping Centre cell tower violations with Town Board member Clinchy. He also mentioned that the application demonstrated proposed trees and a fence around the circumference of the cell tower.

Ms. Davis explained that Chairman Meixner performed an impromptu site inspection first and then Board member Moriarty read the email forwarded to the C.B. and made the time to visit the site as well.

The comments provided by the Board would be sent via email (in a memo) to the appropriate parties (Building Inspector/Principle Engineering Technician). Ms. Davis mentioned that when Gary first phoned her she emailed the Engineering department to give them a heads-up on what was going on with the cell tower site. She said that she was aware that the particulars would be available after some discussion on the matter and the meeting tonight.

Town Board member Clinchy inquired about the Conservation Boards agenda and the new business applications and was wondering if there was anything that he could do to help the C.B. members.

Chairman Meixner said that the applications were handed out tonight and he is reviewing Sussmann. The applicants have to provide yet another traffic study for the Planning Board. He mentioned that they will have to wait for the Town traffic expert and the applicant would have to take care of payment.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

Mr. Clinchy brought up a new project called Alexan Woods, which is proposed for construction and located south on Rte. 100 before the State Police Barracks. The applicants are proposing to build 120 +- units of which 12 to 14 would be affordable housing. They would like to put in a grocery store that could encompass 40,000 sq.ft. However that seemed too large perhaps somewhere in the vicinity of 15,000 sq.ft. would be more feasible. They also have to do a traffic study also as part of the SEQRA process. The applicants are planning to build rental units as they are looking to rent the residential part of the proposed development he said.

Chairman Meixner inquired about there being senior housing.

Mr. Clinchy responded that there would be some affordable housing units, approximately 15 total.

Chairman Meixner mentioned that there does not seem to be any assisted living in the area and it would be beneficial if they would propose that feature in their development.

Chairman Meixner went on to discuss Baldwin Place and mentioned that the parking facilities are not adequate for the number of proposed units that would be located there. He conjectured that the applicants could put additional parking on site as they have the room.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

Mr. Clinchy agreed with the concept and noted that there is room for additional parking on site. However, he said that the approvals have been given for the proposal located at Baldwin Place adjacent to Stop N' Shop.

Board member Moriarty volunteered his expertise and said that there is a formula that is used in the industry that is 1.2 spaces per bedroom in the facility.

Mr. Clinchy said that he would have to look into the situation. He noted that the proposed affordable housing is part of a larger project, but this area is going to be constructed first.

Chairman Meixner mentioned that the bus service in Somers should be more adequate for the needs of the people that the town is trying to attract. At present we need better service in certain areas of town he said.

Mr. Clinchy informed the Board that anything approved since December could be used as part of the numbers needed by the County. He noted that the recreation fees would be cut in half because of the need (and encouragement) for senior affordable housing. Somewhere around \$80,000.00 qualifies for affordable housing, as it is a percentage of the median household income, which in this area is approximately \$120,000.00.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

Town Board member Clinchy said that the project at Baldwin Place would count as affordable as well as the proposed units at North End. He mentioned that Mr. Zappi is considering constructing some units in Windsor Farms, but it is just a concept at the moment as we are trying to get to the 200 number. He said that under the new mandate there has to be diversity so the units could not be offered solely to firefighters and policemen, etc.

Mr. Clinchy explained that Westchester County received money from HUD to provide affordable housing on a Federal program. As part of the deal they had to provide for racial diversity along with income diversity. The judge ruled that no positive action was taken to encourage people to take advantage of the affordable housing.

Somers is obligated to provide units because of the Anglefly Preserve said Mr. Clinchy. We have a strong position with the County, as Somers could be an asset in the near future. This feature could also be used as a bargaining position as the County needs our help.

Board member Dr. Merker inquired about the Anglefly Preserve and was wondering if the town was going to destroy the existing buildings on site as there is a lot of infrastructure. He was wondering if the town could use any of the buildings.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

Originally it was decided that the units would come down especially if there is a community center constructed on the parcel said Mr. Clinchy. The town may use the buildings if it comes to pass that there is no community center constructed.

Some discussion took place with regards to the construction of a new town house instead of using the Elephant Hotel, but Mr. Clinchy remarked that it would not be in the immediate future with the way the taxes are being affected.

Chairman Meixner brought up the construction of additional ballfields (in Somers) which was also discussed at the meeting, as he is aware that there is a need for more ballfields.

Also, the Board members discussed the proposed Trailway around the J.F.K. Campus, which appears to be in limbo at the moment. The Board mentioned the monies that were appropriated by the County for Somers and the fact that they could be withdrawn in the near future if we do not act and take the initiative on providing a Trailway in that area of town.

Mr. Clinchy mentioned that he thought that the possibility of that happening was good and that to his knowledge it was not a dead issue yet.

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**New Business:**

**A) Town Board/Clinchy:**

After much discussion the Conservation Board members thanked Mr. Clinchy for attending the meeting and providing his valuable input to the Board members.

**B) Report/Emails/Site Inspections/Somerstown Shopping Centre/Cell Tower location (in rear of parking lot): (GM/JM)**

Ms. Davis explained to the Board members that she received a phone call and email from Chairman Meixner originally after he conducted an impromptu site inspection at the location of the cell tower being constructed in Somerstown Shopping Centre. She copied the Board members on the email and subsequently Board member Moriarty also managed to find the time to conduct a brief site inspection.

Board member Moriarty forwarded an email to Ms. Davis stating some of the violations and associated concerns with the property that he saw during his site inspection including both NYCDEP and Federal OSHA regulations.

Both Chairman Meixner and Board member Moriarty together found many obvious problems associated with the parcel/cell tower location.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

Board member James Moriarty gave his report with some comments from Chairman Gary Meixner.

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Report:

- Mr. Moriarty explained that the property exhibits 300-ft. of silt fencing, none of which has been installed or maintained correctly.
- He advised that the silt and mud has washed into the parking area, the storm drains and into the woods.
- There were piles of rocks and dirt everywhere he said, especially pouring out from under the silt fenced area. He noted that it appeared that the silt fence was installed when the ground was frozen and now it seems ineffective.
- Mr. Moriarty informed the Board that there were numerous safety violations including the spikes used for the silt fencing which were exposed causing a possible impalement hazard. He observed that the spikes were located underneath the hay that was on the ground. He pointed out to the Board that this was a dangerous situation and should be corrected as soon as possible before someone is seriously injured.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

- Chairman Meixner advised that the spikes should be capped (orange caps) by the applicant.
- Board member Moriarty also noted that there was a generator in operation. However, he mentioned that according to the paperwork submitted there was not supposed to be any refueling equipment on site. Someone was operating the generator, as there was the associated noise and smoke, but apparently no one was available on site.
- Mr. Moriarty explained that there was garbage and piles of rocks and dirt everywhere.
- Chairman Meixner added that there were exposed electric lines on the property, which are very dangerous.
- Mr. Moriarty informed the Board that there appears to be no significant construction at the present time. Some official should be visiting the site checking for violations (DEP/Federal safety-OSHA) and things of that nature he said. He mentioned that the site looks like it has been in this condition for a while.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

Board member Hantman inquired about inspections and was wondering who would impose the proposed fine.

Chairman Meixner responded that the Engineering Department and the Building Inspector would be the key people. He went on to say that ultimately the proposal calls for trees around the structure as well as a fence.

Ms. Hantman was wondering if this type of problem would effect future cell tower applications.

Mr. Moriarty responded that the Building Department and Engineering Department would have to handle these problems so they would not occur again.

Chairman Meixner specified that there was an antenna on the cell tower that points (at a right angle towards the school) and he was under the impression that all equipment was to be installed inside the pole structure.

Discussion ensued among the Board members with reference to their concerns regarding site violations, etc. Ms. Davis informed the Board that she emailed the Engineering department when Chairman Meixner contacted her, but she was not aware of the subsequent follow-up procedure at present.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

Chairman Meixner asked Ms. Davis to email the appropriate parties and give them the information provided by the Board tonight. He wanted them to get back to the Board with the results of what is being done on site. He mentioned that it would be a good idea to include the question regarding the antenna that points at a right angle along with the correspondence.

\*

A memo (#10-07) via email will be sent to the Building Inspector and the Principle Engineering Technician stating that several members of the Conservation Board performed an impromptu site inspection to the above cell tower site located at Somerstown Shopping Centre this past week.

The C.B. discussed the above site at their meeting last night and wanted to advise your office of the following notable concerns/violations on site.

The C.B. has the following concerns and recommendations:

- 1) The 300-ft. silt fence was not installed properly nor maintained.
  - There are DEP violations with shredded silt fencing.
  - There is ground debris (mud) that has been washed into the parking lot area and the woods.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

- 2) There are federal safety violations on site (OSHA) including steel and wood spikes exposed in the ground allowing possible impalement.
  - These should be removed or capped.
  - There is hay over the hazardous areas blocking the places where spikes are exposed.
  
- 3) There is a town violation as a portable generator is running on site (with no supervision).
  - There is also associated noise and smoke in the immediate area.
  - We believe that it is unlawful to refuel equipment in this area.
  - The Board does not recall seeing any paperwork showing use of a portable generator to power the structure. Did the applicant submit the paperwork?
  
- 4) The fuel in the generator needs to be accounted for especially in terms of safety and volatility issues; along with any other material on site until completion of sign-off.

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

- 5) We believe that it is a federal requirement to have MSDS sheets posted on any construction site (i.e. at the cell tower).
  - There is no notice posted.
  - There are no permits, no contacts, no MSDS forms or DEP forms as required by law.
  
- 6) There appears to be an electric line exposed on site.
  
- 7) The site exhibits garbage and piles of rocks and dirt everywhere.
  
- 8) Question regarding antenna:
  - An antenna points at a right angle (towards the school).
  - The Board was of the opinion that all equipment was supposed to be located inside the structure.
  - What is the ruling on this?

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**New Business:**

**B) Report/Cell Tower:**

The Conservation Board members are concerned about safety on the cell tower site and would appreciate any action taken on this matter as soon as possible. The Board would also appreciate an update via email (to secretary) to advise them as to when this situation will be corrected.

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The Board members took no further action at this time.

- C) Planning Board Site Walk/March 20, 2010/meet at Town House 9AM:  
Kauffman/Wetland Activity Permit (TM-17.12-2-2.11) Application of  
Rodd Kaufman for Wetland & Stormwater Management & Erosion-  
Sediment Control Permit for property located at #13 Rte. 116 for a  
proposed in-ground swimming pool and drainage in the wetland buffer  
area;**  
**Iervolino/Steep Slope Alteration Permit (TM-27.17-1-21) Application of  
Chris Iervolino for a steep slope permit for property located at #9 Farese  
Way for the construction of an in-ground swimming pool and retaining  
wall within the 35% steep slope category:**  
The Conservation Board members were not able to attend the above  
Planning Board site walks for Kauffman wetland activity permit and  
Iervolino steep slope alteration permit.

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**New Business:**

**C) Planning Board/Site Walk:**

The Conservation Board concerns and recommendations were forwarded to the Planning Board previously upon completion of the Conservation Board site inspections and reports generated by the Board members involved.

The Conservation Board members took no further action at this time.

**D) Merritt Park Estates Subdivision/TM-5.20-1-1/Application of Mancini Building Corporation for final subdivision approval, wetland, steep slope and tree preservation permits for a 15-lot subdivision (discussed last at Planning Board meeting 9-21-05); Survey/Donnelly Land Surveying, PC; TS-1 Title Sheet; C-101 Subdivision Plan; C-102 Grading & Utility; C-301 Road Profiles; C-302 Utility Profiles; C-501 Water Details; C-502 Drainage & Sanitary Sewer Details; C-503 Details; C-504 Notes; S-500 Existing Conditions; S-501.1 Erosion-Sediment Control Plan-Phase 1; S-501.2 Erosion-Sediment Control Plan-Phase 2; S-501.3 Erosion-Sediment Control Plan-Details; S-502 Soils Map; S-503 Constraints Map; S-504 Existing Conditions Drainage Map; S-505 Future Conditions Drainage Map; S-506 Stormwater Basins Planting Plan, (*Easterly side of Lovell Street & Addison Way*): (EM/GM)**

The Conservation Board members will review the above Planning Board application for Merritt Park Estates Subdivision final subdivision approval, wetland, steep slopes and tree preservation permits at their next meeting.

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**New Business:**

**D) Merritt Park Estates:**

Board member Dr. Edward Merker and Chairman Gary Meixner will review the materials submitted, perform a site inspection of the property and give a report to the Board.

A report will be forthcoming at the next Conservation Board meeting.

**E) Homeland Towers/Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC/Somers-Woods Bridge; Second Additional Radio Frequency Information Report dated March 5, 2010; Visual Resource Evaluation & Viewshed Analysis (Installation/14-ft. Tower), Prepared by B&E Associates, LLP; Full EAF; File Review Record/Federal-State Historic Places/Somers-Woods Bridge dated May 26, 2009, Prepared by Abbie Hurlbut; Information to NYCDEP Cynthia Garcia for SEQRA from Colin Diehl, Tectonic Engineering Consultants dated March 5, 2010; T1-Title Sheet; Z1 Plot Plan/Adjoiners/Notes; Z1A-Site Plan; Z2-Setback Map & Bulk Requirements Table; Z3-Site Detail Plan; Z4-Elevations; Z5-Elevations; Z6-Equipment Details-Notes; Z7-AT&T Equipment Details; Z8-Erosion Control-Stormwater Management; Z8A-Erosion Control-Stormwater Management-Details-Notes; CC1-Color Constraint Map-Soil Types; CC2-Color Constraint Map Wetlands-Steep Slopes; Prepared by Snyder & Snyder, LLP, (#121 Rte. 100/Amato): (JM/SH)**

The Conservation Board members will review the above Planning Board application for Homeland Towers/Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC; Somers-Woods Bridge erosion control, stormwater management, viewshed analysis and visual resource evaluation at their next meeting.

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**New Business:**

**E)** Homeland Towers:

Board member James Moriarty will review the materials submitted, perform a site inspection of the property and give a report to the Board.

A report will be forthcoming at the next Conservation Board meeting.

**F)** Sussmann Mobil Station/Site Plan dated March 12, 2010, John Collins Engineering response letter dated 2-25-10/Long EAF form/CP-IT Stacking Plan for Typical Conditions, 2-9-10/CP-1TP Stacking Plan for Typical Peak Conditions/CP-2R Stacking Plan with Fuel Delivery/CP-2C Stacking Plan with Fuel Delivery Site Plan Scheme C, 2-25-10; Prepared by Bibbo Associates, LLP, (Rte. 100 across from IBM): (GM)

The Conservation Board members will review the above Planning Board application for Sussmann Mobil Station site plan, engineering response and stacking plans at their next meeting.

Chairman Gary Meixner will review the materials submitted, perform a site inspection of the property and give a report to the Board.

A report will be forthcoming at the next Conservation Board meeting.

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**New Business:**

- G)** North End at Somers/Environmental Assessment Form/Supplements dated February 2010, Site Plan Application dated March 9, 2010; Environmental Constraints Plan-Pg2; Grading Utility-Layout Plan-Pg3; Sediment-Erosion Control Plan-Pg4; Details-Pg5,6,7,8; Watershed Pre-Developed-Pg9; Watershed Post Developed-Pg10; Site Plan-Parking Plan-Pg11; Landscape Plan-Pg12; Landscape Plan, List, Details, Notes-Pg13; Floor Plan & Elevation-Pg14; Proposed Wetland Mitigation Plan-Pg15; Proposed Planting Mitigation Plan, Notes-Details-Pg16; Prepared by Hudson Engineering & Consulting, PC, (Rte. 6/Rt side/down from Mahopac Avenue): (EM)

The Conservation Board members will review the above Planning Board application for North End at Somers, EAF, Supplements, site plan at their next meeting.

Board member Dr. Edward Merker will review the materials submitted, perform a site inspection of the property and give a report to the Board.

A report will be forthcoming at the next Conservation Board meeting.

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There being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made at 9:15 PM by Board member Dr. Edward Merker and seconded by Board member Shoshana Hantman. All members present approved.

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The next regular meeting of the Conservation Board will be held at the Town House on April 27, 2010 at 7:30 PM.

Subsequent Conservation Board meetings are tentatively scheduled to be held at the Town House on May 11, 2010 and May 25, 2010 respectively.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosetta Davis  
Secretary  
Conservation Board

Cc: Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Town Engineer  
Town Planner  
Planning Board  
Zoning Board  
Open Space Committee  
Architectural Review Board  
Landmark Committee