

Minutes
Natural Features Protection Review Board
December 10th, 2024
Regular Meeting

Held at City Hall, Commission Chambers

4:02 p.m.

A. **Call to Order:** Director Martin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

B. **Members absent:** Hollander, Bassett

C. **Motion to excuse absences**

Motion to excuse absences made by Director Fuller, supported by Director Lettow, motion passed unanimously.

D. **Adoption of Agenda**

Motion to adopt the agenda made by Director Lettow, supported by Director Fuller, motion passed unanimously.

E. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 26th, NFP Review Board Meeting made by **Director Martin**, supported by **Director Fuller**, passed unanimously, with the following amendments:

- fix misspelled Director Fredrickson's name and
- change "non-evasive" to "non-invasive" in the minutes

F. **General Citizen Comments**

There were no general citizen comments, either in person or by phone.

G. **Board Comments**

Director Fuller - 3-terms are ending this year and the board will be taking applications to fill these positions. Will need specific knowledge in the areas of Water resources, Wildlife habitat and Plant restoration. With a lot of boards taking applications there will be some combining of forces a little bit for Marketing for the multiple opportunities. Hold Annual meeting to look at applications.

New Business

1. Approval of a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP Slope Standard for the addition of an upgraded pump house at 1609 Whites Road.

Nolan provided an overview of the project and then the applicant was invited to present on the request.

- Primary Country Club golf course, in February they were looking for upgraded pump house to provide more capacity for their expansion further to the southwest along the lake. The previous variance was similar focusing on some of the protected slope area and some protected trees. The site has changed, the previous site was not the most suitable due to the complexities in that area, costly and the sanitary line runs near there.
- They refocused on where the existing pump house is currently and is located within some sloped areas that are protected, with no trees and within 500 feet of the lake. Will not have to bore a line and switch to 5 centrifugal 75 horsepower pumps versus a vertical turbine pump.
- Use existing concrete building that is 15x15 feet to house the new transformer for power and build a similar concrete building next to it that will be covered over by a roof and earth as well, you will only see the face of the structure with a garage door. They will run 2 smaller lines out into the water which will be only 20 feet because of the depth of the water.
- The golf course sits on 2.53 acres of the existing naturalized area, which is 110,420 sq ft. The new naturalized area will be 31.1 Acres which is 1,335,500 sq ft of tall fescue native naturalized prairie species and will eliminate 257,004 sq ft of impermeable surface: tennis courts, etc. Slope will be improved.
- Sending in pre-application permit application in to get State approval as well.
- Erosion Control plan during construction in front of the pump station it is flat, they will be excavating a hill out and it's about 30x40 ft footprint. With the new design, we won't have the interface with hand digging and see no long-term erosion.

Questions?

Director Fuller: What is the distance between the new pump house to Whites Lake? 25 feet is the setback requirement for a water resource.

Mr. John Fulling: Approximately 75 to 100 feet and everything is flat.

be expanded but there will be no conflicts with trees or critical root zones.

Director Lettow: At the February NFP Board meeting there was a discussion about the permitting required from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), has any aspects of that changed like the water withdraw or capacity?

Mr. John Fulling: No, the only changes are the location of the new pump house which will help so we don't have to run two pump houses (older and newer) at the same time. We can just utilize the new pump house.

Director Lettow: Clarified that the what the board is worried about is the capacity of the slope to erode or not, especially near a water body. Due to that, Director Lettow asked Mr. Fulling to discuss the footprint of the pump house structure.

Mr. John Fulling: Indicated that there will be some earth moving to accommodate the new footprint of the pump house structure but that in front of the structure near the lake is flat and there are plans to add plantings in the sloped areas. This new location will also not require digging a wet well and directional boring. New pipes will only be about 4-5ft underground.

Director Lettow: Asked Nolan if Soil Erosion Control is something handled internally by the City.

Nolan: Confirmed that, yes, the City of Kalamazoo has a staff member in the Building Trades team that works on compliance and Soil Erosion Soil Control permitting.

Director Fuller: The area of variance was approved in February, is it relatively similar for the slope disturbance?

Mr. John Fulling: This new proposal is far less. The existing pump house footprint will those NFP layers. Water Management or impervious surface or native vegetation in a sustainability perspective.

Board questions focused on other aspects of the site which are not pertinent to the variance request case. Nolan clarified that the case before the board is solely focused on the pump house variance request. Any further work will come back to the board through the Site Plan Review Process OR if a variance beyond the scope of the pump house are pursued by the applicant, they would need to come back before the NFP Board.

Motion to approve the recommendation to the zoning board of appeals to grant relief from the NFP slope standard for the addition of an upgraded pump house at 1609 Whites Rd. Made by Director Murgia, supported by Director Martin, motion passed unanimously via a roll call vote.

Staff Reports and Update

Staff Updates: 2025 Work Session Topics

Nolan: Director Hollander brought up a point that led to some discussion about 2025 as we reviewed our meeting schedule and thought about special topics that the board is interested in pursuing as part of an umbrella of NFP phase 3. Could be ordinance-related or special topics, invasive species, storm water, etc. A draft of topics to talk about for possibly years to come.

- **Director Lettow:** NFP as a regulatory zoning tool and what it would look like to incentivize

some of the cases. Put together a packet or set of guidelines for the owners of the parcels in

- **Nolan:** In January you will see the first draft of the guide and we can add more to it. NFP has had a lot of successful projects where you have a classic developer come in and NFP can help with a shift of focus.
- **Director Lettow:** We reframe the tree replacement ratio where basically found if you're going in for inch-for-inch tree replacement and moving a large tree on a small lot and it's a variance that the board feels appropriate and given the difficulty of the situation there's not a way that you're going to be able to replant that many trees in that space. If you do, they're going to be tiny little ornamental trees that will not offer a ton of value from a natural features standpoint. Is there any kind of tree bank or if the City or others have sites that could be recipients for trees?
- **Director Fredrickson:** Stormwater and how it relates to the existing ecosystem in these overlay districts and relying on trying to maintain water movement in the site. They tend to either pond or bury our water and get it off-site as quickly as possible. We should evaluate how we can integrate that into our Natural Features Protection.
- **Nolan:** Can ask City staff who are primary storm water Engineers or reviewers to see if they want to join the board for that work session.

Public Comments:

None

Unfinished Business

None

Communications and Announcements

None

Adjourn Meeting

Director Martin adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

