



Agenda  
Natural Features Protection Review Board  
August 25, 2020  
Regular Meeting

Held virtually, pursuant to Executive Order No. 2020-75

4:00 p.m.

---

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call and Excuse Absent Members
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 28, 2020
- E. New Business
  - 1. Approval of a recommendation to reappointment two directors of the board for new 3-year terms (Director Cole-Wick, Director Sylvester).
- F. Old Business
  - 1. Review and discussion of proposed amendments to NFP standards.
- G. Board Comments
- H. Staff Updates
- I. Citizen Comments
- L. Adjourn Meeting



Meeting Minutes  
Natural Features Protection Review Board  
July 28, 2020  
Regular Meeting

Held virtually, pursuant to Executive Order No. 2020-75

---

A. Ashley Cole-Wick, vice chair called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM

B. Roll Call

Directors Present:  
Ashley Cole-Wick  
Mitch Lettow  
Paul MacNellis  
Kyle Martin  
Alan Sylvester

Directors Absent:  
Erin Fuller  
Bobby Glasser

Staff Present:  
Jamie McCarthy  
Nolan Bergstrom

Alan Sylvester made a motion to excuse absent members. Motion was supported by Paul MacNellis. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. Adoption of Agenda

Paul MacNellis made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion was supported by Kyle Martin. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

D. Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 23, 2020

Mitch Lettow made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 23, 2020 meeting. Motion was supported by Paul MacNellis. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

E. New Business

1. The NFP Review Board held a public hearing for a variance request for relief from the NFP slope protection standard at 3401 Nazareth Road. Jamie McCarthy presented the staff report for the variance request. The report recommends that the NFP Review Board approve a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals



(ZBA) granting a dimensional variance request by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (SWMLC) for the property at 3401 Nazareth Road. The applicant requested a variance from the slope protection standards in Chapter 50-6.2(H).

Jamie said staff reviewed the case and the constraints at the site and evaluated the conditions for granting relief, as described in Chapter 50-6.2(L). Staff determined the request meets the conditions by seeking the minimum relief required for reasonable use, not causing substantial detriment to the public good or substantially altering the intent of NPF ordinance, and the relief is balanced by preservation and management objectives at the site.

Next Mitch Lettow, acting as Stewardship Director for the SWMLC and representing the applicant, provided a description of the project site. Also known as the Bow in the Clouds Preserve, the site is 57 acres donated by Sisters of St. Joseph (SSJ). The existing boardwalk was installed in the 1990s by a boy scout troop. The SWMLC now owns and manages the preserve for ecological health and public access.

SWMLC has prioritized this preserve for better public access since it is the closest property they own within the largest urban center in their seven county service area. SWMLC has been working collaboratively with nonprofits and local organizations including Disability Network, Borgess Hospital, groups from the Eastside Neighborhood, students, and community conservation groups on the project. In spring 2019, Phase 1 was finished which increased parking and provided handicapped parking spaces. They are now starting Phase 2 to expand trailways, with the goal of 5% grade or less to accommodate those of different mobility levels.

Mitch explained how City of Kalamazoo sanitary sewer infrastructure runs through preserve. In 2011 there was vandalism on the site whereby an obstruction was created in the sanitary sewer and an overflow occurred. The proposed trailway expansion is located to provide access to the manholes that will need maintenance over time. Therefore, avoiding protected slopes is not feasible. Mitch presented the site plan map to show the exact location of natural features, including protected slopes and setbacks, and where the planned trailway expansion intersects the protected slopes.

Jamie McCarthy asked Mitch to clarify which areas on the map with protected slope and setback would be impacted by the trail. Mitch explained the beige shading showed slope setbacks.

Public comments:

Sister Virginia Jones of the SSJ provided public comment. She has been involved with the preserve since it was dedicated by SSJ in 1974. She is very supportive of the proposed work the SWMLC is doing at the preserve, especially the priority to make trails accessible for people with limited mobility.



2. Paul MacNellis made a motion to approve a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP slope protection standard for a portion of trail planned at 3401 Nazareth Road. The motion was supported by Kyle Martin. There was no additional board discussion. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

F. Old Business

Jamie talked about the modified public comment window for the Phase 2 NFP map. The window is being pushed back due to some unforeseen technical difficulties with the website vendor. The delay will create more opportunities for public feedback and allow staff to give presentations to more neighborhood and community groups. The draft map, public comments, and recommended ordinance text amendments will be brought before the board in September instead of August.

Nolan Bergstrom and Jamie talked about how the Phase 2 map had been modified since the June NFP meeting due to board member feedback. Nolan will forward the latest draft to the board ahead of public release. The board discussed the benefits and challenges of including industrial and manufacturing land uses in the overlay district. Ashley and Mitch noted that the NFP standards could still provide ecological benefits when applied to land used for heavy manufacturing.

G. Board Comments

Paul MacNellis shared with the board that the Stewards of Kleinstuck have a purchase agreement for the parcels immediately adjacent to the east of the preserve. He noted that this could change the preserve boundaries and drive the need for NFP protection on other adjacent properties. Alan Sylvester asked about the projected closing date. Paul said the plan is to close on the property sale on September 1.

H. Citizen Comments (none)

L. Meeting adjourned at 5:07 PM

---

Jamie McCarthy, Recording Secretary

---

Print Name, Title

---

Signature