

Minutes
Essex County Wetlands Board
109 Cross St., Tappahannock, VA,
Meeting of May 26, 2022
6:00 PM

A meeting of the Essex County Wetlands Board was held on May 26, 2022, in the School Board Meeting Room at 109 Cross St., Tappahannock, Virginia, with the following present:

Present:

Jeff Howeth – Chairman

Wayne A. Davis, Jr.

Nathan Parker IV.

F. L. Garrett IV.

Absent:

Kevin Goff

Also present:

Jay Woodward, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

Rob Hodges, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Kelly McKnight, Planning and Zoning Office Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Howeth called the meeting of the Essex County Wetlands Board to order.

ROLL CALL

Ms. McKnight called the roll. A quorum was met.

AGENDA

Chairman Howeth announced two Public Hearings on the Agenda, one for Ronald Geiger VMRC #22-0750 and one for St. Margaret's school VMRC #22-0760.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Howeth asked for a motion to approve the April 28, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Davis so moved and Mr. Garrett seconded it. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 ABSENT: 1

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Howeth opened the public comments session and as no one came forward closed the public comments session.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

VMRC #22-0750

Chairman Howeth opened the Public Hearing for VMRC Application #22-0750 for Ronald Geiger, Tax Map 26C-1-A, lot 26, 513 E. Gwynnfield Rd. on the Rappahannock river in Essex County, Virginia.

Proposed Work and Purpose

To construct a 107' long by 3' high vinyl bulkhead in the same footprint as the existing bulkhead.

Discussion

Mr. Geiger came before the Board and gave a brief description of the work requested. He has an existing bulkhead in front of his Gwynnfield home. He estimated that the bulkhead was built around 40 years ago and has deteriorated. He wants to replace it with a vinyl bulkhead in the same footprint but matching the height of his neighbors' bulkheads which are one foot higher than his existing one. He would like to angle it into the river but was told that it is considered an encroachment into the wetlands. Brian McDermott, the contractor for Mr. Geiger indicated that he would be able to design the bulkhead at an angle if the Board would approve that.

Chairman Howeth explained that the work does not require a permit from VMRC, however, the small corner in question is technically a wetlands and there is a "no net loss" policy in the State of Virginia. A 90-degree angle isn't the best scenario but the State would need compensation if the applicant decides to go that route.

As no one came forward to speak at the Public Hearing, Chairman Howeth brought it back to the Board for discussion. Mr. Woodward of the VMRC explained that when it is a bulkhead there is a total loss of habitat. If you could cut into the yard that would be in site in kind. There must be a valid reason for the fill. It could, however, be filled with rock.

Chairman Howeth indicated that the 214 square foot non vegetative bulkhead referenced in the application needs to be zero, otherwise, there will need to be monetary compensation consisting of \$15 per square foot. He recommended putting rip rap in the notch but will not make it mandatory.

Mr. Davis made a motion to approve VMRC application #22-0750 with the change from 214 to zero and Mr. Parker seconded the motion. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 ABSENT: 1

VMRC #22-0760

Chairman Howeth opened the Public Hearing for VMRC Application #22-0760 for St. Margaret's School, Tax Map 32B-1-57, 444 S. Water Lane, on the Rappahannock river in Tappahannock, Virginia.

Proposed Work and Purpose

Construct a new dock installed with a 6' by 70' walkway, a 12' by 15' ramp, a covered 20' by 20' open sided platform, a 6' by 24' floating dock, a 3' by 10' gangway, a 6' x 16' dropdown platform, and a boat lift.

Discussion

Ms. Kupper Dickenson gave a brief description of the work. She said it will be a classroom with a solar panel and wind turbine. The pier will go over the existing rip rap so that will not be disturbed.

Chairman Howeth stated that the plan does need a VMRC permit and because it is considered a commercial project, it does need to come before the Wetlands Board for approval. He opened the floor for any public comments and as there were none brought the floor back to the Board.

Mr. Garrett made a motion to approve VMRC Application #22-0760 as presented and Mr. Parker seconded the motion. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 ABSENT: 1

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

Having no further business, Chairman Howeth entertained a motion to adjourn and Mr. Parker so moved. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 ABSENT: 1