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## Support for pond at NORCO Club

| *May 31, 2007*

BY PHYLLIS BOOTH [PBOOTH@HOLDENLANDMARK.COM](mailto:PBOOTH@HOLDENLANDMARK.COM)

More than 20 people, members and friends of the NORCO Club, showed up at the conservation commission's May 22 meeting to support the club's proposal

to construct a 75,000-squarefoot pond on the club's property on Houghton Road.

Arthur Allen from EcoTech, Inc., representing NORCO, filed a notice of intent for the pond because construction would be partially in the 100-foot buffer zone. The pond would be lined with an impervious Betonite liner and will be supplied with water by a bedrock well, said Allen.

The NORCO Club was formed in 1937 by a group of sportsmen who worked at Norton Company. In 1947 members of the club purchased three parcels totaling 305 acres at the end of Bullard Road extending to Route 31.

In 1994, club members explored the possibility of selling the building rights of a portion of the land to the then Metropolitan District Commission, now the Department of Conservation and Recreation. In 1997, NORCO entered into an agreement with DCR to put a conservation restriction on 265 acres of the club property. On the other 40 acres are the buildings, trap/rifle and archery ranges and recreation areas. In 1998 another 47 acres, landlocked between NORCO and Mosher, were purchased for open space.

Pheasant is stocked on the property in conjunction with the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

The club also stocks the Wachusett Brook, which runs through the property.

The man-made pond is being proposed as a "natural environment" pond that will eventually support a youth program for fishing, sporting activities and provide a water source for fire protection. the pond would be for members and guests.

In 2000 NORCO submitted a notice of intent to construct an agricultural pond and fire pond of approximately 61,000 square feet. The location of the recently proposed pond has shifted away from the original site, and away from the resources of Wachusett Brook.

“All work is outside the 200-foot riverfront area and we’ve met with DCR representative Nancy McGrath and received positive feedback,” said Allen.

Soils from pond excavation would be used to flatten out the trap range, said Allen. The trap range is now a sloped area and difficult to manage in terms of lead reclamation, he added. An area that was cleared and grubbed as part of the original pond plan will be restored.

Club representative Kevin McManus said the pond would have two dry hydrants in locations approved by the Princeton Fire Department. Work on the pond will be done during the dry season but McManus said he’d like to start installing erosion control measures. “We’d like to cut trees on the north side of the proposed pond as soon as possible to start getting the area dried out,” he said.

McManus said that very large construction equipment would be used. It will take about 10 days to put in the pond, and an engineer would be on site at all times during the construction, he said.

“The positive thing about the pond is it will be a water source in case of a fire,” said neighbor and club member Stanley Keyes. “Now, hoses would have to be laid all the way to Snow Pond and by then the house would burn down.”

Commissioners asked for a revised plan with additional details and will discuss the project at their June 19 meeting.

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