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Southampton planners eye new car wash proposal

By CATHERINE BAUM
Staff Writer

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Wednesday, August 5, 2009

SOUTHAMPTON - The Planning Board tonight will consider the drainage plans of a proposed College Highway car wash, which is set to use Easthampton's sewer system.

The board meets at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room.

Paul E. Trueheart, of 27 College Highway, proposes a 1,200-square-foot four-bay car wash, office utility area and paved driveway on about 1.3 acres. The site is located at 23 College Highway, between Exotic Fish & Pet World and Harley-Davidson of Southampton. Trueheart owns the pet store and Trueheart Paving & Constructing, located at 25 College Highway.

Trueheart is interested in breaking ground for the car wash before fall, according to town officials.

"It's a good project for the town," said Mark Reed of Heritage Surveys, the project's surveyor. "It's a need for the area that currently doesn't exist. He would like to provide that service to the people of Easthampton and Southampton."

The car wash aims to be equipped with a series of water tanks that purify and recycle the water, said Charles McDonald, chairman of the Conservation Commission. Excess drainage would be directed to a 1,000-gallon pump chamber and discharged into Easthampton's sewage pipelines. The Easthampton Board of Public Works granted the project preliminary approval, pending the approval of the Southampton Planning Board.

John Furman, a member of the town Planning Board and professional engineer at Vanasse Hagen Brustlin Inc., reviewed the project storm water plans. Trueheart's Planning Board hearing begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Hall meeting room.

Pending a storm water management permit granted by the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission will establish an order of conditions under which the project has to be carried out. McDonald anticipates the commission will come up with conditions at its Aug. 10 and Aug. 24 meetings, both at 7 p.m. in Town Hall.

Commission members last month visited the site, where a small stream is located behind the lot. The commission has jurisdiction over about 50 percent of the property, McDonald noted. Kevin Brooks, a wetland scientist and consultant at Many Springs, reviewed the wetlands delineation and, according to McDonald, the wetlands "had no major impact on the project." The state Department of Environmental Protection also approved the delineation.

"We're satisfied," McDonald said. "I think the project is relatively simple."

Last month the Zoning Board of Appeals granted the project a variance, allowing construction to start 50 feet away from College Highway. Town bylaw requires construction be at least 75 feet away from College Highway. Fencing and noise barriers along the back of the property are expected to minimize the effects of lights and sounds on neighbors, according to plans.

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Catherine Baum can be reached at cbaum@gazettenet.com.

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