

Minutes
Watertown Conservation Commission
Town Council Chambers
Wednesday, June 7, 2017

Conservation Commission Members Present: Marylouise Pallotta McDermott, Leo G. Martin, Patrick Fairbairn, Louis Taverna, Maria P. Rose, Charles C. Bering, Jamie O'Connell

Commission Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Susan C. Jenness

Martin Chaired.

- 1. Notice of Intent – Various roadway improvements at the intersections of Charles River Road and N. Beacon Street and N. Beacon Street and Greenough Boulevard. Property owner, Department of Conservation and Recreation. Applicant, Athena Health, LLC Representative, Stantec**

Hilde Karpawich represented Stantec in this request for an Order of Conditions on the proposed Transportation Improvement project as part of Athena Health Expansion.

Rose pointed out the need for an equipment staging and lay down area.

O'Connell said that the project seemed likely to present a significant earth disturbance requiring erosion control measures. It was noted by Karpawich where to find the erosion control plan in the packages provided to the CC. The erosion control plans will be monitored by Hayward.

O'Connell wondered if they would be adding trees. As Karpawich was not involved in that aspect of the project planning, she said that she was not sure off hand, but that she could get back to the CC with that information.

Fairbairn mentioned that there would be significant addition of trees at Athena Health Campus and mentioned that this project could mean an increase in trees as well. Karpawich said she would get back to the CC with the answer.

Fairbairn asked Karpawich to note the spelling error in Executive Summary of NOI.

Fairbairn noted that the proposed pedestrian/cyclist access path linking Athena property to the DCR greenway would decrease open space in the Riverfront Area in contravention of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act regulations [CMR 10.58 (3)] -- presumption of significance for wildlife habitat in a Riverfront Area. He recommended that the proposed access path be permitted specifically on the basis of CMR 10.53 (6) -- "construction of...footpaths, bike paths...and other...non-motorized vehicle access to or along riverfront areas but outside other

resource areas, provided that adverse impacts from the work are minimized and that the design specifications are commensurate with the projected use and are compatible with the character of the riverfront area".

Bering who said he was not familiar with the larger project asked for clarification on the buildings, in particular how large the two buildings would be.

Karpawich explained that the light blue area was the new construction and that the light brown is the existing building. She said that the CC had jurisdiction of the project based on the public park over to the right of the site. She explained that they would be seeking a Certificate of Occupancy for this fall which was why they were before the CC this evening. She explained that this project had gone all the way through Planning and Zoning and this is the first appearance before the Conservation Commission, but it is not known how high the buildings will be yet. The entire campus plan went through the Master Plan Process last summer. Bering said that he was interested in finding out more about the height of the buildings.

Martin reviewed Sheet 4 which illustrated the winding of the road and grading into the existing conditions. He said it was good space for erosion control measures as suggested by O'Connell, and that some straw wattles would be effective, with the removal of them to be worked out with Hayward the Preservation Agent

Martin referred to Sheet 6 and said that it showed some erosion control measures down below grading.

Hayward had no comments to make.

Public Comment-

There were no public comments.

Motion: Pallotta McDermott made a motion to close the hearing. Fairbairn seconded the motion.

Motion: Fairbairn made a motion to accept the project under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act under the citation [CMR 10.53 (6)]. Pallotta McDermott seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached approving the project under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act under the citation [CMR 10.53 (6)].

2. **Informational discussion - Mt. Auburn Cemetery's plan to release and reintroduce Eastern red-backed salamanders on cemetery grounds. Representative, Brooks Mathewson, M.F.S - Ecologist / Educator / Photographer**

Hayward explained that this was not a formal application on a project before the CC and that this letter was to promote a discussion among the CC about increasing the bio-diversity of a non-certified vernal pool.

Fairbairn said that he felt it was only right that the CC discuss this project to introduce bio-diversity in the only non-certified Vernal Pool in Watertown. Fairbairn also said that too much publicity about this could have a negative impact on the 100 feet around the pool.

Motion: A motion was made by Pallotta McDermott that the CC agreed with increasing the bio-diversity of the vernal pool at Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Rose seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached to promote the bio-diversity of the vernal pool at the Mt. Auburn Cemetery.

Fairbairn will write an email endorsing the decision of the CC to approve the bio-diversity of the vernal pool at the Mt. Auburn Cemetery and send it to Hayward who will write a letter to Mt. Auburn Cemetery on behalf of the CC.

3. Minutes from April 5, 2017

The CC agreed to review the minutes from the April 5th CC meeting at the next Conservation Commission meeting.

4. Agent report

Martin reported that he has seen some cleaning up around the building at Sasaki and that some trees had been trimmed, but that no scaffolding had been spotted at the site of the project.

Hayward reported that there has been no activity at the site of the Pedestrian Bridge yet but that he had seen reinforcing bar in place, indicating they are preparing for construction at this time. Fairbairn clarified that the fish were still running through July 5th so it would have to be after that time.

5. New Items

1. Minutes for the April 5, 2017 CC Meeting
2. I-Cubed Status based upon the meeting held May 11, 2017 General Discussion-DCR Athena Health
3. Victory Field Phase II Meeting May 31, 2017

Meeting adjourned.