



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Leo Martin, Chairperson
Maria P. Rose, Vice Chair
Charles C. Bering, Member
Patrick W. Fairbairn, Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member
Colleen Egan, Member

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MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting by Zoom and Dial In

Conservation Commission Members Present: Leo Martin, Maria Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Patrick Fairbairn, Charles C. Bering, Colleen Egan. **Absent:** N/A

Also Present: Elodia Thomas, Hugh Hahn, Richard Quinby, Pam Phillips, Joe Gaiko

Staff Present: Laurel Schwab, Conservation Agent, Susan C. Jenness, Assistant

Martin chaired the meeting and read the following.

The Town of Watertown (Conservation Commission) will hold a meeting on July 8, 2020 with the meeting starting time of 7:00 pm. In accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, section 20, relating to the 2020 Covid-19 emergency and to avoid group congregation, this meeting had remote opportunities for participation with public access provided by emailing the agent at lschwab@watertown-ma.gov.

Martin reminded the group they had voted to accept electronic signatures at the last meeting and also to poll all votes taking place in Zoom meeting format.

1. Notice of Intent- 650 Pleasant Street

Martin began by stating he was disappointed that this project began one year ago but was not brought to the Conservation Commission (CC) until now. He elaborated that he believed it was the fault of the developers and of town officials who knew about the project, and had reviewed it.

Richard Quinby, Vice President of Arranta Biotech, began the presentation with an overview of the firm. He explained that there is a sister company located in Gainesville, Florida, where early stages of development of the products take place and will then be transported to Watertown for production. He summarized that this project is to develop office and lab space for 100 employees, as well as outdoor amenity space along Pleasant Street and a connection to the DCR Riverfront Trail. He closed his introduction by stating how excited Arranta Biotech is to become a part of the Watertown community.

Hugh Hahn, the Senior Project Manager from VHB, was present to discuss the project, which is now underway. He explained that the back of the parking lot is located within the 200 ft. Riverfront Area. He reported that a wetland scientist surveyed and delineated the riverbank prior to work beginning. The work in the Riverfront Area will include the removal of some gravel and paved areas in the parking lot, which Arranta Biotech has agreed to add loam and seed in its place.

An employee amenity area will be located in the front of the building. They are working with Stop and Shop and hope to make improvements to the footpath connector from Pleasant Street to the Greenway on the western edge of the site. Rose asked them if they could keep working with Stop and Shop to keep the area looking nice and inviting. Quimby said he can ask employees to keep an eye on the area.

Martin pointed out that the wetlands were not delineated on the drawings. He said he wanted to see where the wetlands were located adjacent to the site and emphasized the importance of this so that the CC could do their job and protect the river.

Rose inquired about the operations and maintenance plans for stormwater management.

Schwab commented that the stormwater memo had been turned into the town during a different process and it seems likely the stormwater check list is not outstanding. She said she would obtain a copy of that as quickly as possible.

O'Connell asked if the clearing in the back ~~from 1999-2000~~ was ever permitted and if there was an Order of Conditions (OOC). ~~recognizing this as a paved area.~~ She said the plans should be delineated to show the 150 foot lines. She recommended compost filter socks for erosion control rather than straw wattle. Martin reminded her the project already began months ago. She asked what materials were being stored on the site as mentioned in the NOI. Joe Gaiko of D.C. Beane & Associates listed construction materials such as fixtures, lighting, oxygen, and affirmed that no fuels were being stored there at the site. O'Connell was clear that the NOI permitting needed to be straightened out whether this project was a redevelopment or not.

Rose said she agreed with O'Connell that clarification was needed but this project appeared to be a redevelopment project as it included clearing, and ~~de-paving, in addition to paving with no inside plumbing. She said sinterior building renovations.~~ he wanted to see a stormwater checklist and the wetland flagging and emphasized the importance of these details for making sure the CC was taking care of the area around the river and commented that this was a great project but they needed to hold this project to the same standards as all others.

O'Connell asked for an additional tree or two to be planted when the loam is added. Quimby responded that he may hold a social event inviting the employees to attend while planting some new vegetation in the developing area. Egan asked if they would consider some pollinator species when they are determining what vegetation to plant.

Bering pointed out that he believed the area behind the parking lot is a Conservation Restriction Area and inquired who the holder was. Hahn said he believed the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) was the holder. Rose said she believed the DCR was well aware of the

Conservation Restriction. Martin asked if they had seen the plans for this project. Hahn was not sure but said he would find out.

Fairbairn said he supported Rose's points and agreed that this is a redevelopment. He said the fact that plans did not show the wetland boundary delineation made him very uneasy. Hahn assured him that the area was demarcated but that the report had not been submitted with the filing of the NOI. He promised one would be filed.

Public Comments

Elodia Thomas said that the areas referred to as loam and seed areas should have professional landscape plans and should be clearly laid out. She said that the front entrance of the building out on Pleasant St. is not an attractive area and will now become even more congested with parking and traffic. She asked that they consult the Transportation Management Plans to get details about the impact of these new plans for development. Thomas opined that the parking lot area referred to where employees might come plant during a weekend social event should be professionally landscaped, and further stated that those plans should include pollinator friendly plants.

Public Comments Closed

Quimby reviewed the list (as seen below) that members of the CC expected to be resolved by the meeting in September.

- Correct drawings as Martin asked with additional details.
- Insert the corrected NOI wetland calculations.
- Review and update drainage items as discussed.
- Provide information about the wetlands flagging report.

Motion: Rose made a motion to continue the public hearing to the September 2020 Conservation Commission meeting. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous poll was taken accepting the motion made by Rose.

2. Minutes- March 4, 2020 and June 3, 2020

Motion: A motion was made by Egan to accept the minutes of the March 4, 2020 meeting with the modifications submitted by Fairbairn to Schwab. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached and polled to accept the motion by Egan.

Motion: A motion was made by Bering to accept the minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting with modifications made by Rose. Fairbairn seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached and polled to accept the motion made by Bering.

3. Agent Report

- a. **MVP update-** Schwab reported that the final deliverables will be posted on the Town website, including a summary of findings. The action grant application was submitted in late June. If the grant is awarded she expects a kick-off in September for the Climate and Energy Action Plan process.
- b. **CPA update-** Rose reported on the Community Preservation Planning Webinar that took place on June 30th and said it was well attended. She explained that this event was held in place of a second public forum. The projects were reviewed and discussed and at the end of the program a question and answer session was held with the Chair of the CPC, the Coordinator for CPC and the project planning consultant for the event answering inquiries. Rose reported that ~~JM en~~ Goldson, the consultant for the Town, is reviewing the surveys and compiling the data so that they can recreate a Community Preservation Plan and an application, and then proceed with start-accepting applications projects by the fall season.
- c. **Pollinator effort update-** O'Connell reported that Pam Phillips held a pollinator species tour through Mt. Auburn Cemetery and there is a link on the cemetery website to view the event. O'Connell said there are plans in the works to gather more links to pollinator resources. Martin added that Bob Dirico from the DPW had set aside space on the DPW property to plant some pollinator friendly species and that he and O'Connell will check back in with Dirico and make a further report in the near future.
- d. **Next phase of improvements to Watertown Riverfront Park (DCR).** Schwab reported that they will be starting up Phase II of the improvements from Irving St. to North Beacon St. to address the 12 additional erosion control plots that have developed since 2008. She reported that Martin and Steve Magoon had taken a site walk during the previous year. Schwab reported she has some plans she will send out to the members of the CC to see. The DCR should be getting a contractor this fall and complete the planting by spring of 2022.
- e. **Ongoing Orders of Conditions**
 - i. **Arsenal Park** – Schwab reported they are on track with the Phase B timeline and the small focus groups will be held soon. She reported there was a pre-construction site visit last week with both the Arsenal Park team and the Arsenal Yards Team for some additional coordination to be planned along the border of the 2 sites to create harmony.
 - ii. **Arsenal Yards-** Schwab reported that the erosion control measures between Home Depot and Little Greenough Blvd are in good condition and that some photos had been sent to her.
 - iii. **330 Pleasant-** Schwab reported there was a site visit regarding the landscape plan with the DCR and contractors to discuss the vista pruning and some final steps that will be taken over the summer. Dan Driscoll had walked the site last fall to explore trees so that he could provide a report to the developers about which trees he would like to have pruned.

Motion: A motion was made by Rose at 8:40 PM to adjourn the meeting. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A poll was taken by Martin and all members agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM