



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Conservation Commission
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MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 1, 2021, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

Conservation Commission Members Present: Leo Martin, Maria Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Patrick Fairbairn, Charles C. Bering

Absent: N/A

Also Present: Glenn Howard, Nick Watkins, Magdalena Lofstadt, Diane V.

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

Martin chaired the meeting. He announced that Patrick Fairbairn would not be seeking another term for his seat on the Conservation Commission when it expires in February. Fairbairn said he sent a note to the City Manager and also enclosed a list of criteria that could be used when they are interviewing and searching for a new member to take his spot.

- 1. Public meeting- Request for Determination of Applicability-** Gore Place -to make improvements to the existing farmstead in the southwest portion of the site, including a new pole barn and threshing barn with associated fenced barnyards, access walking paths, gravel driveway, utility service upgrades and new stormwater management system. Gore Place Society, Applicant; Highpoint Engineering, representative.

Schwab reported the Applicant/Owner requested a continuance to the January 5, 2022 meeting.

- 2. Public Hearing (continuance has been requested to Dec. meeting)- Notice of Intent-** 0 Arlington St (Williams Pond Parcel) - to construct a 2-story commercial building and parking lot on property known as the Williams Pond parcel; Max Hatziliades, Applicant and Owner.

Schwab reported the Applicant/Owner requested a continuance to the January 5, 2022, meeting.

- 3. Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 551 Rear Arsenal St., Arsenal Park Phase B-** Notice of Intent submitted for the project providing improved park facilities at Arsenal Park located at 551 Rear Arsenal St., a 13.7-acre park situated on the former Arsenal Grounds, for phase B of construction maintaining the existing layout and uses of the park., Steve Magoon, Applicant; CDM Smith, representative.

Howard reviewed the timeline of the Notice of Intent (NOI) for Phase B of the Arsenal Park Improvements. The last meeting between the Conservation Commission (CC) and CDM Smith took place at the January 6, 2021, CC meeting. The design of this project was at 60% design by March 21, 2021. The next stage of the design will be 90%. Stormwater will be reviewed by DPW.

Schwab reported that the Mass. DEP is experiencing a significant backlog, therefore, no Order of Conditions would be issued at this meeting but informed them that a review of the project could take place.

Watkins reviewed the updated plans that responded to the comments made by members of the CC at the meeting held last January 6, 2021. Watkins highlighted the following areas of the park and focused on the comments from the last meeting.

- Play Space- has been kept as natural as possible.
- Landscape- has been planned with minimal maintenance in mind.
- Community Garden has been planned with pollinator species, accessible plots and access to space for waste and yard debris.
- Skate Park- has been planned for all ages, including young users.

Dianne V. reviewed the impervious space and the phosphorous removal for the site. She reported they have added rain gardens near the community gardens and skate park that allow all overflow to go into the existing stormwater system, which includes a subservice infiltration basin. The catch basin is similar to the system used in Phase A. Rose found a technical issue on sheet L- noting the hatch patterns were replicated. Watkins said he would follow up on that and correct it.

Lofstadt reviewed the permit classification under the Wetlands Protection Act in the resource area, that was filed as *riverfront redevelopment* by improving stormwater management and keeping impervious surfaces in the riverfront under 10%. This project remains below 10%, coming in at just 7.5%.

Dianne V. reported the project is meeting Mass. stormwater standards for stormwater and phosphorous control on the primary work areas of the site.

CC Discussion

Rose pointed out the CC has no jurisdiction over phosphorous but inquired if the applicants were working with DPW on this. Rose checked on the detail sheet 4 for details about mulch being used in rain gardens. She recently learned that some mulches have been found to leach phosphorus and said she would email Schwab in the morning with more information. Rose clarified they may want to camera the 8-inch clay pipes and 24 inch brick pipes that may not be in good condition, although brick was likely in good condition. Rose asked them to point out the lay down area for contractors. Howard said they would investigate that to control stockpiling and protect catch basins in the area.

O'Connell said the foot path section may not actually meet standards for redevelopment and said she was unsure if they were not making it worse by adding impervious in the only part of the project in the riverfront area. She urged them to add some restoration to make a strong argument they are making improvements. Watkins agreed he could add some trees or shrubs and Howard said they can add some shade tolerant species. O'Connell said they should clearly delineate how they are making ecological improvements and Watkins said they would show them how they are making it better than how it is currently.

Fairbairn reminded the group the CC had the care and custody of this park and their vital first principle was no loss of green space. He said he would like to see a native species list and mentioned the city is in the process of drafting a Tree Ordinance that includes a native species list. He explained that he would like to have the sense that these plans have improved the space and that he had great faith in CDM Smith that they could do that. Watkins said the meadow seed mix was a great suggestion and that they intend to plant the mound with varied plants and with pollinator species in mind.

Howard informed the members of the CC that Phase A had added some green space to the park overall.

Martin thanked Rose and O'Connell for their comments. He told Watkins he would like to see them leave the amphitheater alone if they are not going to reconstruct it in this phase. He further suggested planting around the edges but said they should leave the rest alone so the kinds from Camp Pequotsette could continue using it for their activities.

Martin said the plans overall were very well done and said they can continue the hearing to the January 5, 2022, meeting and CDM Smith can make the necessary changes and return for the setting of conditions for the OOC.

Motion: Rose made a motion to continue the meeting to January 5, 2022. Bering seconded the motion made by Rose.

Roll Call: A unanimous roll call was taken agreeing with the motion made by Rose.

4. Agent Report

- a. **CPA-** O'Connell reported that applicants have been notified of proposals allowed to proceed in the application process. The CPC will soon be reviewing the projects and making decisions.
- b. **Climate and Energy Plan-** Schwab reported implementation details that go into the draft plan are being reviewed over the next 2 months. The draft plan is scheduled to be released in February.
- c. **Pollinators-** Schwab reported she was contacted by a high school student who was working on a project focusing on selecting future sites for pollinator species gardens, as a sustainability project for creating natural habitats. When the project is complete, she intends to present it to the town, most likely to the Town Council.
- d. **Ongoing Orders of Conditions-** Riverfront Park Restoration- Schwab reported a meeting will be held on December 9 from 6-7:30 PM for the Riverfront Park Restoration Project. She has a link she will send out to members of the CC in the morning if they already have not received a link to the meeting. Schwab went on a site visit to inspect some trees with the project team to focus on removal of appropriate trees. Some dead trees will remain at a height of 10 feet as part of the natural habitat and other trees that pose potential danger, or could potentially lead to further erosion control issues along the riverbank, will be scheduled for removal.

650 Pleasant St- Schwab visited the site at the request of Rose who noticed the hill on the western edge of the site to be looking very overgrown. She asked the property owner for an explanation and was informed the area was planted with meadow wildflower mix. He offered to mow the area down if that town would like that. Schwab said while it is looking a bit gangly, she is inclined to leave it.

57 Coolidge St- The project managers are having a current issue with removing excavated soil from the site. The two sites that accept removed soil are closed until January. Scheduling trucks has been an issue as well due to supply chain constraints. They have proposed to create a temporary stockpile area protected with cloth below and above, erosion controls, and jersey barriers. The stockpile areas is within the 150 ft boundary with no other alternative on the site.

They have been able to keep up with the removal of the more contaminated soil and transport it to intended sites without issue. They have agreed to make a daily detail report and sending it to Schwab keeping her informed of the stockpile's size and condition. Schwab will update the CC when the situation has changed.

Fairbairn inquired about the status of the site visit to Gore Estate. Schwab said she would contact Cedrick Azor in the morning to schedule a time when they could go visit together.

5. Minutes-review and approve minutes from November 3, 2021, meeting

After a review of the minutes from the October meeting, a motion was made accepting the minutes as modified.

Motion: A motion was made by Rose to accept the minutes as modified. Fairbairn seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A roll call vote accepted the motion made by Rose.

6. Review of Meeting and Filing Dates for 2022

Rose commented that they should possibly schedule a meeting in August in case anyone decides to file an application during that time. Schwab replied that the Commission has been taking off the month of August each year. Rose felt that this year it might be helpful to hold the extra meeting and they can always cancel the meeting if nothing comes in, or they can meet to discuss other ongoing issues. Martin asked if the office could schedule a meeting on August 10th that could be cancelled if no new business comes in.

Fairbairn mentioned he will be away on travel on February 2, 2022, and wanted to know if they could change the date of the meeting. Schwab said she would investigate both issues when she got back into the office.

Motion: A motion was made by O'Connell to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM. Fairbairn seconded the motion.

Roll Call: A poll was taken that accepted the motion made by O'Connell.