



CITY OF WATERTOWN
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
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Maria P. Rose, Vice Chair
Charles C. Bering, Member
Patrick W. Fairbairn, Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member

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MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 2, 2022, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

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

Absent: N/A

Also Present: Kate Finn, Vincent Piccirilli, KT Perera, Christopher Zevitas, Katie Patterson, Carol Kirby, Rich Kirby, Ray Cruz, Deb Pierce, Emily Rizzo, Elodia Thomas, John Airasian, Caroline Bays

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

Martin chaired the meeting.

- 1. Public Hearing (continuance has been requested to March 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 informed the members of the CC that the applicant contacted her seeking a continuance on this matter to the April 6, 2022, meeting.

- 2. Public Hearing- Notice of Intent- 93 California Street-** For the construction of an addition to an existing single-family dwelling and associated site appurtenances at the above-referenced property. Christopher and Rose Zevitas, applicants, and owners

Schwab reported she was informed of an outstanding 2013 Order of Conditions on this site and spoke with the Circuit Rider at Mass. DEP regarding the issue. Because the project was never executed, no Certificate of Compliance (COC) was ever issued, leaving the OOC outstanding. After speaking with Mass. DEP, Schwab spoke with both Martin and Rose to discuss the best path forward at this time.

- Schwab explained it would be appropriate for members of the CC to vote in favor of the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance for the 2013 OOC.
- The COC would specify the work remained unexecuted.
- The COC would be filed with the Registry of Deeds with proof of service filed in the Office of Conservation.
- Members of the CC would be able to deliberate about the current NOI that was scheduled for this meeting but could not enter an order of conditions until the previous one is closed out.

Motion: Rose made a motion for the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance for an incomplete project to close out the Order of Conditions in an appropriate manner. Bering seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll of the members was taken, and all agreed with the motion made by Rose.

Richard Kirby, Environmental Scientist attended the meeting to review the current project on behalf of the owner, Christopher Zevitas. He explained the house is located on the northern side of California St. on a 6500 sq ft lot along the Charles River. He confirmed Zevitas had filed a NOI in 2013 for a similar project but had not been not aware he needed to file the OOC with the registry of deeds.

Facade

From the façade the building is a 2.5 story single family house with an attached 1 story garage, a paved driveway and walkway leading to the rear of the house.

Rear of the House

From the rear there is a deck and railing across the back of the house that will be removed along with the 1 story garage to make room for a 2-story addition. Pervious pavers will be added over the portion of the property where the deck is being removed.

Erosion control measures have been proposed to mitigate the removal of the driveway being replaced with pervious pavers and a reduction of impervious space by roughly 500 sq ft.

The wetlands had been flagged and the project had been reviewed by the Planning Board and approved in January 2022.

O'Connell asked if she could see more details in the plans about the pervious pavers. She spoke about her concern for water infiltration between the pavers on the driveway and patio and wondered where the drainage would go. She asked if the aggregate is enough to accommodate run off.

Rose pointed out the 1-foot compensatory storage and said that was not following the floodplain which would require 1 cubic foot on bordering land subject to flooding. Rose said the type of pavers would all need to be listed on the plans to be classified as pervious pavers per the engineering designs, and not just listed in the body of the NOI. She requested verification of the classification of pervious pavers with the Town Engineer and to back up the plans with the brand and details. She clarified there would be a crawl space in the area below the house, rather than a basement. Bering agreed with all the comments made by Rose. Martin had no comments.

Public Comments

Elodia Thomas said she appreciated the comments made by Rose. Thomas called for all specifications to be listed on the plans and asked where the project was taking place in relation to the Watertown Dam. She confirmed that the grapes planted by the owner were not actually planted on the DCR property abutting the site.

After reviewing all the comments made by the public and members of the CC, a motion was made, and a poll was taken.

Motion: Rose made a motion to continue the public hearing to the meeting on April 6, 2022. Bering seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken, and all members agreed with the motion made by Rose.

3. Informational Meeting

- A. Presentation and discussion of Whitney Hill Park Annual Report 2021 per the City Council's 2013 Resolution Preserving Whitney Hill Park.

Martin and other members of the Commission took a few moments to focus on the work planned, executed and accomplished by Fairbairn at Whitney Hill in his 18 years of service to the CC. Fairbairn attended this meeting as a member of the public and the main steward of Whitney Hill, focusing stewardship on tree inventory, initiatives for maintenance, and markings for the sample plot centers.

Fairbairn recapped highlights of the Annual Whitney Hill Report to the City Manager and City Council, citing he initiated this work with the intention of having it completed by the end of his term on the Conservation Commission. Fairbairn explained that the second year of Covid-19 delayed his plans for student volunteers to participate in the summer months, working outside on biology curriculum through stewardship at Whitney Hill.

Fairbairn reached out to the non-profit Student Conservation Association with the possibility of developing a project to manage and/or realign selected footpath segments to counter soil erosion. Over the course of June, Fairbairn inspected all 32 samples plot centers.

Public Comments

Elodia Thomas expressed her deep gratitude to Fairbairn for his service over the years and made a list of comments and suggestions:

Delineating and fencing in the park- Thomas said she is in favor of the idea that circulated by Peter Deltredici to delineate Whitney Hill and place fencing around the perimeter. Thomas elaborated that this idea was a good way to deter the cars she has seen driving up, with people getting out and dumping their trash. She also indicated this activity is usually blamed on abutters.

Entrances- Close off the entrance by Victory Field, hang signage at Marian Rd and Oliver Rd.

Ideas for Stand Use- Thomas suggested hanging information for the park visitors, to inform the public about the assets of the park. She said educational information would be a good idea.

Path grooming- Thomas said she has fallen, even while walking with a cane due to fallen branches and other natural tripping hazards that currently exist on the paths.

Dog Issues- Thomas mentioned unleashed dogs tearing through the park as a source of concern.

4. Agent Report

- a. CPA- O'Connell reported that in February the CPC reviewed the proposal made by the Historical Society to restore the murals hanging in the lobby of City Hall. The project was presented by applicants at the meeting, and members of the CPC voted unanimously to allow the project to go forward with CPA funding. The CPC will be reviewing the Nichols Ave. project and the Irving Park project at their next meeting. O'Connell informed the group that they may look up details of the projects on the CPC website.
- b. Climate and Energy Plan- Schwab made the announcement that the Draft Plan has been released to the public for a comment period. Schwab said she will be collecting comments by written communication, and she expects the final plan to be released by the end of the month. Schwab has left a hard copy of the current report on the table outside of her office for anyone who would like to view it in person.
- c. Pollinators- Schwab has not been in contact with Bob Dirico yet but expects to be able to speak with him before the next meeting about moving forward on behalf of pollinator species news.
- d. Schwab reminded members of the CC that the MACC conference is taking place soon and anyone who has interest in signing up for courses should send her the invoice and she will submit for reimbursement in a timely manner.

5. Minutes-review and approve minutes from January 5, 2022, meeting, the January 19 Special Meeting and the February 9, 2022, meeting.

January 5, 2022, Conservation Commission Meeting

Motion: Rose made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 5, 2022, CC meeting. O'Connell seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken, and all members present agreed to accept the motion made by Rose.

January 19, 2022, special Conservation Commission Meeting

Martin made comments to modify the minutes to clarify additional funding that had become available for the Arsenal Park Phase B funding.

Motion: A motion was made by Bering to accept the minutes from the January 19, 2022, CC meeting. O'Connell seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken, and all members present agreed to accept the motion made by Bering.

Motion: Rose made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 9, 2022, CC meeting. O'Connell seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken, and all members agreed with the motion made by Rose.

Motion: A motion was made by Rose to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Bering seconded the motion.

Poll: A poll was taken, and all members agreed with the Motion made by Rose.