



City of Watertown
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main St.
Watertown, MA 02472

Maria P. Rose, Chair
Leo Martin, Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member
Darya Mattes, Member
Rachel Danford, Member

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 1, 2024, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

Conservation Commission Members Present: Maria Rose, Leo Martin, Darya Mattes, Rachel Danford, Jamie O'Connell, and Jill Ayers (new member awaiting to be sworn in)

Absent: N/A

Also Present: Dan Driscoll (Department of Conservation and Recreation), Kennan Brinn (ExteNet Systems, LLC), Taylor Donovan (VHB), Nick O'Connor (National Development), and Michael Albano (City of Watertown DPW).

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent, Susan Jenness, Assistant

Rose took a roll call and proceeded to chair the meeting. Mattes was in attendance at her final meeting as Commission Member for the purpose of voting on MA DEP #: 321-0187 and March 6, 2024 Conservation Commission meeting minutes.

1. **Public Hearing:** Notice of Intent (continued from April 3, 2024 hearing) – 99 Coolidge Avenue and DCR bike path extension (MA DEP#: 321-0187). Application for 0 Arsenal St. in Watertown, MA within the 200-foot Riverfront Area. DCR, Property Owner, and National Development and VHB, Representatives.

At the April 3, 2024 hearing, the project had not been signed off on by the DCR which is a requirement for members of the Conservation Commission to decide on the proposal. The applicant and Commission agreed to continue the hearing to May or an alternative date sooner if needed.

Donovan (VHB), briefed on the proposed work:

- NOI filed as a limited project as a redevelopment project under 310 CMR 10.53(6) for the construction of a non-motorized, accessible, multi-use path extension to connect with an existing multi-use pathway.
- Extending from the back of 99 Coolidge Avenue property across DCR to Arsenal Street with a total area of the proposed multi-use path: 2,890 SF.
- Within the jurisdictional Riverfront Area (RFA) as a previously disturbed area, Buffer Zone (BZ), and no impact to the local 50 ft No Build Zone (NBZ). A total of 1,440 sf of temporary impact to the RFA and 1,450 sf of permanent impact to RFA.

Commission questions and comments:

- O'Connell noted that she attended a site visit with Swan in February and noticed a lot of run off was visible onto fire access road (between the fence line and garage). O'Connor (National Development) clarified that runoff was from the abutting property. The abutting property placed small stone along the fence line on their property to divert and slow down the runoff.
- O'Connell asked if there were any plantings and was told that native seed mixture is going to be used.
- Scour issues - there are no impacts to the bank.
- Proposed path crosses the stream – the proposed path does not cross the stream, it's parallel to the stream. There is an existing path that goes to the GSA site which crosses over the stream.

Public Comments: No public comments were made.

Motion: Martin made a motion to close the public hearing. Mattes seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Martin.

Motion: Martin made a motion to approve the proposed Notice of Intent. Danford seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Martin.

2. **Wetlands Decision:** Request for Extension of Order of Conditions – DCR Riverfront Park (MA DEP #: 321-0133). DCR, Property Owner, and Dan Driscoll, Representative.

Dan Driscoll (DCR) was present to discuss the request for an Extension of the Order of Conditions for a period of one (1) year. Additional time was needed to continue the monitoring of the plantings and possibly replace the guardrails (far away from the Riverfront Area along Charles River Road). Driscoll noted there were 14 areas on the

project with Impact Zones that were subject to erosion, and his team had bioengineered solutions to improve the areas and generate restoration wherever possible

Rose said she appreciated the color-coded plans that came with the letter seeking the extension. Ayers pointed out that DCR was asking for a one-year extension, but the requirement for minimum two year growing season was a period of two years. Driscoll agreed to have 1.5 years for the extension. Driscoll thanked members for their flexibility and support throughout the process of completing this project.

Motion: Rose made a motion to extend the Order of Conditions (MA DEP 321-0133) until October 31, 2025. Martin seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Rose.

3. **Wetlands Decision:** Request for a Certificate of Compliance - North Beacon and Charles River Road Utility Pole (MA DEP #: 321-0177). DCR, Property Owner, and ExteNet Systems, Inc., Representative.

Brinn (ExteNet Systems, LLC) was present to discuss the request for a Certificate of Compliance to close the Order of Conditions (OOC). Brinn's contractor met with Swan on 4/11/24 on site to look at the design specs and site per the OOC for the installation of a small cell that was mounted on a pole. Rose noted for Brinn to file a copy of the issued CoC with the registry of deeds.

Motion: O'Connell made a motion to approve the request for the Certificate of Compliance. Martin seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by O'Connell.

4. Updates

- A. **Whitney Hill Woodland Management Project:** A meeting was held with the City Manager in April including a couple members of the Commission, and City Staff to discuss the proposed management plan for Whitney Hill Park. The working group will work on a scope and develop an RFP for a consultant.
- B. **CPC Update:** O'Connell reported that she is interested in serving as the Conservation Commission representative on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for another three (3) year term.

Motion: Martin made a motion that O’Connell continue in her role as the Conservation Commission representative on the CPC for the next term. Danford seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Martin.

O’Connell reported there the four projects were voted on by City Council for funding.

- Saltonstall Park: fully funded.
- Browne House: fully funded.
- Walker Pond: fully funded.
- Scotts Fence: voted down

- C. **Agent Report:** Arsenal Park Phase B Update: Construction has started and plan to go until Fall 2024. Swan reported she will be attending weekly construction meetings and update the Conservation Commission monthly.

Charles River Vegetation Management (MA DEP #: 321-0185) notified Swan that 2024 invasive plant removal per the OOC is starting again for the season. CRC and CRR will do their volunteer clean up events on May 4th at Cannalonga Park and on May 9th ECast Productions (in Watertown Square). This is part of the General Maintenance of the DCR Parks and Invasive Plant removal work (that was approved in 2022).

5. Minutes from March 6, 2024 and April 3, 2024 Conservation Commission meeting were approved.

- March 6, 2024 Conservation Commission meeting minutes. Members reviewed the minutes. Rose had brief updates.

Motion: Mattes made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2024, meeting. Martin seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Mattes.

- April 3, 2024 Conservation Commission meeting minutes. Rose had some updates to request.

Motion: A motion was made by Martin to approve the minutes as updated. Danford seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made by Martin.

6. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: O'Connell made a motion at 8:45 to adjourn the Conservation Commission meeting. Martin seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled, and all agreed with the motion made to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.