



CITY OF WATERTOWN

Conservation Commission

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

The Conservation Commission in the City of Watertown will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 7:00 PM. This meeting has only remote opportunities for participation with public access provided as follows:

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2023 AT 7:00 PM

AGENDA

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=1>
- B. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/99597080710>
- C. Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 995 9708 0710
- D. Public may comment through email: sjenness@watertown-ma.gov

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- 1. Informational Meeting
 - A. Discussion of Whitney Hill Annual Report per City Council Resolution of 2013 preserving Whitney Hill Park.
 - 2. Public Hearing-
 - A. (Continuance was requested to April 12, 2023 meeting)- **Notice of Intent- O Arlington St. (Williams Pond Parcel)**- Mass DEP 321-0174- to construct a 2 story commercial building and parking lot on property known as the Williams Pond parcel: Max Hatziliades, Applicant/Owner, Mickey Marcus, Representative
 - 3. Public Hearing-
 - A. Continuance was requested to the April 12, 2023 meeting)- **Request for Determination of Applicability**- for the proposed parking lot improvements and utility upgrades located at **10-30 Manley Way**, Watertown, Massachusetts. PPF Industrial 20 Seylon, LLC, Owner,

Christopher M. Lucas, Representative/Applicant

4. Public Hearing-
 - A. **(Continued from the February 1, 2023 meeting), Lot located off 0 Arlington St- Notice of Intent** submitted for the construction of a 41,289 square feet (sf) of pervious parking area to grade and pave the north side of Sawins Pond, extending from the existing paved parking lot, located off 0 Arlington Street, between 71 Arlington Street and 15 Arlington Street taking place within the 100 foot Buffer Zone of Vegetated wetlands and Inland Bank and locally regulated 150 foot Buffer Zone. Polina Safran, Representative from SWCA, Max Hatziliades, Owner
5. Agent Report
 - A.
 1. CPC Update- Jamie O'Connell
 2. Ongoing Orders of Conditions
6. Acceptance of Minutes
 - A. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from the February 1, 2023 Conservation Commission Meeting.



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

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TO: George Proakis, City Manager, and the Honorable City Council
FROM: Katherine Swan, Conservation Agent and Watertown Conservation Commission
CC: Patrick Fairbairn, Steve Magoon
SUBJECT: 2022 Whitney Hill Park Annual Report
DATE: February 13, 2023

Background



Whitney Hill was purchased, along with Saltonstall Park, by the then Town of Watertown under the auspices of the Park Department in 1895. As can be seen in the image on the left, Whitney Hill is an L-shaped parcel that is bounded on the north and northeast by Worcester Street, DPW Yard and Victory Field, on the southeast by residences along Oliver, Marion and Palfrey Streets, on the southwest by residences on Palfrey

Street and Everett Avenue and to the west by residences on Marlboro Terrace. The property has been mostly undeveloped since it was purchased, with the exception of the southwest portion, which was once a location for the city's water tower. Whitney Hill is approximately 10 acres. When combined with the adjoining Victory Field, there are over 21 contiguous acres for public outdoor recreation. There is no other plot of land in Watertown that provides its residents with such a diverse range of recreational opportunities, such as a walk in the woods or practicing free throws on the basketball court.

The property is the last wooded upland in the City. The hill has native deciduous and pine trees as well as invasive Norway Maple trees. The wooded parcel provides a habitat for insects, reptiles, salamanders, small mammals and birds.



On January 8, 2013 the Watertown Town Council, by unanimous vote, adopted Resolution No. 3 (R-2013-31), preserving Whitney Hill Park. The resolution directs the Watertown Conservation Commission (WCC) to submit "...a recommended plan for maintenance and educational activities" for Whitney Hill Park. The update of the plan has been typically done in January and approved at the WCC's February meeting. Upon the plan's approval, it is disseminated to the relevant City officials, abutters of the Park and to the general public for discussion at the WCC's

regular March session. A comprehensive long-term outline of the WCC's response to this directive is included in Appendix A.

Past Activities

Since the resolution was passed in 2013, a number of activities have taken place at Whitney Hill. The WCC and its members, City staff, and volunteers have:

- Completed a survey of the park and established property bounds.
- Initiated a study to evaluate changes to the park over time by establishing 32 sample plots by former Commission Member Patrick Fairbairn with support from Watertown HS students.
- Continued the monitoring of the sample plots by Patrick Fairbairn, volunteers, members of the Conservation Commission, and students from Watertown High School.
- Added sign boards listing the park rules at entrances to the park at Victory Field and Marlboro Terrace.
- Provided a trash barrel near the Victory Field entrance, maintained by the DPW.
- Inspected the trees for public safety concerns with the City's Tree Warden.
- Inspected the trees and understory by Watertown resident and botanist Dr. Peter Del Tredici.

When he was still a member of the WCC, Patrick Fairbairn contacted the Student Conservation Association (SCA) for assistance to reduce erosion on the north slope of the hill. The area of concern is shown in the photograph on the right. Agreements to have the SCA perform improvements in this area are underway for completion this field season.



Activities in 2022

The following was done in 2022:

- Continued discussions with the SCA to perform improvements to the park. A site visit was conducted to develop a scope and determine costs.
- Reviewed the proposal from the SCA and began to work out contractual issues.
- Performed routine annual inspection and maintenance of the markings for 32 sample plot centers. A review of the test plots by team of volunteers lead by Patrick Fairbairn.

- Performed limited maintenance, as necessary by the Watertown DPW.

Proposed Activities for 2023

- Installation of a third information sign at junction of Marshall Street and Oliver Road.
- Finalize the contract with the SCA and complete the installation of recommended erosion control measures.
- Monitoring and maintenance of the 32 sample plot centers. This exercise comprises primarily the renewal of the blue surveyor's tape hung near the PVC stakes. Each stake's 2-part numerical code (Transect No. – Plot No.) needs occasional fresh inking with a coarse felt-tip pen. There is a piece of steel rebar at the center of each plot in the event the PVC marker gets buried by leaves so it can be located with a metal detector.
- Complete a survey of the Park's trees this spring. This survey should provide good information on changes at the Park when compared with data from the original survey completed in 2015.
- Park stewardship, including monitoring for illegal disposal of yard waste and inorganic debris.
- Organize a family-friendly event that encourages nature exploration & learning.

Longer Term Goals

- Investigate future collaboration to improve the trails that extend to the top of the hill, if the work with the SCA is successful.
- Continue to perform routine annual inspection and maintenance of the markings for 32 sample plot centers.
- Complete a survey of the Park's trees again in 2027 providing data for identifying longer term variations at the park.
- Complete a survey of the Park's woody vegetation. This would involve the sampling of the sapling-shrub-liana stratum. These understory data are especially important in monitoring several invasive species changes. This exercise can be combined with the monitoring of Red-backed Salamander cover boards.
- Remove old granite curbing discarded off the trails and utilize the pieces to stabilize areas along the paths.
- Improve/maintain the trails, especially the heavily utilized trail from Marlboro Terrace to Marion Road.
- Investigate options for natural-looking fencing in certain locations to clearly denote the difference between public and private land.



It should be noted that most of the work involving Whitney Hill Park has been carried out under the direction Patrick Fairbairn. To continue these studies, help will be needed from our members and residents who are interested in the evaluating the ecology of Whitney Hill and its adaptation to our changing climate.

APPENDIX A

Whitney Hill –Development of a Stewardship Plan

Informational

General public meeting, to hear citizen opinion about the future of Whitney Hill, and citizen response to the Conservation Commission's proposal for that future. Meetings thereafter to be held periodically as needed, preceded by adequate publicity promulgated through official Town announcement, press notice and communication directly with individual abutters.

Inventory

- Site history - develop the ownership timelines from the Whitney family to the present utilizing town records, Sanborn property maps and old topography maps
- Site ecology – determine and document the Park's
 - Geology – identify the soils, hydrology and its underlying rock if possible.
 - Vegetation - identify the dominant species of tree, sapling, shrubs and herps present on the hill. Label the various species found in the Park. Determine the age of selected trees utilizing "tree-coring" techniques.
 - Animals - identify birds, mammals and invertebrates.
 - Human intervention – changes to the hill through human interactions
 - Mapping/ Aesthetics - Continue to monitor invasive, changes of species as identified in the sample plots established, identification of landscape value (e.g. autumn foliage, picturesque trees, unusual wild flowers, tranquility) with heavy reliance on citizen input, photographic record of these assets, and identification and refinement of educational opportunities to pursue
- Develop a booklet/report on Whitney Hill as a resource for the community. The report should include:
 - Findings of the study, establishment of an ecological baseline for study of future changes, with provision for management as necessary for preservation of its general character of the Park.
 - Listing of the site's most important aspects.
 - Ongoing listing of management/maintenance concerns
 - Implementing actions to address management and maintenance issues.

Stewardship goals/objectives

Goals: Overall purpose (e.g. enhance public understanding and appreciation of the site, establish the basis of long-term ecological research, reduce unplanned disturbance, control invasive plants).

Objectives: Specific tasks to achieve the goals in measurable steps (e.g. interpretative labeling, ranking of invasive species and zones by degree of threat for priority control)

MAXIMOS HATZILIADIS
5 MADISON ST
BELMONT MA 02478

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53-7017-2113

12.12.2022

Date

CHECK ARMOR
TRADE PROTECTION

SURER

Pay to the
Order of Town of Watertown
One thousand

\$ 1,000.00

Dollars



Photo
Safe
Deposit®
Details on back

Watertown
— Savings Bank —

or Conservation NOI

M. Hatziliadis

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AMOUNT

37044	437000	370401	AFFORD. HOUSING - OTHER DEPT REV	
37044	483000	370402	AFFORD. HOUSING - CONTRIB & DONATIONS	
37044	484000	370403	AFFORD. HOUSING - MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	
37104	437000	371001	REDEV. FUND - OTHER DEPT REV	
37104	483000	371002	REDEV. FUND - CONTRIB & DONATIONS	
37104	484000	371003	REDEV. FUND - MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	
37114	437000	371101	GIFTS FOR PURCH OF TREES - OTHER DEPT REV	
37114	483000	371102	GIFTS FOR PURCH OF TREES - CONTRIB & DONAT	
37114	484000	371103	GIFTS FOR PURCH OF TREES - MISCELLANEOUS	
37124	437000	371201	ARSENAL PARK GIFT - OTHER DEPT REV	
37124	483000	371202	ARSENAL PARK GIFT - CONTRIB & DONATIONS	
37124	484000	371203	ARSENAL PARK GIFT - MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	
37144	437000	371401	CONSERV. WETLAND - OTHER DEPT REV	
37144	483000	371402	CONSERV. WETLAND - CONTRIB & DONATIONS	\$ 1,000.00
37144	484000	371403	CONSERV. WETLAND - MISCELLANEOUS	
89064	437000	8906	FIRST HOME PROGRAM COLLECTIONS	
89074	437000	8907	HOME PRGM/OFFSET/PAYROLL COLLECTIONS	
89104	437000	8910	WAT. ARSENAL DEVL P. CORP. COLLECTIONS	
89164	437000	8916	SHWCSE HOUSE/COMM. MN RECEIPTS	
89174	437000	8917	HIST CMSN. ACTIV.ACCT RECEIPTS	
86004	437000	8600D	CONSERVATION TRUST (OTHER DEPT REV)	
			CONSERVATION TRUST	
86004	483000	8600C	(CONTRIBUTIONS & DONATIONS)	
86004	484000	8600M	CONSERVATION TRUST (MISC INCOME)	

Check No. 572 WPA

NOI- M Hatziliadis- 6 Madison St. Belmont MA 02478

\$ 1,000.00

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE _____