

Minutes
Watertown Conservation Commission
Lower Hearing Room
Wednesday, April 6, 2011
7:30p.m.
Adopted May 4, 2011

Conservation Commission Members Present: Marylouise Pallotta McDermott, Louis Taverna, Leo Martin, Maria Rose, Patrick Fairbairn, Charles Bering

Conservation Commission Member Absent: Stan Sadkowski

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Daphne M. Collins

Members of the Public Present: See Sign-In Form

Pallotta McDermott chaired.

- 1. Public Hearing – NOI – 71 Arlington Street, 321- 0145, WWO-11-03 construction of a pervious pavement parking area with landscaping and buffer zone enhancement planting. Applicant/Property Owner: Maximos Hatziliades**

Richard “Chip” Nylen, Jr., attorney for the applicant, informed that the project was similar to one submitted in 2009. Unlike the previous project where there were issues regarding the river status of Sawins Pond, this application characterizes Sawins Pond as a river. Nylen mentioned that the proposed parking area is beyond the 50’ buffer zone, outside the resource area. He noted that the project design includes an infiltration system. Erosion controls will be installed, invasive plants will be removed and tree wells will be provided. No direct discharge will be going into the river. According to Nylen, an alternatives analysis demonstrates that there will be no negative impact on the resource area and that the proposal is an improvement over the existing developed area conditions.

Pallotta McDermott requested a formal Alternatives Analysis be conducted. Nylen felt there was sufficient alternative discussion in the NOI.

Andrew Street, engineer, Engineering Alliance Inc., stated that the NOI is in accordance with the Riverfront Act. Street highlighted three alternatives considered for the site (Fig. 1, 2, 3). He considered the proposal (Fig. 3) to be the best option for this degraded site. He identified the following project features: a porous asphalt material over layers of crushed stone, 86 parking spaces (compared to 138 spaces proposed in Fig. 1), no asphalt in the 50’ no build zone, a surface to respond to a 200-year storm event, an 80% TSS removal, tree box filters, and a maintenance plan insuring the porous nature of the asphalt surface.

Martin disagreed with the 50' no build zone calculations. Street indicated that he worked with Rimmer Environmental Consulting who was hired to determine the most landward buffer zone and wetland locations of the site to meet CC standards. Pallotta McDermott requested that recalculations be done.

Fairbairn wanted to know how the parking spot figures were established. He considered the project too big and exploitative of the area. Street responded that the characterization and lot number size were selected to improve the water quality and storage capacity, and minimize impact.

Fairbairn was concerned that the parking lot would remove habitat. He did not consider the new additional plantings as an equitable exchange for the loss of so much wildlife vegetation. Street pointed out that the area was commercial and not a robust wildlife area.

Nylen pointed out that Rimmer Environmental Consulting concluded that the project would be an improvement to wildlife habitat. Referencing Peter Del Tredici, Fairbairn responded that all wildlife habitats in Watertown are disturbed to some degree but valuable to the Town. He did not see a net improvement for wildlife under this project. Nylen challenged Fairbairn's conclusions, stating that the site is a filled former dump, with 100% invasive plant material. Nylen noted that the applicant is proposing a careful selection of replacement plantings at a 1:1 ratio which would improve the water quality and be better for wildlife. Fairbairn stated the need to protect the present conditions which are better than the new material.

Rose disagreed that the proposal was an improvement to present conditions. She concluded that the project was a new introduction to a wooded tract of land, not meriting a redevelopment characterization. She considered the area as a wooded wetland area requiring CC protection.

Nylen described the area as a redevelopment based on the following indicators: a 21E site, the presence of solid waste material, and the discharging of contaminated storm water by Watertown. He acknowledged that plants have grown at the site due to lack of attention. Street concurred that the proposal meets the standard of redevelopment.

Rose requested that the applicant clarify its snow removal practices. She stated that no snow dumping or storage is allowed and that the Best Practices must reflect that. Pallotta McDermott requested that the NOI be paginated. Nylen agreed to make the changes.

Taverna inquired where the construction storage area is located. Nylen responded that storage would be limited to clean material and stockpiled for no more than 30 days. If contaminated, it will be removed from the site. Taverna reminded the applicant that the material must be characterized before it's removed from site.

According to Nylen the area is a total 4.5 acres, with only ¾ of an acre considered for the parking lot area. Fairbairn inquired if the proposal was the minimum parking lot size considered. Nylen responded that the lot size was selected based on the minimum impact on the resource area, not on a cost/benefit analysis. Fairbairn did not support the proposed removal of local trees.

Pallotta McDermott requested an Alternatives Analysis be submitted and that it include option examples other than parking use. Nylen stated that the parking use had been selected based on alternatives.

Rose requested that a SWPPP be submitted.

Robert Holz, 14 Palfrey Street, thought the present site was horrible and disgusting, and that NSTAR needs to clean it up.

Susan Sidiropoulos, 69 Union Street, is a tenant of the applicant. She thought the site was horrible. She supported the proposal. She thought the proposal would be an improvement to the pond and to the tax base.

Marylyn Petitto Devaney, 98 Westminster Avenue, supported the proposal. She thought the parking lot will an improvement and provided needed parking.

Mark Sideris, Town Council President, supported the applicant in trying to improve the site within the Town’s guidelines. He considered the application an improvement over the larger proposal of 138 parking spaces.

Paul Hatziliades, Newton, MA, informed that 600 acres of unfiltered storm water gets released to the site.

Nylen requested that the Public Hearing be continued to May 4, 2011 to allow the applicant to provide the additional materials and to make changes to the NOI.

Vote: Rose moved to continue the Public Hearing to May 4, 2011, 7:30pm, 149 Main Street. Taverna seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. March Minutes – adopted.

3. Old Business

Item	Update status
Whitney Hill Report	Pallotta McDermott to provide Hayward with information of marker costs obtained through Mt. Auburn’s source.
Victory Field – Synthetic Surface	Fairbairn to edit CC’s letter to the TC regarding the synthetic surface issues. Taverna recused.

Recycling Center/Filippello Park	Magoon is in possession of letter from Mt. Auburn Cemetery offering usage of their property for 10 years as a recycling site. CC to meet with the DPW Subcommittee regarding this issue.
Storm Water Advisory Commission	Rose reported on the continued progress on draft ordinances. Ordinance on agenda of TC Subcommittee scheduled for Jan.
Rivers Protection Act	Hayward reported that there is a new Assessor. He will meet to discuss updating the RPA areas on the Town's GIS map.
GSA	Awaiting response to CC's comments. Corsi assigned as manager to site.
Stanley Ave.	Area has been cleaned up. Trucks have been moved. There is a prospective developer for site.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.