

Minutes  
Watertown Conservation Commission  
Lower Hearing Room  
Wednesday, January 9, 2013  
7:30p.m.  
*Adopted March 6, 2013*

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

**Conservation Commission Member Absent:** Michelle Gauvin

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

**Members of the Public Present:** See Sign-In Form

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Pallotta-McDermott chaired.

**1) Notice of Intent – 192 Pleasant Street, 321-0153, WWO-12-04, to redevelop the site to construct one 14-unit building. John B. Wise, Burkhard Corporation, applicant; Robert Cass, owner.**

Pallotta-McDermott reported that her family business has done business with McKenzie Engineering Group, Inc. and that it would not have any effect on her consideration.

John B. Wise, developer, presented that 192 Pleasant Street is a difficult industrial site measuring 95'x90'. He noted it would cost \$350,000 to clean up the site. He reported that the present structure which is in the wetlands would be removed. He said that the flood storage capacity of the proposed project would be improved appreciably over the present conditions. He also noted that they would work closely with DCR to remove the site's invasive plants.

Brad McKenzie, McKenzie Engineering Group and representative of the developer, informed that the proposal is for 14-condo units totally 17,000sq', with 28 parking spaces and new utility connections. Also proposed is a connection of the bike path to the Charles River Park path.

McKenzie indicated that bio-swales and rain gardens will capture all surface area runoff and 50% of the roof runoff. The Total Suspended Solids (TSS) removal will be at 90% better than the required 80% for new developments. According to McKenzie the entire site is classified as previously degraded area, and the Wetlands redevelopment standards requirements apply.

McKenzie explained that a corner of the new development will extend into the 50' no-build zone and much less of an area intrusion than the current building. He believed that the new site improves the area despite its incursion into the no-build zone, protecting wildlife and water

quality, as well as controlling sediment migration and flooding capacity. He noted there is an Operations Management Plan during construction and post-construction to insure quality control. McKenzie indicated that the impervious area would be decreased by 40%, and recreation and aesthetics would be improved. A landscaping plan is proposed for the increased green space area.

Pallotta-McDermott is upset with the massing of the building adjacent to the Charles River. She wants the project reduced as the site is extremely close to the abutting bvw of the Charles River.

Rose inquired if the proposed building could be moved out of the 50' no build zone. McKenzie responded that the utility easement limited the building placement.

Martin noted that the CC does not allow buildings in the no build zone. He felt it the proposal was too much incursion. He also was concerned about the flooding of cars in the parking lot.

Rose requested cross sections to back-up the calculations for flood storage. McKenzie will provide the cross sections. McKenzie agreed to place erosion controls (silt sock) along the length of the property to be removed upon completion.

Fairbairn agreed that the proposal provided many improvements however he wanted more improvements. He preferred that the project be smaller as it was twice as high as the existing abutter. He was concerned about the canyonization being created along Pleasant Street.

McKenzie noted that the project cannot go forward without the parking and there are not many options to move the parking because of the site's constraints.

Rose said she'd consider the project if the building was pulled out of the no build zone.

Dan Driscoll, DCR Director of Recreational Facilities and Planning, thought there were many positive aspects to the proposed project. However, he was concerned about all the developments along the Charles that are squandering the Charles River Park. He thought the Pleasant Street Corridor zoning was leading to the canyonization of the Charles River. He believed the project was good for people but bad for wildlife and the river. He indicated that the Charles River is an important fly way zone for birds. He thought the project could be prevented on wildlife protection grounds. He suggested that the CC contact the Audubon Society.

He noted the exceptional storm water protection proposed were a positive improvement; as well as the good connections with Pleasant Street. However, he thought the project was too big and tall. He suggested that the developer use dark colors and wood to blend into the landscape. Driscoll noted that residential use is a good use along the Charles River, but it has to be improved. He was concerned about the dogs and domestic cats associated with residential use that will destroy the wildlife along the river. He recommended that the CC consider limiting them. He thought a mixed-use, village center scale development plan along the river would provide a positive attraction. He suggested that the project side facing Pleasant Street be allowed to be taller, terracing the river frontage side, tolerating the 50' no build for the exchange of less units, and working with the developer for a darker color palette similar to Riverlofts.

Martin suggested scaling down the project. McKenzie said the expense of the clean-up necessitated the larger project.

The CC voted to continue the public hearing to February 6, 2013 to allow the developer to respond to the CC's comments and request. Materials requested are due January 28, 2013.

**2) Minutes of the December 2012 Meetings – Adopted.**

**3) Old Business.**

Item	Update status
Whitney Hill Report	TC subcommittee is reviewing language to allow dogs on leash. Land to be surveyed. Proposed is that TC will be in “care and custody” of site. CC to be responsible for the annual maintenance report and public education of the land.
Recycling Center/Filippello Park	New recycling center being developed. DPW has not relocated recycling operations off of Filippello Park.
Storm Water Advisory Commission	The second ordinance has been docketed with the Subcommittee. The Storm Water Commission finalized the third ordinance.
GSA	All buildings to be taken down and the area will be allowed to revert to wetlands. Project to be completed in 12/13. Fairbairn requested that ACE inform CC about their plans before commencing work. Martin wants to see a grading plan. Hayward noted that he has contacted Iorio about the development schedule and has had no response. No work has started.
CPA	CC supports pursuing CPA for open space acquisition. Fairbairn to discuss with Magoon.
No Build-Zone Regulations Update	Collins to update Rules and Regulations with the new approved language

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.