

Minutes

Watertown Conservation Commission

Lower Hearing Room

Wednesday, April 4, 2007

7:30p.m.

Conservation Commission Members Present: Pallotta McDermott, Martin, Fairbairn, Hammett, Taverna

Conservation Commission Members Absent: Bering

Staff Present: Hayward, Collins

Members of the Public Present: See Sign-In Form

1. Public Hearing –RDA Charles River Reservation Kiosk adjacent to California Street, Department of Conservation & Recreation, owner.

Dan Driscoll, DCR, informed that he was seeking a negative determination for the installation of an interpretive/educational, four sided-kiosk. The proposed kiosk would be located by the California Street footbridge. He viewed this project as part of the Charles River Walkway Restoration OOC project that has expired. At the time of the OOC, this project was planned but was not funded. The kiosk will have a concrete footprint that will be in the resource area.

James Smith, 61 Bridge Street, asked that nothing be place in the resource area. He noted that when the steps were installed a turtle nesting area was affected. He urged that the CC leave the river alone. He suggested that the money be used to maintain the area. He noted that he maintained the pathway as an interested citizen. He suggested that all the amenities be removed and that the pathways be taken care of instead.

Driscoll affirmed that improvements along the Charles River have negatively affected the wild life. He noted that the lighting at Forte Park in Newton had affected the herring and heron. He reported that he has learned from the first improvements along the river. He noted that the original log benches are being replaced. However, he felt that the kiosk was important to understanding the habitat.

Hammett was concerned about citizen volunteers. She wants DCR to present the maintenance efforts that are required in the OOC.

Dan Driscoll noted that DCR has the responsibility in perpetuity to keep the paths and vistas clear. However, DCR is hard pressed to handle it. According to Driscoll, thanks to citizen volunteers like Sasaki and James Smith some path maintenance is undertaken.

Pallotta McDermott objected to maintenance conducted outside of a NOI. She felt it is necessary to know who is responsible, how is it being carried out, and who is supervising.

Driscoll responded that those who love it maintain it. Realistically DCR can't supervise it. He noted that DCR is chaotic and needs increased support and help. DCR has no consultants. He informed that he had \$100,000 to do pathway improvements but no time to do the NOI for three communities to get the work done by the June deadline. He was requesting a RDA. Boston and Newton allowed it through a RDA because of the constraints. He felt it was an emergency. The funding is coming from Solomon and CRC.

Hayward supported the negative determination for the educational kiosk as it was not intrusive.

Fairbairn wanted to know if the fish panel was final as there were some edits. Driscoll believed that they had been corrected.

Vote: Hammett moved that a negative determination be made for the RDA for the Charles River Kiosk. Taverna seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Public Hearing Continuance – Sawins & Williams Ponds Disposal Site, Arlington Street and Coolidge Avenue, RDA, DEP#32100123/WWO-06-02, Maximos Hatziliades applicant

Steve Fleming, Vineyard Environmental Services, reported that the property needs to be investigated to bring it into DEP compliance by conducting or not a remediation. He reported that he will be assessing the site in the upland areas with 4 to 6 wells. He noted that wells are already at the site. He will be collecting soil and surface water samples. The water samples will be done with hand tools. He reported that once the data is collected they will either remediate or do more assessments.

Fairbairn inquired why the up gradient side was selected for assessment. Fleming responded that all existing boring are on the high side. They will be using a track rig. He expects the process not to be easy because of the dumped rubber by PF Goodrich. He felt that the bombardier should be able to get in within 5' of the identified area. There will be no damage to the site.

Taverna suggested using a boring contractor of quality.

Martin inquired whether there will be hay bales. Fleming responded that no. The drillings will be done with augers and place stand pipes with locks. Martin was concerned that the area might be cleared during the process. Fleming noted that there were no plans to clear any of the area. The area is not a pristine area. In fact, rubber sticks out of the earth. If the grass area is scarred up, they will repair it. The drilling will take two days.

Hayward concurred that the area is not pristine. He reported that rubber and metal sticks out of the earth. He noted that there was plenty of area to move around and not cause damage to the trees.

Fairbairn was concerned that they might miss information from the lower area. Fleming indicated that it was a comprehensive site assessment. That the sampling will go down thirty feet and that the borings will be spread out to get the necessary information. He indicated that there will 19 locations plus three outside the area. They are doing as much as they can for the money. He noted that the site is known to be impacted. The goal is to find out if there is any risk currently or for the future.

Vote: Martin move that a negative determination be made for the RDA for Sawins & Williams Ponds Disposal Site. Hammett seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Request for amendment 20 Seyon Street, Eight temporary parking spaces, Brian McCarthy, representative for RJ O’Connell.

Hayward reported that the item was withdrawn as the eight parking spaces were relocated outside of the CC jurisdiction.

4. March 2007 Minutes – To be reviewed at the May meeting.

5. Old Business - Not Discussed

Item	Update status
Whitney Hill Report	Watson forwarded report to Town attorney. Pallotta McDermott to forward plan to TC.
Recycling Center/Filippello Park	TC will consider the Recycle Center to remain at site with a land swap. If no place in found in 90 days, the recycle center will move. CC will not respond until after the 90 days – June 2007.
Storm Water Monitoring Results	Hayward met with Mee, John Murphy and Paul Blinko. Mee looking forward to meeting with CC on SW issues. Mee to be scheduled in June.
Water Conservation Program	Pallotta McDermott to talk to Mee regarding water conservation program.
Gore Estate	Martin delineated and calculated area. Pallotta McDermott and Martin met with Watson. Watson and Scott to be contact with UBS in lieu of CC. Hayward to ask for schedule of meetings and request to be included. UBS waiting to hear from CC.
GSA	West side of delineation to be included. 150’ buffer and 50’ no build to be included. Letter of appreciation to Bob Davis. Letter to DCR not to accept property until all buildings are removed. Davis to be contacted regarding Section 206.
Ordinance	Staff to contact K&P attorney for informal meeting with Bering, Hayward and Hammett to review changes. Watson to be informed.
Pleasant Street Master	Pallotta McDermott to discuss with Watson.

Plan	
Pleasant Street Tree Fund	Hayward found and distributed Minutes of 10/6/04 regarding K&P tree fund escrow account.

6. New Business

April 24 Earth Day Clean Up – Hayward reported that Watertown Square to Yacht Club is scheduled for an Earth Day Clean Up.

James Smith, 61 Bridge Street, reported that there is a hazardous tree by the MDC pool next to a painted turtle nesting ground. He also raised concerns about the gravel mound by Walker Pond. He noted that the pond was an area frequented by wild ducks and blue heron.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm