

Wakefield Conservation Commission – Minutes – September 23, 2021

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Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani, Vice Chairman Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Ken Alepidis, Peter Miller; Frank Calandra; Silvana Bouhlal
Rebecca Davis, Judy Green

9/9/21 minutes – Mr. Calandra made a motion to approve the September 9, 2021 minutes.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-609 – 410 Salem Street (Heron Pond Condos) – Heron Pond Condo Trust – Public Hearing: Notice of Intent (NOI) for the construction of a retaining wall and drainage structures within the buffer to bordering vegetated wetland (BVW) – Greg Hochmuth of Williams & Sparages was present for the applicant. The proposal calls for regrading and trenching behind buildings 1 and 2 for placement of extended downspouts in order to direct water away from the buildings. The downspouts would daylight at the wall. A small retaining wall will also be installed. This wall will be 2 blocks high only and will have a gravel base beneath. He noted that settling had occurred in the area of the existing retaining wall. There will be no change to the existing wall. A silt sock would be bound to the ground for erosion control.

Mr. Luciani asked if the downspouts discharge to an underground system.

Mr. Hochmuth stated they do not.

Mr. Luciani asked if any units currently get water in the basement.

Mr. Hochmuth stated there is some in building 2.

Ms. Bouhlal asked if this type of work would be needed behind other buildings.

Mr. Hochmuth stated it would not.

Mr. Luciani asked how much fill would be placed.

Mr. Hochmuth stated it would be up to 2' in some spots.

Ms. Belmonte asked why the downspouts could not simply be extended rather than trenching and filling.

Mr. Hochmuth stated that they are trying to make the lawn areas more usable. They are currently uneven. He does not think this work would impact the wetland.

Mr. Calandra felt that it may be worthwhile to wait until Spring 2022 to undertake the work.

Mr. Hochmuth concurred.

Mr. Luciani asked why they hadn't determined the cause of the sinking ground.

Mr. Hochmuth stated the investigation would be a huge undertaking.

Mr. Luciani stated that they would review the original site plan to determine the previous grade.

A site visit will be conducted 9/26/21 at 8:00AM.

DEP#313-608 – 200-400 Quannapowitt Parkway – CCF Quannapowitt Parkway Co. LLC – continued public hearing: Notice of Intent for the construction of 3 multi-family residential buildings, access road, parking, drainage, landscaping, and utilities within Bordering Land Subject to Flooding and Riverfront – Mitch Maslenka and Scott Goddard from Goddard Consulting and Matt D'Amico from CCF were present for the applicants.

Mr. Alepidis recused himself from this hearing.

Mr. Maslenka stated that the buffer zone is currently mostly paved. He contended that the proposal will improve degraded surface area. The proposed buildings and reconfigured islands will decrease paved surface area as well as increase vegetation. Run-off would flow from Quannapowitt Parkway, through the proposed wet basin to the bordering vegetated wetland (BVW). He noted that he was on-site this week to review sediment in the wetland. Test pits were dug indicating that the paved swale, which extends into the BVW, is filled with 6" to 8" of sediment. He does not recommend restoration as vegetation is healthy. He contended that the proposed wet basins would decrease sediment deposition in the wetland. Invasive plants along the shoreline would also be removed and replaced with native species.

Mr. Luciani requested clarification of how the perennial stream connects to the lake.

Mr. Maslenka stated he would review and report back. He added that he is still compiling a performance standards report per the Commission's previous request.

Mr. Luciani noted that the Commission would like to maintain a 25' setback in several areas.

Mr. Maslenka again stated that the wet basins would improve the buffer.

Mr. Luciani stated that he did not feel that the project meets the performance standards for working in the 25' buffer.

Mr. Calandra noted that the applicant has contended that the wet basins would not be a disturbance.

Mr. Luciani does not feel that the basins should be so close.

Mr. Maslenka stated that erosion controls would be used during installation. He added that he felt that any impact to the existing lawn area would not have a negative impact on wildlife habitat.

Mr. Luciani does not think lawn area could simply be dismissed as having no wildlife habitat value. He requested a written justification for this contention.

Mr. Maslenka stated that the new plantings and ponding area would improve wildlife habitat. He added that the graded areas would also be considered basins. Runoff from the buildings would be directed to the wet basins and bioretention areas.

Mr. Luciani asked how the effectiveness of the wet basins was evaluated.

Mr. Maslenka stated that the site engineer could address that at the next meeting.

Mr. Luciani expressed his disagreement with the riverfront assessment. He does not feel that retention areas should be placed within 100' of the lake.

Mr. Maslenka stated that his forthcoming report would show how this is an allowable use.

Ms. Vreeland stated that she and Ms. Davis agree that BSC Group should be retained as the Commission's consultant. She also spoke with Mr. Renault regarding stormwater review. He will prepare a summary for the Commission.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to ask BSC Group to submit an engagement letter.

Mr. Luciani made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Belmonte asked what temporary measures could be put in place to avoid further sedimentation build-up in the BVW from the degraded areas.

Mr. Romano suggested placing silt socks in the broken curb areas.

Mr. Maslenka stated that he looked at the site today and the vegetation looked fine. He added that they would move forward with stormwater management efforts once this application has been approved.

Dennis Cloherty – Harvest Lane – expressed concern with water flow onto his property.

Outstanding issues to be addressed:

- Temporary remediation of degraded parking area.
- Concerns regarding stream elevation.
- Profile of wet basins and relation to ground water.
- Address how wet basins would be an improvement to the wetland.
- Test pit locations to be noted on a plan.
- Written justification and photos to explain how current vegetation in the river mitigates sediment deposition. Areas of sediment also need to be located on the plan for review.

Mr. Luciani questioned the inclusion in the drainage report of a sewer suitability assessment review form. He noted that it appeared to be relative to the test pits. There is also a certification requirement which is not signed.

Mr. D'Amico stated that he would speak to the civil engineer for clarification.

Mr. Miller noted that the proposed intensity of use for this lot is going from daytime office park use to 24 hours a day, 7 days per week activity. He asked how a more intensive usage and its associated stress on the wetland resource would be factored in.

Mr. Goddard stated that the regulations do not speak to that. He contended that human activity and traffic activity are not factored into alterations to wetland resource areas.

Ms. Belmonte asked if the Zoning Board of Appeals had requested any plan changes.

Mr. D'Amico stated that the only changes to date were storm water related.

This matter was continued to 10/14/21.

DEP#313-567 – 0 Patriot Circle – Request for minor modification – homeowner Steven Leppo and architect Julianne Tavares were present. He noted that the design of the home has been altered. The footprint has been enlarged by 15 square feet.

Mr. Miller asked if this would impact the 25' buffer.

Ms. Vreeland noted that it would not as the lot sits atop a retaining wall which is 25' from the wetland.

Mr. Miller made a motion to accept the change as a minor modification.

Mr. Luciani made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-602 – 237 Water Street – Water St. Wash Joint Venture RT – Notice of Intent – this matter was continued to 12/9/21 at the applicant's request.

DEP#313-607 – Lake Street – Foundry Development LLC – This matter was continued to 10/14/21.

DEP#313-596 – 67 Harrison Avenue – This matter was continued to 10/14/21 at the applicant's request.

DEP#313-578 – 200 Quannapowitt Parkway – Request for Certificate of Compliance – no work undertaken.

Mr. Luciani asked if the wetland delineation line would then be vacated.

Ms. Vreeland stated that it would be valid for 2 more years.

Mr. Miller made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance.

Ms. Bouhlal made a second to the motion.

After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed. Mr. Alepidis abstained.

109 Farm Street – The homeowners will be filing a Notice of Intent (NOI) for an addition as well as an after-the-fact NOI for the prior installation of a pool. They have asked if a mortgage plan would suffice as a site plan.

Mr. Miller noted that based on previous aerials, several large trees were taken down in the area of the pool.

Ms. Vreeland stated that the homeowner contended that they had not filed an NOI before receiving a building permit as there had been a plan several years ago to culvert the stream. (The work was not undertaken.) Based on this, they concluded that the stream would no longer be a resource area and distance to the wetland was no longer a factor. They were also not required to obtain a stream setback variance.

Mr. Calandra noted that the plan needs to show the 25' no-disturb line, 100' BVW line, distance from both the house to the pool and the pool to the stream and cut tree locations.

The Commission requested submission of a new plan with the above noted additions.

19 Kathy Lane – Request for Certificate of Compliance – This filing was approved in 1990.

Ms. Vreeland conducted a site visit today. No issues were noted.

Mr. Miller made a motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance.

Mr. Calandra made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

49 Essex Street – tree removal request – Ms. Vreeland forwarded the tree removal policy to the homeowner as the tree is alive. This matter was continued to 10/14/21.

24 Winnisimmette Avenue – This matter was continued to 10/14/21.

Setback bylaw – This matter was continued to the next meeting.

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Bouhlal made a second to the motion.

After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.