

Wakefield Conservation Commission Minutes – May 16, 2023

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Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani, Peter Miller, Ken Alepidis, Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Haley McHatton-Ballou; Paul Wendelgass

Conservation Agent: Rebecca Davis

5/2/23 minutes – Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a motion to approve the 5/2/23 minutes.

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

DEP#313-627 – 17 Butler Avenue - Rod Rivera & Kandara Krishnakumar - Notice of Intent: continued public hearing for renovations on existing single-family to enclose a porch within the buffer to bordering vegetated wetland (BVW) Mr. Rivera and Mr. Krishnakumar were present.

As a file number from DEP has now been issued Mr. Luciani made a motion to close the public hearing.

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

Mr. Luciani made a motion to issue a standard Order of Conditions with the following two special conditions:

- Trash and debris behind the garage and fence, extending into the wetland is to be removed.
- The rear yard will be graded, loamed and seeded.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Standard Order of Conditions – Ms. Davis noted that condition #36 would be amended to reflect the Commission's tree removal policy.

DEP 313-623 - 1 Harrison Lane – Rochelle Hall Public Hearing (cont.): Notice of Intent for the removal of a deck and shed and the construction of an addition within the Riverfront Area. **At the applicant's request, this matter was continued to 6/6/23.**

DEP#313-262 – 8 Thistledale Road – CJ Lui – Notice of Intent: continued public hearing for the for the construction of a 16' by 32' addition and new deck and stairway within the buffer to Inland Bank. John Ogren of Hayes Engineering and the homeowner were present. An amended plan was submitted for review this evening. Mr. Ogren noted that the stairs off the back of the proposed deck had been modified in order to move beyond 50' from the stream. Additionally, the driveway will be extended along the length of the addition.

Ms. Davis asked if the lawn is currently mowed up to the edge of the bordering vegetated wetland (BVW).

Mr. Ogren stated that it was.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to close the public hearing.

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

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to issue a standard Order of Conditions.

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

Open Space and Recreation Plan survey – Ms. Davis noted that the survey will remain open for the next few months in order to allow for more respondents.

DEP#313-625 – 1 Audubon Road - iFly Holdings LLC – continued public hearing: Notice of Intent for the construction of a 3,500 square foot indoor skydiving facility, parking lot, utilities, and stormwater management within the buffer to Bank, BVW, and within Riverfront Area – John Ogren from Hayes Engineering and a representative for the applicant were present. Mr. Ogren stated that the proposed parking area will be atop a currently vegetated area. He added that the proposal will restore 8,000 square feet of degraded riverfront area.

Mr. Miller asked if a planting plan had been developed for the area to be re-vegetated.

Mr. Ogren stated that they propose to use a New England wetland seed mix as well as native plants and shrubs.

Mr. Romano requested that they also use pollinator friendly plants.

Mr. Ogren stated that in response to DEP's comments the noted high water mark is 64.48'. He added that a test hole would be dug as part of the building permit. Regarding parking, it was noted that required parking would be less than required.

Ms. Belmonte asked if parking could be reduced further.

Mr. Ogren stated that it could not as this additional use puts a strain on the hotel parking.

Mr. Romano requested submission of a planting plan.

This matter was continued to 6/6/23. hearing

Eagle Scout – Ms. Davis stated that an Eagle Scout candidate is in the process of formalizing a proposal for submission to the Commission. He has expressed interest in mapping trails and exploring access points to the trails from Town owned parcels.

DEP#313-624 - 572-596 North Avenue – Dana Lopez + Richard Nickerson – continued public hearing: Notice of Intent for the construction of a 36-unit apartment building within the buffer to BVW. Attorney Jesse Schomer and Mr. Lopez were present.

Mr. Schomer stated that they are in the process of completing the wetland delineation forms. He noted that the stream had been determined to be intermittent.

Ms. Davis stated that it would be important to obtain soil samples. She added that the landscaping plan cited on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) website included non-native tree species that are not desirable for this site. She will work with the applicant's landscape architect.

Mr. Romano noted that the stream in question is the primary outlet to Lake Quannapowitt.

Mr. Schomer stated that they had no problem changing plant species. The trees were chosen in an attempt to beautify the site. This would also require approval of a minor modification from the ZBA.

Ms. Davis asked if the weeping willow at the rear of the lot would remain.

Mr. Schomer stated that he would ask and report back.

This matter was continued to 6/6/23.

DEP#313-620 - Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School – Continued Public Hearing: Notice of Intent for the demolition of existing school, construction of new school, parking lots, athletic fields, utilities, and stormwater management system within Bank, Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), the Buffer Zone, and the Riverfront Area – David Conway from Nitsch Engineering; Kevin Nigro from PMA Consultants; Carl Franceschi DRA; Dan Wells and Andrea Kendall from LEC; Attorneys Julie Barry and Rob Schlein were present for the applicants. Town Engineer Bill Renault was also present. Revised plans were submitted for review this evening.

Ms. Barry stated that stamped plans and answers to Ms. Davis's questions were submitted for review this evening.

Ms. Kendall noted that the invasive removal plan had been enhanced in response to the Commission's wetland peer reviewer consultant comments. She noted that roof runoff directed to the certified vernal pool, during small storm events, would infiltrate underground. During a 100-year storm event water would bubble over the pipe resulting in non-erosive impacts. The point of adding the runoff to this area is to maintain water budget balance. Thermal impacts from this runoff are not anticipated as the water temperature is not expected to be greater than ambient.

Mr. Conway stated that the snow management plan would follow Department of Transportation standards.

Mr. Luciani expressed concern regarding logistics of the snow plowing.

Mr. Conway stated that the plowing contractor would be aware of the requirements.

Mr. Luciani asked what level of salt would be detrimental to the environment. He noted that the wetland could be impacted or destroyed. He requested monitoring of salt levels.

Mr. Conway stated that they would use the smallest amount possible.

Mr. Romano concurred with Mr. Luciani's point regarding salt use.

Mr. Conway stated that he had worked on 200 school projects and had not killed a single wetland due to salting. He does not feel that this is as big a problem as it is being made out to be. He added that there is no intention to monitor these levels as he does not feel that there is a need to.

Karen Johnson – Malden – does not feel that a 0' to 25' wetland buffer is sufficient.

Doug Heath – Stedman Street – expressed concern regarding destruction of wetlands due to salt use.

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Paul Rybicki – Parker Road – asked why the lighting plan did not specify a wavelength that would be wildlife friendly.

Bronwyn Dellavolpe – Cyrus Street – felt that the lighting plan was incomplete. She requested that the Commission require a detailed, wildlife-friendly lighting plan. She also expressed concern with chemicals leeching from the PVC piping into wetlands. She also asked about ongoing monitoring of salt impacts.

Mr. Romano noted that the applicant did not agree to ongoing monitoring. He added that the Commission has concerns about this as well.

Bob Brooks – June Circle – expressed concern with blasting and rock crushing activities and the impact on wetland health as well as private property flooding.

Christine Rioux – Woodland Road – expressed concern regarding blasting effects on ground water, buffers and the wetlands.

Mr. Romano asked if ammonium nitrate would be used during blasting.

Mr. Conway state that it would not.

Linda Ireland – Melrose – noted that Town Engineer has recommended review of the blasting plan by a Geotechnical consultant.

Tricia Priestly – Forest Street – asked why this location was preferable to an already cleared area.

Katie Butler – Montrose Avenue – concerned with the environmental destruction.

Sasha Savoie – Melrose – requested that the Commission consider environmental and climate changes.

Janet Cohen – Melrose – felt that protection of wildlife habitat is a reason not to allow blasting.

Mr. Romano stated that the applicants had requested to close the public hearing.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to close the public hearing.

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

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn.

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