

MEETING MINUTES

Conservation Commission
October 26, 2023 6:30 PM
Auditorium, Waterford Town Hall

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2023 NOV -1 P 1:24

Members Present: Matthew Keatley, Geneva Renegar, Wade Thomas
Members Absent: David Lersch (notified), Tali Maidelis (notified), Richard Muckle (notified),
(1 vacancy)
Alternates Present: Ivy Plis (2 vacancies)
Staff Present: Maureen FitzGerald, Environmental Planner
Kim Powell, Recording Secretary

ATTEST: *Dina L. Lopez*
TOWN CLERK

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by W. Thomas, acting Chair, at 6:30 PM. I. Plis was seated for D. Lersch.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Motion made by M. Keatley, seconded by I. Plis to approve the October 12, 2023 meeting minutes.

Vote: 3-0-1, G. Renegar abstained.

3. NEW APPLICATIONS

C-23-09: 295 & 313 Willetts Ave.; 16 & 18 Boston Post Road, Proposed hotel and associated parking and storm water management systems; Woodsprings Suites – Applicant, CLA Engineers, Inc. - Agent

Robert Russo, Soil Scientist from CLA Engineers presented the proposed activity. The building will be a 122 room hotel with parking and storm water management basins. The inland wetland area on the western side of the site is an isolated area comprised primarily of red maple swamp with greenbriers. R. Russo noted the wetland functions are limited due to surrounding land use. The wetland is used by local wildlife and birds. The primary access to the facility will be from Route 1. Willetts Avenue will provide access for emergency and utility vehicles.

R. Russo reviewed the location of the two storm water management basins that are designed to hold 2" of rainfall run-off, treating many of the pollutants associated with run-off. The storm water system is designed to reduce flows leaving the site. He stated there is no direct impact to wetlands from the project. Activity in the upland review area includes the storm water basin, a portion of the parking and access drive, and proposed landscaped areas. A rain garden will be installed by the dumpster area and by the Boston Post Road access.

Commission members requested a vegetated buffer be included around the isolated wetland. W. Thomas requested the engineer review if the outlet from the southern basin can be moved to the east to avoid conflict with the sanitary line. R. Russo reviewed the proposed proximity of the development to the wetland boundary and adjacent playground. He stated the project engineer will be available to answer questions at the next meeting.

4. APPLICATION REVIEW

C-23-8: 33 Kenyon Road, New Construction; Congregation Beth El Temple, Inc. - Applicant, Wayne S. Garrick, AIA - Agent

Staff noted the applicant's agent is working on revised plans to address additional wetland area on the site.

5. VIOLATIONS

52 Gurley Road: Notice of Violation – Issued 10-13-23, Unauthorized Grading & Clearing of Stream Channel, Restoration Plan required by 10-26-23

Mr. Jeff Reagan, owner, gave background information of the property and described the clean-up of debris and fallen trees that resulted in the unauthorized activity. Mr. Reagan explained the restoration plan proposes planting ten red twig dogwoods 8 feet apart along the western channel embankment. Additional plantings will be added if needed for stabilization of the stream. The lawn will be maintained with proper mowing up to the stream area as it is throughout the property.

The commission accepted the restoration plan and directed staff to draft a permit authorization for review at the next meeting. Mr. Reagan was notified he will need to submit a permit application fee.

577 Vauxhall Street Extension: Notice of Violation & Corrective Actions - Issued 6-14-23 Unauthorized Activity within Inland Wetlands & Watercourses, Restoration required by 11-1-23.

The corrective actions are required to be completed by November 1, 2023.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

49 Niantic River Road – Request to modify portion of non-encroachment area – revised plan

Staff reviewed that unauthorized mowing had been conducted in the non-encroachment area. The mowed area was not grubbed and will grow back. The owners are requesting a modification to the non-encroachment boundary as part of the restoration plan. They have submitted a revised plan for the Commission to consider.

Mr. and Mrs. Heard, owners, addressed the Commission. They purchased the subdivision lot behind their house and combined the properties. They installed a shed on the second property and would like to keep the land behind it cleared to the neighboring yard to improve visibility. They are also requesting the commission relax the non-encroachment boundary by 10 feet on average on the south side of the yard so they can mow around the forsythia and avoid weeds and poison ivy.

Staff explained the forsythia shrubs were planted by the prior owner along the established non-encroachment boundary and have since grown in width. The boundary will be marked with stakes with non-encroachment boundary markers attached.

Motion: Motion made by M. Keatley, second by I. Plis to accept the revised plan to modify the non-encroachment boundary and to have the owners submit an application.

Vote: 4-0

Staff will prepare a draft authorization for review at the next meeting.

Conservation Commission Annual Report 7/1/22-6/30/23

The Commission reviewed a draft of the report and highlights of commission actions.

Conservation Commission Proposed Annual Budget 2024-2025

The Commission reviewed the draft FY 24/25 budget. The requested budget amounts were the same as previous years.

Motion: Motion by M. Keatley, seconded by G. Renegar to approve the draft annual report and the draft budget.

Vote: 4-0

7. CORRESPONDENCE

CACIWC 2023 Annual Conference – November 11, 2023

8. PAYMENT OF BILLS

There were no bills.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Made by M. Keatley seconded by I. Plis to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM.

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,



Kim Powell
Recording Secretary