



## City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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### Public Meeting – Monday, April 8, 2018 at 7:00PM 147 Hampshire Street, Main Conference Room

#### MEETING MINUTES

The following meeting minutes were taken by Tracy Dwyer and are respectfully submitted.

Present Commission Members: Purvi Patel (Chair), Elysse Magnotto-Cleary, David Lyons, Kathryn Hess, Kenneth Nugent, Ted Pickering and Jennifer Letourneau (Director)

Absent Commission Members: Kaki Martin

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, Cambridge Public Works; James Wilcox, Cambridge Public Works, David Biancavilla, BCS Group; Robert Schlager, Bulfinch; Kathryn Rimol, BSC Group; Mark DiOrio, Bulfinch

Purvi Patel opened the hearing.

#### **7:00 - Request for Determination of Applicability BSC Group for Bulfinch Acorn Park Drive – Pavement Repair**

David Biancavilla and Kathryn Rimol from BSC Group went through the project, explaining to the commission that this would be a mill and overlay of Acorn Park Drive from the Belmont line to Discovery Way. In addition to the mill and overlay they will be repairing some curbing that has sunk over time. Currently there is two-way traffic, a bike lane and sidewalk for pedestrians, although part of the roadway that runs along the wetland area there is no sidewalk. Bulfinch and BSC would like widen road to ten and half feet, so an additional four and a half feet. This would accommodate the AASHTO requirements with having ten and half feet of roadway, five feet for a bike lane and five feet for a walkway. After the mill and overlay they would paint lines, double yellow for center line in road way, and then two additional white lines for distinguish from the bike lane and pedestrian walk way.

Purvi asked how much additional square footage are they adding to the roadway? David responded that they would be adding an additional 7000 square feet. David responded that in some places they will not get a five foot walk way, that it would go down to three feet because they are not intending to cut any trees in the area to make room for the widening of the road. David also explained they can not construct your traditional sidewalk with curbing because this section of roadway is adjacent to the wetland and can not install drainage. The drainage in this

area is simple, the rain runs off the roadway and it collects in the drainage area on the side of the road.

Purvi asked if there was no requirement for pre-treat? David pointed out that in section 10.02(2)(b) “minor areas are exempt”.

Kathryn asked if there are ever been this sort of structure built in the City? Since there is no curbing to differentiate from the bike lane and walk way? David explained this is a unique road, and that there can not be any traditional sidewalk constructed because they can not install drainage in that area. David stated that they will have signage up distinguishing from road, bike and pedestrian walk way.

Purvi asked about the AASHTO guidelines and David explained because there is now bus traffic in the area and with the increased residential units there are more people biking and walking in the area as well.

Elysse asked if they have received a sign off from DPW yet? They have not received a sign off from DPW.

Mark the representative of the owner, Robert Schlager from Bulfinch said that in 2000 they started the redevelopment of the site, the understanding that was once they were complete they would mill and overlay because the road is in such disrepair, and lots of potholes. There has been additional development and residences and more people walking and biking in the area, as well as the connection to Belmont.

Jim Wilcox from DPW stated that nothing formal has been submitted to engineering for review or approval. Jim explained that this would require a multi-department approval. He said that DPW, Traffic Department and CDD would all be involved in reviewing an approving the changes on Acorn Park Drive.

Mark explained that prior to building #200 and #300 there was no change in grading, they intend not to change any of the grading and this simply would be a mill and overlay and striping.

David explained in the area of Acorn Park Drive the stormwater drains to the pond area, in the section that has no curbing or sidewalk to the Belmont line they stormwater simply runs-off.

Purvi asked if they would have to go back to the Planning Board for any type of review of this, they didn't think they would need to.

Ken asked if there were issues with parking on the shoulder of Acorn Park Drive? He said the ground is pretty compacted from looking at the pictures. David explained that there was some issues during construction with construction vehicles parking on the shoulder but that they along with the Cambridge Police Department policed the area and that stopped. Ken said it seemed a little compacted from just walking traffic. David said currently there is no one parking on the shoulder and they feel with the improvements to the roadway and the markings for the bike lane and walk way that would deter vehicles from parking on the side of the road.

Mark explained there has been a lot of efforts for policing in the area. He said in the past, and it still becomes a problem from time to time that vehicles are using Acorn Park Drive as a cut through to by-pass traffic on route 2. They worked with the police to have a detail out to have traffic stop using it as a cut through. He said this road now has MBTA bus stops along it as well as some private bus company stops.

Robert Schlager from Bulfinch joined the commission and explained the overview of the project and explained the reasons why they wouldn't be able to install the traditional sidewalk with curbing on the south side of Acorn Park Drive.

**7:39** – Public Comment was opened

Ellen Maas from the Friends of Alewife Reservation was there to explain the importance of the area. She explained it to be a habitat for “urban wildlife”, she said that this project borders vegetation, she provided the commission maps to look at of the area. She went on to tell the commission that about three (3) months ago there was a “massive” tree cutting by Bulfinch, although she said it was never confirmed that it was actually by them. She suggested that the Bulfinch company install signage that states “Respect wildlife and wetlands”.

**7:44** – Public Comment was Closed

Purvi asked if this project was in the buffer zone, there is wetlands on either side of the road leading to Belmont. Jennifer explained that they have three (3) years to complete the project, if they alter the plans in anyway they will have to come back to the committee. Robert explained that this road was constructed back in 1941.

Purvi asked if they could lessen the widening of the road. It was stated that they could not because of the AASHTO standards.

Robert went on to explain that there has been an increase of two thousand (2000) units since 2004, there are a lot more pedestrians in the area, he would like to install a traditional sidewalk and guard rail for protection but can not because of the drainage issue. He said this was a shared road, with buses, vehicles, bikes and pedestrians and simply a mill and overlay of a public road.

Jennifer asked if there would be an opportunity to have more trees planted and Robert agreed he could do that.

Purvi asked that the committee include special and standard conditions and propose mitigation.

Robert also added that the signage for the shared road would only be at the crosswalks, as to not encourage pedestrians walking in the walk way.

Purvi asked if there was a prior project that was similar to this and Jennifer said yes that the Blanchard Road project was similar to this one.

David Lyons asked if there were similar projects that came through the committee like this one and Jennifer said yes.

The committee agreed to vote for a negative determination of applicability.

**8:02 - Administrative Topics**

Meeting Minutes from February 11, 2019 meeting were approved.

**8:05 - Meeting Adjourned**

