



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Jennifer Letourneau, Director

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Public Meeting – Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 6:00 PM 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), Jennifer Letourneau (Director), David Lyons (Vice Chair), Kaki Martin, Erum Sattar, Elysse Magnotto-Cleary, Kathryn Hess

Absent Commission Members: Ted Pickering

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, Cambridge Public Works; James Wilcox, Cambridge Public Works; Kara Falise, Cambridge Public Works; Kate Riley, Cambridge Public Works; Swaathi Joseph, Cambridge Community Development; Doug Hartnett, Highpoint Engineering; Jesse Aguilar, Highpoint Engineering; Tyson Reynoso, King Street Properties; James Rafferty, Adams & Rafferty; Hannah Loope, Wagner Hodgson; Jack Kelly, Bartlett; John Rochwood, EcoTec; John Hawinkson, Cambridge Day

Purvi Patel opened the meeting.

The Commission voted to have Jennifer Letourneau, Director be the signatory. The other commission members will send their electronic signatures.

The Commission approved.

6:07 – Notice of Intent

King Street Properties

101 Cambridgepark Drive – Offsite Bike Path

Doug Hartnett from Highpoint Engineering was there to go through the project with the commission. Doug stated that this is a multiuse path for the public to use. The location of the path has a twenty-five-foot river front set back and land subject to flooding. The path will include an elevated timber boardwalk at the elevation of three feet and the boardwalk is about eight-six feet long. In the land subject to flooding there will be fill in and minor regrading totaling about twenty-nine cubic yards. The total area effected is about twenty-five thousand square feet to the left and right, and of that twenty-two hundred square feet has already been impacted.

The project will bring enhancements to the area and removal of invasive species, the process to remove the invasive species would be blotting wooded roots. They would also be improving the habitat enhancements by using log sections in locations for wildlife to burrow and stones for the same purpose. They would be planting native shrubs and trees, with that they will be removing eight trees, none in total one of which is dead all of these trees are along the lot line. They are also removing a chain link fence that runs along the lot line near the MBTA property.

Jim Wilcox from Cambridge Public Works reviewed his memo comments with the commission and proponents. Jim stated that King Street Properties are in the permitting process now with DPW for 87/101 Cambridgepark Drive. In regard to the invasive treatment that Highpoint stated that they would be doing, this would take more than one application and is more of an on-going process and not a one time and done. Jim also noted that test pits should be done for the location of the storm drainpipe that is located on the property. Jim suggested a O & M plan for the maintenance of the path and suggests some sort of safety measure for when the path floods in storm events.

Purvi stated that Jim had also made comments about the ADA requirements and accessibility of the path and she said as those are important the Conservation Commission has no jurisdiction over those.

David Lyons asked about the CSO issue and access to the property for construction.

Doug answered that contractor access would start from the northside of the project they would begin to grade out the land to stage and build walkway. The staging of the timber walkway would be at 87 Cambridgepark Drive. Doug suggested that signage be put into place notifying users of the flooding potential and not to use the path if it is flooded. He does not suggest a barrier for this area as that is too restrictive if emergency personnel need to access the path in emergencies.

Elysse Magnotto-Cleary asked about the start date of the project and the duration of the project?

Doug stated he believed the project would begin around 2022, which would be at the end of the building project at 87/101 Cambridgepark Drive. Tyson Reynoso from King Street Properties stated that they are hoping to get the project going in the summer/fall season of 2022, but with the current COVID-19 pandemic, things may get pushed back.

Erum Sattar asked if they had a sense of the habitat that is currently living in the area? Also she asked about the signage for the flooding and whether signage would actually keep people out of the area?

Doug answered that today there is no value to the habitat now, that do to the landscape. He said that there are probably other areas of the Fitchburg cut off that have flooding issues, so they could investigate that. They could also work with DPW about how they could notify the public.

Kathryn Hess asked about the nine trees being removed and also about the other trees mentioned that might be needed to be removed that are along the edge of the land. She also asked about sheet C500 – the groundwater and how they are using that information and how often it fluctuates? Also Kathryn asked about the flooding and how often that floods? She also asked about the runoff from the maintenance of the path particularly in regards to deicing in the winter months.

Doug stated the potential for more trees to be removed would be determined by the contractor once they start to work. They don't know what the impacts would be to tree roots, if their root systems would need to be cut, etc. They would be replacing trees that would be removed and as of now they are removing eight living trees and one dead tree. The planting plan that they have established is to plant eleven new trees and one hundred shrubs.

As far as the groundwater on-site, Doug stated that they did a boring and at elevation 12.5 they had groundwater when they did the test for the building on the adjacent site.

Jim Wilcox from Public Works answered Kathryn's question regarding the flooding. Jim stated in his twenty years working for the City he said maybe five times the area flooded. So he said there is potential for every four to five years they could expect flooding.

As far as the question regarding run off Doug stated that they would be submitting an O & M plan as part of the DPW stormwater management plan. He stated that the maintenance of the path would be the responsibility of King Street Properties.

Kaki Martin said she did some calculations of the caliber of the trees being removed and replaced. She said that about one hundred and thirty-six (136) caliber inches were being removed and one hundred and three (103) caliber inches would be replaced which she was happy about. She asked that the commission make sure that there are no changes that would decrease the caliber inches being replaced. She said that there should be language about maintenance of the trees as well as language about the City's requirements for replacement.

Jim Wilcox stated that for example the Green Line Project was exempt from the City's requirements about tree removals and replacements. He said that the MBTA has been very responsive to notifying the City Council when trees were being removed.

Kaki responded that she hoped that the tree number would not be reduced.

Jennifer Letourneau said that she has very good communication with the MBTA and she was confident that would continue.

Purvi Patel asked how the 103 caliber inches were calculated and she asked about the new mitigation commitment. Purvi asked that a narrative be submitted explaining about the work being done about the invasive species.

7:03 – Public Comment was opened.

No public comment.

Purvi would like this hearing continued she said she would like the proponents to submit some more information regarding the project.

David said he would approve the Notice of Intent with the conditions, if Jennifer could review them.

Jennifer reviewed the conditions with the permit. She said that the proponents would need to revise sheets C200, C300 and C400 (ADA requirements) as Jim Wilcox stated in his memo.

Jennifer stated that the flooding events would be covered during the DPW permitting process. In regards to the tree removals she said that if there was any change in the planting plans they would need to re-do the plan and if there was a substantial change in the plan that the proponent would need to come back to the commission. Jennifer stated will all projects that they would need to have a three-year plan that would give the plants time to establish themselves and they would be responsible for them for three years.

Elysse - yes

Erum – yes, she would like to see more detail about the invasive trees.

Jennifer stated that with the O & M requirement they would need to submit a landscape maintenance plan, so that would cover it.

Kathryn – yes

Kaki – yes

7:13 – The commission approved the Notice of Intent

6 yes, 1 abstain, 1 absent

7:16 – Administrative Topics

Meeting Minutes from March 9, 2020 meeting were approved.

Jennifer told the commission that the meeting scheduled for April 22, 2020 was cancelled. The City's Law Department was reviewing all public meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic and has stated that we would need to cancel the meeting.

7:19 – Meeting Adjourned

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