



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Public Meeting – Monday, July 25, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

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

Present Commission Members: Jennifer Letourneau (Director), Purvi Patel (Chair), David Lyons (Vice Chair), Kathryn Hess, Michelle Lane, Erum Sattar, Kaki Martin

Absent Commission Members: Elysse Magnotto-Cleary

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, DPW; Jim Wilcox, DPW; Michael Bellomo; Jennifer Soto; Mark Smith, CMG Environmental; Bruna Rossetti, North American Development; Jason Santana, North American Development; John Rockwood, EcoTech; Dan Anderson, Anderson Porter; Bryan Walsh, VHB; Kelan Koncewicz, VHB; Sam Hasso, CMG Environmental; Sarah Nitchman, OJB; Jacob Kain, Elkus Manfredi; Matt Lerner, Longfellow Real Estate; Annie Raftery, VHB

Purvi Patel opened the meeting. Purvi stated the commission will no longer be voting on projects that need revisions or updates and they needed to be copied to Mass DEP.

7:00 – Notice of Intent – Continued from June 13, 2022

56-58 Magoun Street
Redevelopment – Floodplain

John Rockwood from EcoTech stated that they had various meetings with City staff and with the comments from DPW they had revised their submission. John stated this site is in northern Cambridge and that the site is five thousand seven hundred and fifty-eight (5,758) square feet and a portion of the site is located within bordering land, with some flooding and the site flood plain elevation is at elevation 18.4 Cambridge city base. The existing conditions is a small single family with a rear deck and a small patio and paved driveway the balance of the property is lawn. They are proposing a second home be built onsite at the rear making the original single family home smaller. John stated they are proposing a few wood decks, a paved driveway, infiltration system and a compensatory storage area. John said due to DPW's comments a third storm tech chamber was added and the location was adjusted slightly now this system will accommodate roof run off from the front building which wasn't picked up originally. Also, there was clarification in the rear building that there is no basement, and the first floor is above the flood

plain elevation, the window well location has been adjusted slightly and the sump pump has been relocated into the basement and now both sump pumps are routed into the infiltration system. The trench drain in the driveway has now been changed to a deep sump catch basin. John stated that they had received an updated memo from DPW that appears that they have meet all the recommended changes and there were no additional changes. John stated that in regard to the resource area impacts they are placing fill within four hundred and forty-four (440) square feet of bordering land subject flooding and six hundred and thirty five (635) square feet of the bordering land subject to flooding will be reduced in grade to promote flood flow across the site. John stated the flood flow is shallow about six (6) inches, so they are doing this, so it does not interfere with flood flow going across the site into the rear of the property. John stated that four hundred and seventy-nine (479) square feet of land outside the bordering land will be graded as a compensatory storage area. John said this project will fill one hundred and seventy-six (176) cubic feet and create one hundred and ninety-two (192) cubic feet of flood plain between elevations 18 and 18.4 and this will provide a net increase on the site of 15.4 cubic feet of flood elevation.

Purvi noted on Jim Wilcox's comments that there was one recommendation on the as-builts. Purvi wanted to ask Jen how this is different from the typical as-built plans that they normally put in the conditions when they approve an order of conditions. Jen stated that this is typically what we ask for, but she thought Jim was referring of a cut and fill table to get a COC.

Purvi noted that David Lyons and Kaki Martin have joined the meeting.

Jen wanted to note the Mass DEP does have a file number and they have no technical comments.

Kathryn Hess stated that since she's been on the commission she has never been in a hearing for a private home and wanted to know if these homes were joined together and how the site was going to be managed. She asked if these are two condos, and would they be assured that nothing happens to the land were flood storage was created, like a raised bed.

John stated that these are two single family homes, he said that Bruna could respond whether it's going to be sold as a condo that they will just be buying the building or whether you get part of the lot in the sale. John stated that anyone who decides to do something in an area subject to jurisdiction is responsible for getting approval from the Conservation Commission. Kathryn said that the average citizen would not know that and asked if this would be part of the deed. John said it could be made part of the sales process. John asked Bruna to respond and suggested that as part of the sales agreement, a copy of the order of conditions be included so the purchaser is aware that there is flood plain on site and what their obligations should be. Bruna stated that they would be sold as condos and that all the plans and anything else they need to know would be part of the sales agreement.

Jason Santana reaffirmed what Bruna said that they would disclose all the information regarding the conditions of the property with the attorneys as well as the banks, so everyone is aware of the restrictions on the property.

David Lyons stated he thought it was a bit much of the owners of the condos to be taking care of something like this, David asked Jen and Jim of whether the city takes oversight and note in this neighborhood providing notice or oversight of the flood plain.

Jim stated that when they have something come up like this when there is a sale of a property the city asks who is going to be responsible for the maintenance, and that would be the maintenance for the drainage system and sewer system, and they ask for an excerpt of the condo documents so it's clear to DPW who is responsible for maintenance. Jim stated the other thing with the site it does not trigger and stormwater permit, but it does have stormwater bmp the deep sump catch basin and infiltration system so this will be on schedule for an audit by DPW to confirm that they are doing the maintenance that is noted in the plan.

David thanked Jim and said it was helpful to hear that the city was going to do that.

Kathryn also wanted to point out that this is not far from the larger development IQHQ in the Alewife area.

7:17 – Public Comment

No public comment.

7:20 – Public Comment Closed

6 – In favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 - Abstained

Purvi asked if there are any of special conditions that should be noted of the order of conditions. She stated that there seems to be mechanisms in place to review the responsibility for the residents for the compensatory flood storage management.

Jen said that the standard conditions for the order of conditions is that they will need to provide an O & M plan to get the COC and clear the deed or deeds of the property. She stated everything will need to be put in the as-built plan to close out this project.

7:21 – The commission unanimously agrees to approve the Order of Conditions.

6 – In favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 - Abstained

7:22 – Request for Determination of Applicability (Floodplain)

2615 Massachusetts Avenue

Gas Station Upgrades

Mark Smith, a Professional Engineer from CMG Environmental was present to discuss the project. They have prepared plans for some improvements at the Alewife Mobile. Mark stated that this is a three-bay service station with no canopies over the gas pumps but have gotten approval to add canopies. Mark said that as part of the improvements that they would be replacing the four-gas pump dispenser, new islands and double wall piping as well as adding canopies over them.

Jennifer explained that all what Mark outlined is not in the flood plain and she pointed out on the map that the flood plain was to the north.

Mark stated that there is an elevation of 6.8 right at the back of the property and is far away from their proposed activities. Mark explained that all the curbing onsite and paving limits will remain

the same. Mark said that they were proposing to add in a five thousand (5000) gallon underground tank well into the property for diesel gas. Mark stated that there were some drainage improvements that they would make onsite, replacing a catch basin with a deep sump catch basin with a hood and replace the pipe and also adding in a stormwater treatment unit so it is treated before it leaves the site. Mark said that they are also proposing to replace a fence on the north side of the property and that fence replacement is just clip the flood zone, but no changes in grade.

Mark stated he read through DPW's comments and will submit an O & M plan and will take out the necessary permits needed.

Purvi Patel asked Mark to talk about the current and existing flooding onsite that you or the owner have experienced or that occurs in the neighborhood.

Mark said he did not talk to the owner about flooding on site or any issues and he said he did meet with the owner, but they did not discuss flooding.

Jennifer stated that when there is significant rainfall she does rounds and stated that this site does not have any standing water. She said it may have some puddles where the asphalt is cracked and sunk or dips. Jennifer stated that there tends to be more standing water on the other side of the street near Alewife Brook towards Arlington and Medford area where catch basins are not cleaned regularly.

Purvi explained to the commission that they would be voting on the applicability and the applicant is looking for a negative determination based on no grading changes with the replacement of the fence.

Erum Sattar asked why there were sump pumps going into the site that aren't currently there and asked for the reason for them.

Mark stated that there are no sump pumps going in that there would be four gas pumps going in, they were just upgrading their old pumps and the big driver to this project is adding in the canopies over the pump stations.

Purvi asked Mark if they needed to meet the new DEP guidelines for tier II for the new double walled pipes and tanks. Mark said this project is not being driven by getting into compliance but that they were doing upgrades.

Kathryn Hess asked Mark to talk about the construction protections, what protections will they be using to protect the resource area and, she asked he talk about the fence replacement that clips the flood plain and how is that going to be done in a way that does not affect the resource area.

Mark said that they will have an erosion control plan, with straw waddles to catch sediments.

The fence posts are replaced every eight to ten feet and it is very limited and controlled. Mark stated they will also have straw waddles across the curb cut on the low side towards Alewife Brook Parkway. When paving is stripped, they will have those in place to catch any sediment running off site. He stated the construction entrance would also be off Alewife Brook Parkway. Mark stated they will be adding in silt sacks into the catch basins near the site and will leave as much pavement on site for as long as possible.

Kathryn asked about the topographic lines on the plan and asked if the site sloped down towards the north.

Mark stated yes those are what the lines are and that all the runoffs will be directed into the deep sump catch basin and run through the infiltration site.

Jennifer stated that there is also a Cape Cod berm on that side as well so there is not a huge reveal.

Kathryn asked what a Cape Cod berm was.

Jennifer said it was not a typical granite curb, but a curb made from asphalt so as to stop the runoff.

Purvi had some questions about Jim Wilcox's review memo. She asked if these were noted for DPW or the commission.

Jim said that the O & M plan was a requirement of the DPW permit and, he wanted to note that the straw waddle is not going to work for every site, so he wanted Jennifer to have a conversation with them about alternate erosion and sediment controls on the paved surfaces.

Purvi asked if that would be something to add into their special conditions.

Jennifer said she would write that into the RDA with a special condition.

Purvi asked Jennifer write into the RDA Jim's comments from the memo.

David asked that soil stockpiles be covered during non-working hours.

7:41 - Public Comment Open

No public comment.

7:42 – Public Comment Closed

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

7:43 – The commission unanimously agrees to approve a Negative Determination of Applicability.

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

7:44 – Notice of Intent

125 Cambridgepark Drive

Building Expansion, Interior Roadway and Parking Lot Reconstruction

Matt Lerner from Longfellow Real Estate was there to introduce the group. Matt stated that they have submitted their special permit and they will be going to the planning Board in late August, early September. Matt said that the last time they met with the commission they closed out the partial certificate of DEP file # 123-295 which was the scope for landscape and cycle track improvements in front of 125 Cambridgepark Drive. Matt said phase three closed out the final landscape improvements on site.

Bryan Walsh from VHB went through the existing conditions onsite, which is in the flood plain. Bryan showed how the truck loading traffic worked with all the surface parking in the back of the building. Bryan stated that there was a comment from DPW review memo about the location of the outfall pipe and Bryan showed on the map the outfall pipe to Little River which is about seven hundred and fifty (750) feet from the site. Bryan explained that currently there is no stormwater management, it's impervious area to shallow drainage that flows left to right across the property and then north to south down the eastern driveway then out to the Little River.

Bryan showed the utilities, he explained that the City of Cambridge has a drain easement onsite running on the western side of the curb cut and driveway and the MWRA has a sewer easement running east to west adjacent to the bike path.

Bryan showed the proposed site plan, which is taking half of the parking located in the back of the building and making previous area and increasing the open space. Bryan stated in the loading area they are proposing to flip the curb cut orientation and the curb cut will be on the east side of the building, loading will be reoriented facing away from the open space and the building addition in the back of the building with trucks facing out so trucks can get out easily. They will be adding solar panels on top of the impervious parking.

Sarah Nitchman from OJB talked about the open space, she stated that their focus is to connect and expand the natural areas on the property which is inspired by the Alewife Reservation. She explained about how the paths will now be connected to the reservation. She said that there will be a swale not only for drainage purposes but also for a landscape amenity, with a bridge crossing. Sarah said they will also be adding seating and alcoves along the streetscape. Sarah also stated that there will also be green roofs added onsite.

Jacob Kain from Elkus Manfredi stated that green roofs will be added to the existing building. Jacob stated that the solar canopies in the parking areas will provide shelter for electric vehicles. Jacob explained that the parking garage at 140 Cambridgepark Drive will also have solar on top of the roof and provide energy to the campus.

Sarah said the materials that they will be using is the same materials as they did in the first phase and materials are locally sourced. Sarah stated that they work with Duke on the planting pallet and will be working off the same pallet they used in phase 1 and phase 2 and that all the species are native and adaptive species that will cut down on water use.

Bryan showed the flood plain map for the site and the reason why they are here at this meeting. Bryan stated that they will be meeting the city's standard. Bryan stated that they closer to the building they are trying to elevate things, with a proposal of a new transformer yard which will be elevated to above the 2070-hundred-year flood elevation. Bryan stated there will be low points within the drainage in the landscape and those will be tying into the existing and they will be proposing a water quality unit to help with the phosphorus reduction standards. There will also be trenching around the new electric yard for underground utilities and, he mentioned that they will be reusing the storm water from the roof for irrigation.

Purvi asked from the meeting in June was there any substantial changes. Bryan said there were a few minor changes.

Jim Wilcox stated that this will trigger a stormwater control permit, and they are well on their way to be issued the permit. Jim stated he review the grading plan and the compensatory flood storage calculations and it does meet the Wetland Protection act requirements. Jim stated compensatory storage is provided and there is an excess provided over the existing condition and the flood storage areas do have a hydraulic connection to the bordering land subject to flooding. Jim stated he asked Bryan to put together the graphic with the cut and fill areas because the grading onsite is very complex and it wasn't quite clear from the topographic plans where the cut and fills were.

Purvi asked if the cut and fill graphic was in response to Jim's comment or was a change in the original submission. Jim stated that was in response to Jim's comment.

Jim stated for the stormwater report he did review that and stated there are some constraints on the site, there is an inability to infiltrate stormwater due to the high ground water table on the site. The applicant was required to present an option to DPW that showed detention of stormwater on the site. Jim stated that they reviewed that, and the detention system was quite large and out of scale to for a project of this size. There is a benefit to the City stormwater system because it's within a thousand (1000) feet of the outfall to the receiving water not detaining water onsite and having it get into the city's drainage system as quickly as possible so

it free up space upstream. Jim stated the city will waiver of some of the conditions of the land disturbance regulations. Jim stated that the last comment Bryan provided the revised location of the outfall to Little River.

Purvi stated that the commission has an opportunity to approve an order of conditions based on Jim's comments, but they don't have to.

Jennifer stated that DEP has issued a file number 123-318 and there have been no technical comments issued.

David stated he asked the proponents if they have taken advantage of all potential opportunities for flood storage. Bryan stated that they did look at that and have captured everything to the maximum extent that they can. Bryan stated because of the MWRA and DPW easements, he said they can't cut too much on top of those structures in the driveway. Bryan stated near the electric yard they are raising the elevation, so he thinks they have done all they can on site.

Jennifer wanted to let the commission know that DPW has had four group meetings prior to it coming to Con Com and she said it's been great working with them.

8:11 – Public Comment Open

No public comment.

8:12 – Public Comment Closed

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

8:13 – The commission unanimously agrees to approve an Order of Conditions.

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

8:14 – Administrative Topics

Jennifer stated that the ownership on the paperwork on the Notice of Intent was not correct for IQHQ. She reached out to the circuit writer if the paperwork needs to be updated. Jennifer said that IQHQ was also asked to look at additional bike lanes and their widths and making sure they don't lose compensatory storage. They are trying to avoid coming back to Con Com but there is a potential.

8:29 – Meeting Minutes approved from June 13, 2022.'

Jennifer stated for the record Kathryn Hess was absent for the June 13, 2022 meeting but watched the Zoom recording and signed the Mullin Rule affidavit so she can vote tonight.

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

Kathryn asked about the document Elysse put together and if it found a home to live. Jennifer stated that they are leaving it open for now till we can add any comments to it. Jennifer said she will have it live on the Con Com webpage. Jennifer said the webpage will be getting updated. Jennifer said there was a possibility that there will be no submittals for the August 15, 2022 meeting and they could use that time to work on some administrative items.

8:25 – Meeting Adjourned

6 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Opposed, 0 – Abstained

