



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Public Meeting – Monday, December 18, 2023, at 7:00 PM Zoom MEETING MINUTES

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

Present Commission Members: Purvi Patel (Chair); David Lyons (Vice Chair); Jennifer Letourneau (Director); Kathryn Hess; Elysse Magnotto-Cleary; Erum Sattar; Tricia Carney; John Leo

Absent Commission Members: Michelle Lane

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, DPW; Howard Moshier, VHB; Kara Falise, DPW; Danielle Desilets, KDLA; Jennifer Sweet, Haley & Aldrich; Danny Frias, IQHQ; Keith Gazaille, Solitude Lake Management; Lena Frappier, DPW; Rich Kirby, LEC Environmental; Curtis Puncher, Ground, Inc.; Fred Keylor, HW Moore Associates; Laura Jasinski, Charles River Conservancy; Anthony Galluccio, Galluccio & Watson; Kevin Maguire, Oxbow Urban LLC; David Webster, B'nai B'rith Housing; David Denison; Eppa Rixey; Eric Grunebaum; James Williamson; Joel Nogic; John Doucet; Lewis Weitzman; Mike Nakagawa; Pasang Lhamo; Renata Pomponi; Susan Hall; Macky Buck; Susanna Schell; Taylor Donovan; Gwen Speeth; Laura Resteghini

Purvi Patel opened the meeting.

7:04 – Informational Presentation **Jerry's Pond Circulation and Access** IQHQ

Chrissy Gabriel from IQHQ presented the information presentation. Chrissy re-familiarized the commission members that IQHQ is the owner of a twenty-seven (27) acre site that encapsulates the northern portion of the MBTA headhouse as well as the southern portion, which they refer to as the commitment area.

Anthony Galluccio was present to speak about the process, community engagement and the permitting process. Anthony stated that the community process started early on, which included presentations from the community as well as a survey from the Rindge Ave community outlining all the different aspects of the public access plan that they wanted to see included. Anthony stated that he thinks IQHQ has included all aspects from the survey except for ice skating on Jerry's Pond. He stated over the years the area was fenced off but has gained some naturalization

and there was a desire for the public to gain some access. The balance was how to get the public to interact with the pond area but also maintain environmental protections. Anthony stated that there will be an array of different aspects to the area from ecological education to footpaths and communal gardening.

Howard Moshier from VHB was present to present to the commission. Howard stated that the reason they are before the commission is that there are four (4) wetland resource areas as defined under the Wetland Protection Act. He stated that there is bordering vegetated wetlands and bank associated with the pond. Howard stated there is also land underwater and bordering land subject to flooding.

Jennifer Sweet presented environmental considerations. Jennifer stated that Jerry's Pond and the surrounding areas are located within a portion of the former WR Grace and former Lehigh Babo sites which resulted in impacts to the subsurface from various contaminants related to historic site use as well as typical urban filling. Jennifer stated that those sites were previously assessed, and response actions taken. Under current conditions there is no risk to human health or the environment. Jennifer stated that part of those response actions was implementing an activity and use limitation (AUL) this action would ensure that ground cover materials are maintained to prevent exposure and restrict uses such as residential uses, schools, and playgrounds.

Jennifer Letourneau interrupted to help James Williamson because he was not able to see the slides from his phone. Jennifer emailed James the slides.

Jennifer Sweet continued with her presentation stating that IQHQ will continue with the AUL and will ensure that protective covers are maintained through allowing for passive use only with raised boardwalks throughout the site. The recent additional testing that was done results indicated that there is no risk to people and wildlife in the pond itself from the former Grace site. However, IQHQ will not allow for direct access to the water for safety reasons. Jennifer stated that they will advise against swimming or consumption of fish from the pond because of high bacteria that are common in urbanized watersheds. She stated also as part of maintaining the protective cover the plan also aims at minimizing excavation whenever possible, any excavated material will need to be trucked and disposed of offsite.

Danielle Desilets from KDLA was present to go over the landscape plans for the area. Danielle started with the Rindge Ave access to the site, which will probably be the main access for the public. She stated that there will be a ten (10) foot wide multi-use pathway along Rindge Avenue which is separate from the boardwalk area with a nine (9) foot vegetated buffer. Along the southwest side is an overlook area with some picnic tables. They have reduced the impacts to vegetation already present in the area so any trees that are six (6) inches in diameter or greater will remain and will only need to remove three (3) trees. Danielle stated that the community asked for an overlook off Rindge Ave so that is present on the plan and lower to the resource area. There will also be two wetlands constructed in the pond, per the community requests. The southeast side is the "main gate" and will consist of boardwalk and hardscape. Danielle moved into the planting plan for the site, she stated that they are protecting the bank, so they are planning on planting seven (7) trees along the south side of Rindge Ave and then additional twenty-two (22) trees to be planted along the bank of Rindge Ave. and some understory plantings in that area. Danielle stated that on the west side there are two BVW areas and that all plantings for that area are native to Massachusetts and will also work on removing invasives from the area.

Jennifer Letourneau stated she will email the slides out to the commission members and stated that as soon as James identified a problem with not seeing the slides, she emailed them to James. She stated although this is not a public hearing that there was a request from Eric Grunebaum to make a couple of statements. Jennifer asked if the commission was ok. Purvi agreed to the comments but asked them to be brief as the commission has a full agenda.

Eric Grunebaum thanked the commission members for allowing comments from Friends of Jerry's Pond. Eric stated that this wetland is the only one of significant scale that is left in Cambridge and is available for restoration along the shore of Jerry's Pond. He stated that the Friends of Jerry's Pond group is proposing a partial restoration of the ponds bank along the Rindge Ave side. Eric stated that it would be a great opportunity for the community to get closer to nature with a canopy of trees rather than a hardscape which has been proposed by IQHQ. Eric stated that IQHQ has been a good collaborator so far, but the City of Cambridge has been absent with some of the decisions that are being made. Eric stated that the city is missing out on opportunities for equitable green space, expansion of tree canopy, better stormwater management, climate resilience, ecological restoration, health equity and complete streets. Eric stated that in response to the boardwalks and decks that are being proposed, the ENF MassDEP state "shading impacts to bank and land underwater are likely to be deemed alteration and should be evaluated in the NOI mitigation maybe required". Eric stated that there are a lot of paved areas around Jerrys Pond that could become unpaved but instead will be sealed under asphalt in the proposed plan. Eric quoted that all though the commission is responsible for administering the Wetlands Protection Act and have jurisdiction over areas in or around wetlands, flood plains, water bodies, the commission is also tasked to "work with regional, state, and federal agencies and community groups to address issues that have both short- and long-term environmental concern". Eric is asking the commission to take another look at the project and make sure that the project is done right the first time.

Jennifer Letourneau asked if it was okay for others to make comments.

Purvi stated it was okay, that it was the first time she had seen the materials and would welcome comments but would like to keep them to three minutes.

James Williamson is resident of Jefferson Park for fifteen (15) years. James stated that he has been involved in this for a long time and as one of the people who takes the 83 bus of which the bus stops right next to Jerry's Pond along Rindge Ave where Eric's comments were focused on. James appreciates the work that Eric is doing. James stated that for ten (10) years the MBTA buses were almost tipping over at that spot and wanted to thank Anthony for this finally getting fixed. James also stated that an expansion along Rindge Ave is worth looking at.

Joel Nogic stated he has lived right next to Russell Field very close to Jerry's Pond for thirty-one (31) years and a founding member of the Alewife Study Group which has been studying, informing and engaging the community around the WR Grace now IQHQ site including Jerry's Pond for twenty-eight (28) years. He stated that the study group initiated a process with IQHQ in 2021 to meet on a regular basis to have community developer collaboration with all aspects of their development. He stated they weren't ready to make comments this evening but know that IQHQ will be back in January and will have comments for that meeting. They are continuing to meet with IQHQ and understand that there are many good things about the plans for Jerry's Pond and there are somethings they are looking into about whether adjustment should be made. They will have comments for the January meeting and will continue to work with IQHQ.

Jennifer Letourneau wanted to reiterate that this is not a public hearing, and this is not a formal public comment period. The hearing for the notice of intent is expected in January. If you do have any comments to make, please feel free to email or mail your comments in or attend the hearing in January, please do not feel that this is your only opportunity.

Gwen Speeth a North Cambridge homeowner and resident as well as a member of a group called "Save The Alewife Brook". Gwen stated that her overall concern is around CSO discharges and wanted to echo some of the points that Eric Grunebaum made. She stated that IQHQ has built over a separate sewer catchment which runs directly into a combined sewer area and dumps. She stated that there have been several discharges today from the storm. She stated that IQHQ sewage will be adding tens of millions of gallons of wastewater into this overburdened system and their sewage will be contributing to the discharges. Gwen wanted to comment on Eric's comment about impervious areas and tree growth. Gwen would urge them to think about wastewater and to do everything they can to make corrections and do as much wetland development over hardscaping as possible.

Pasang Lhamo is part of the Friends of Jerry's Pond group and lives across the street from Jerry's Pond and agrees with all of Eric's comments. Pasang said she thinks we need to rethink the plans for Rindge Ave and said there are 4000 homeowners and families in the neighborhood that will be impacted by Jerry's Pond. Pasang stated that what happens in Jerry's Pond they will have to live with for decades and need to make sure we are doing what is best for all the families that live in this neighborhood. She also stated with all the rain today from the storm that the street was flooded. She stated that stormwater and climate change is a huge concern, she stated that they have had their basement flood when she was growing up and her house is right across from Jerry's Pond and is part of the flood plain. She said there is a real need to restore and reimagine how Jerry's Pond will look like.

Eppa Rixey resident of 126 Harvey Street has been involved in this project for over two (2) years now through the Alewife Studying Group. Eppa pointed out that the Friends of Jerry's Pond group has been participating in these meetings with Alewife Study Group, IQHQ and Mass Audubon and have talked about the pros and cons of some of the different issues. Eppa thinks it's important to raise the concern of accessibility. He stated that one of the repeated concerns of the community was to have accessibility to nature and that is what led to the boardwalk along with protective cover and the soil from being disturbed more than it needed to be. Eppa also wanted to raise one point about the asphalt, he stated that they way Eric phrases his comment makes it sound like there's a substantial amount of asphalt being added and the only asphalt being added is the mixed-use pathway immediately adjacent to Rindge Ave. He stated that the remaining asphalt and the basement they described are existing site conditions that are not changing. Eppa thinks it's worth looking into adding additional landmass on the range outside is going to require compensatory storage. He does agree with Pasang concerns over flooding however taking land from somewhere else is going to result in removal of some mature trees. He stated he thinks there are opportunities to work along the western side of the site along Alewife Brook Parkway but is not convinced adding soil along Rindge Ave is going to meet those objectives.

Mike Nakagawa wanted to remind everyone who's reviewing this site that it is so complicated, and because of that it's a balance of pros versus cons. He stated that they continue to work with

IQHQ and are members of the Alewife Study Group and the Alewife Neighbors Inc. From his standpoint and IQHQ's it's a complicated project. He asked that everyone keep that in mind.

Anthony Galluccio wanted to thank James. Anthony stated that James showed up and expressed his concerns and Chrissy but it together to make the commitment to make the bus turnaround better for the community.

7:42 - Request for Determination of Applicability
Aquatic Management Program - Cambridge Crossing Pond
Solitude Lake Management

Keith Gazaille from Solitude Lake Management was present to present to the commission the project. Keith stated that they filed the request for determination of applicability for the implementation of some basic water quality and vegetation management at the Cambridge Crossing site. Keith stated that there is an approximately a .15-acre stormwater basin separated into two individual basins by a causeway walkway which drains into the general green space park area and then ultimately makes its way into an overflow standpipe through the stormwater sewer system then into the Charles River. Keith stated to curtail some of the poor water quality conditions and the resulting plant and allergy growth they would like to request the ability to implement some small-scale nutrient activation treatment and the installation of some oxygenation iteration and the use of some limited herbicide and outside treatment in the event of extreme conditions. Keith said that one of the products they are proposing is an herbicide called Sona and the active ingredient is Flurdone. He stated that this is the same product that they have been using in the Charles River for invasive species management under the DCR project that is ongoing. He said there might be other contact herbicide products that are a little bit faster acting and provide more area selectivity because they do act faster. This would allow them to work on select invasives rather than the whole basin. Keith stated that all the products are US EPA and DAR registered products.

Purvi thanked Keith for the reference that those products were also being used in the Charles River. Purvi asked if there was any hierarchy that they were using in terms of injecting oxygen so that you have increased BOD, COD and then moving on so that the chemical application is the last.

Keith stated that is true, and that from a stormwater perspective oxygen is their primary concern and will help facilitate the release of nutrients from the system and slow down the algae build up. He also said they have been successful with manual removal. Keith stated that the reason they included herbicides that they have experienced over the last few years some exacerbated growth and it was difficult to affectively control it. Keith stated that the use of herbicides will be the last resort.

Purvi asked Jennifer since they are requesting a determination of applicability what are the resources areas that are being impacted. Is land underwater applicable.

Jennifer stated this is why this is an RDA because this is hydraulically connected to the Charles River out of caution and having a fully transparent public process we are asking the commission to rule whether or not this particular area has the ability to have a negative impact on the Charles River given the nature of these activities. Jennifer stated that as described in the narrative associated with the RDA all beneficial to this project that this part drains to the Charles River basin and we would be looking at any addition of macro nutrients that could exacerbate issues of

algae blooms. She stated as the water collects in this area, it's beneficial for the treatment so they know that this is not contributing to the macro nutrients in the basin.

Purvi stated that it was good to hear from Jennifer and one element is that there is not a new chemical that's being introduced to the Charles River and the other point was that she wanted to understand what the resource areas are, so it essentially that the upstream of the discharge.

Jennifer stated as these developments continue to be built, they should have these treatments in their O & M plans. She stated this is where Keith comes in and the development contacted him about a solution.

Purvi asked Jennifer if she's a problem with the commission giving this a negative determination.

Jennifer stated that she does not, because with the treatments going on in the lower Charles River basin and what they are seeing on Acorn Park Drive, these treatments are working with no adverse effects.

Erum Sattar stated that she read that there were going to be some aeration units installed and wanted Keith to talk about that.

Keith stated that there are two systems that could be used for this, but at first thought they would like to use a newer system called a nano bubble. The system creates an injection of dissolved oxygen so the unit will draw water from the basin, and it has a medical grade oxygen concentrator so it will inject pure oxygen into the water flow and discharge back into the water. This method is far more efficient than some of the older technologies. Keith stated one issue is that there is no hydraulic connection between the two (2) basins and the difficulty becomes where to locate the power associated with the unit. He stated they are limited with the draw and discharge in the basins so drawing it from one and discharging it to another, there may not be a complete impact to both basins. This may force them to use a bottom air diffuser system.

Erum stated that they wouldn't want to mix across basins because that might negate the purpose of this. Erum stated that what she is hearing is that they haven't reached a final decision about where these will be placed and what the right mix of the bottom versus the sides.

Keith stated that the location will be based on the power source and at this point the applicant has not fully decided where and how they can provide that.

David asked Jennifer if the commission issued any sort of permit or decision on this location back in the development of Cambridge Crossing.

Jennifer said they did not. She stated the only issue is the hydraulic connection with the overflow of the system back to the Charles River.

David asked if this was in flood plain?

Jennifer stated it's not in the flood plain and it's solely the hydraulic connection to the Charles River. She stated that this was for a fully transparent process but was a negative RDA, but that was for the commission to decide.

Gwen asked Keith if he stated that they used the same herbicides in the Alewife.

Jennifer responded that he said they were using the same herbicides in the Charles River.

Gwen stated it might have been in response to something.

Jennifer stated that they were using herbicides at Acorn Park Drive.

Gwen stated that DCR was using herbicides.

Jennifer responded no, it's a private developer who is using herbicides.

Gwen asked what they were using them for and was it for the fake pond they had.

Jennifer stated that is a stormwater basin and yes, they were using herbicides in there.

7:59 – Public Comment Closed

7 – Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained

8:00 – The commission approved a negative determination with conditions, a notification to the commission when herbicides are being used.

7 – Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained

8:01 – Request to Extend Order of Conditions

DEP File # 123-293 - Charles River Floating Wetland

Charles River Conservancy

Laura Jasinski, the Executive Director for the Charles River Conservancy (CRC) was present to present to the commission. Laura stated that the floating wetland is just at the mouth of the Broad Canal, it's not there now because it's at its winter location at the MIT Sailing Pavilion now but it will be back in the spring. Just as a reminder to the commission that this wetland was put into the river in 2020 in partnership with a student doing a research dissertation at Northeastern University on whether floating wetlands could help improve water quality and co benefits such as supporting biodiversity and providing access and education opportunities for the Cambridge community. Laura stated that she had forwarded to the commission members the dissertation, but now have a lighter reading thirty (30) page report which talks about the research, the process they went through for permitting and design, education and engagement and plans for expansion. Laura stated that as a big part of the work of the Charles River Conservancy (CRC), is not only about making the river healthier and more accessible and one the ways they are doing that is through education. As part of the education program the CRC they have provided for the third-year wetland activity kits to sixth graders in Cambridge Public Schools so all of them will get the opportunity to grow their own floating wetland in a four (4) week curriculum that mimics some of the research that is happening on zooplankton and habitats that are happening on the rivers floating wetland. The CRC is also engaging in other single day events like "Steam It Up" and the Cambridge Science Festival as well as offering kayaking tours.

Laura stated that they are actively engaging with the City of Cambridge and the City of Boston as well as private entities so they can create opportunities to have more floating wetlands in the river. They are engaging in large infrastructure projects along the river as potential connections, like the I90 interchange project and potential connections that might need to be made with boardwalks and creating lagoons. Last year Laura stated that they went to Chicago to visit their project to see if this were something that they would potentially like to bring to the Broad Canal.

Laura said that they are trying to bring on a Floating Wetland Manager onto their team to work on all the complexities of the outreach, public and private partnership models, and design and permitting that they will need going forward. Laura stated that they are hoping to bring on someone in the coming months as funding gets closer but would like to keep their floating wetland pilot on the Charles River to continue with engagement, research opportunities and any potential partnerships for the coming year. Laura said the CRC will continue to keep the commission update on any information and will continue to share annual reports and is asking the commission for a three (3) year extension.

Jennifer stated that this meets all the statutory requirements for an extension and that the request was submitted well in advance. They have met all the conditions in their order of conditions, so Jennifer feels they are fully eligible for an extension of up to three (3) years.

Purvi stated she is very supportive of this project. She asked if they were thinking of taking all the little wetlands that were made by sixth graders to make one larger one.

David loves the project and looking at it from the Red Line. He asked if they had any conversations with IQHQ, he said this was the first time that he had heard of them proposing floating wetlands in Jerry's Pond.

Laura said they haven't talked to them, but they would be happy to connect with them and talk about all they have learned. She also stated that they have a call scheduled with someone from Worcester and have been partnered up with other projects across the state and country looking into these types of projects, so that is why they put together the report.

Elysse stated she also loves seeing the project when crossing the bridge on the red line and she thanked Laura for the update on the project.

Erum asked about the cost of the wetland and how the funding process is going because we would all love to see more of these, but how do we make that happen.

Laura said that they have not got into the capital funding for the expansion, but they are working on capacity building, but she does think there is support for the Broad Canal project. She said that currently these wetlands are not tied to any incentives, but they are also thinking about how to get these integrated into different regulations so that there are incentives to put wetlands in the water the same way with other similar infrastructure. She said they are looking at this as an opportunity to increase park space but creating boardwalks and walkways along and in the river with wetlands which will benefit public access and additional green space. She said she would be happy to share more information once they have it on the capital side, but she said that to do something on the Broad Canal with a tens of thousands of square feet rather than seven hundred (700) they believe a very rough estimate would be about two (2) million dollars more on the capital side.

Erum thanks Laura for the information. She stated that she likes that idea of trying to work on the regulatory side because it makes sense to move in the direction of incentivizing this type of project.

Laura wanted to add that they are not saying that stormwater doesn't need to be handled onsite but this could be an additional layer and benefit to the project.

Kathryn stated she loved the project and likes the idea of building this type of project on Broad Canal since there are already kayaks on the canal this seems realistic.

Tricia stated she is familiar with the project and as a rower she has been by the wetland and also as a biker and runner she often sees people stopping to take a look at it.

John stated he is new to the project but heard that they take them out in the wintertime. He asked if this would happen in the Broad Canal as well and asked if they take them out because of the icing on the river or that they are just not effective to the climate.

Laura stated that they do move them in the winter and it's less about the freezing and more about the ice sheeting in the river and once the ice breaks up in the river in the spring their concern is about how that would affect the wetland because its not very large. She said that if one was built larger, they would not move it and is one of the things they are considering in the final design phase and they believe there is a solution. She said one of reasons for moving it to the MIT Sailing Pavilion is that they have some aeration bubblers there and that helps from the water freezing around it. Laura stated it does stay in the water in the river just in a different location, so all the plants and roots stay in the river.

8:17 – Public Comment Closed – no comments.

7 – In Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained

8:18 – The commission approved a three (3) extension to the Order of Conditions.

7 – In Favor, 1 - Absent, 0 – Abstained

8:19 – Notice of Intent

89 Blanchard Road Redevelopment

LEC Environmental

David Webster from B'nai B'rith Housing was present to present to the commission. David stated that they were there for a Notice of Intent for one hundred and ten (110) unit senior housing project on Blanchard Road in the Cambridge Highlands area. David stated that they will be demolishing an outdated 1970's retail strip center to make way for the new construction. David stated this is low-income housing intended for seniors living under the city's affordable housing overlay zoning ordinance. David stated the plan is designed to improve the existing conditions of the site by reducing the amount of impervious area, upgrading stormwater management infrastructure as well as taking an existing under appreciated neglected resource area and turning into an amenity for the residents. David stated that the plans would connect residents with access to the stream which connects into Blair Pond. David introduced the rest of the team on the zoom; Rich Kirby from LEC Environmental, Kevin McGuire from B'nai B'rith Housing, Fred Keylor from Hancock Associates the civil engineer on the project as well as Curtis Puncher from Ground Inc. the landscape architect.

Rich Kirby from LEC Environmental, who filed for the Notice of Intent, showed an aerial image of the overall property. Rich explained that on the left (western) side there is the black roofed commercial building that will be demolished and replaced with the L shaped apartment building. Rich explained that this property is going to be subdivided and that there are two (2) four story apartment buildings currently onsite with associated parking and those will remain. He stated that toward the northern part of the property is Wellington Brook and toward the right is Blair Pond. Rich also showed the FEMA flood plain map which shows zone A extending along the

brook to elevation 18.5 that is the city of Cambridge's base. He also showed the 500-year flood plain or the .2% annual chance of flooding. The other slide shown was the flood view for the 2070 storm which depicted that the area is at 23.5 city base and that does extend onto the property within the parking lots between the buildings. Rich also showed to the commission a plan that marked the mean annual high-water mark associated with Wellington Brook, and the flood plain elevation on the property which immediately follows the high-water line. Rich explained that the brook is contained within a very steep embankment that measures five (5) to six (6) feet tall and the flood plain elevation is close to that high water mark. Also on this plan was the line that represents the twenty-five (25) foot river front area, much of this is currently paved for parking and access to the existing road. Rich also showed the commission the one hundred (100) foot buffer zone which is the commission's jurisdiction. As well on the plan was where the placement of the L shaped building will be placed, Rich stated that this will be a 6-story building but the fifth and sixth stories will step back to make the structure appear to be a 4-5 story building from the street view. Rich explained that parking will be realigned onsite, as well as offering some indoor parking on the first floor within the structure along with some commercial space on the first floor with residential above. Rich went through the erosion control plan and stated that the commercial building will be removed along with some saplings and shrubs that will be removed within the islands of the parking area to be reconfigured. He stated that there will be two (2) gravel construction entrances off Blanchard Road and will have silt sacks protecting catch basins along Blanchard Road to protect all resource areas during construction. Rich presented a plan to the commission which depicts existing conditions and proposed conditions which shows the reduction of over five thousand (5000) square feet of impervious area as well as riverfront area and impervious area will reduce by one thousand five hundred and sixty-nine (1569) square feet by increasing the green space between Wellington Brook and the proposed building. Rich pointed out that all hardscaping and patios around the development will be pervious pavers. Rich stated he would turn over the presentation to Fred to go over the stormwater management onsite. Rich stated that there is little work to do there are a few catch basins but does not believe they have deep sumps or hoods and they do have several infiltration systems proposed. Fred was present but was having some audio issues and could not speak to the commission. Rich took over to explain that they have three (3) proposed infiltrating structures onsite that will collect runoff from paved areas and be treated and collected in isolated rows before entering the infiltration systems. Rich also explained that these infiltration systems will have observation ports, so they can be viewed and cleaned out to make sure they are functioning properly. Also roof runoff will be entering the infiltration system directly, because generally that is clean. Rich explained how they would increase the vegetated land within the twenty-five (25) foot river front area. Rich showed the planting plan for the project, he stated that they worked with Ground Inc to come up with the proposed plan and worked closely with Ground Inc on the planting plan proposed with the twenty-five (25) foot river front area. Curtis Puncher from Ground Inc presented to the commission about what plantings are being proposed to replace what currently is a paved parking lot. Curtis stated that what they are proposing is 100% native and a mix of woody shrubs, ferns, and ground cover as well as a few trees like Birch and Hackberry. Curtis stated the amenity space for the residents is made from wood decking that will be on footings and it will not be a paved surface, so underneath will be aggregate or earth underneath. Curtis stated that all the paving on the river side of the building will be all permeable paving.

Purvi thanked Kara Falise for the memo and asked if Kara wanted to go through the memo. Purvi stated that when she was going through them, she noted that some where recommendations and

some points Kara was just noting that there would be an additional review with other local boards.

Kara stated that generally the calculations that were submitted were general DEP standards and the City of Cambridge enhanced stormwater mitigation standards. Kara stated that current existing conditions have water sheeting and going untreated into the brook, so the proposal is to meet the standards for the city and state. She stated that regarding the construction phase impacts they must present a plan and will have to have further enhancements under the NEPDES permit filing and then they will need to prepare a SWIPP which will be reviewed by the city.

Kara pointed out that the long-term operations and maintenance onsite would be important for the commission to take a long act to investigate further on how operations on site could potentially impact the jurisdictional areas long term at this location. Kara stated that she wrote in her memo which included snow removal and storage, landscape area maintenance and trash storage. Also, she stated that what the residents will or will not be allowed to do on the patio areas might be of interest to understand the long-term potential impacts of the project on the wetland resource areas.

Kara stated that she will continue to add to the technical memo reviews to the commission what other reviews projects will see going forward as the project progresses through the permitting phase and into and through construction. Kara stated that she noted in her memo that this project will trigger a stormwater control permit, a NEPDES construction general permit and will require a SWIPP and also as the project manager mentioned they will be going through the affordable housing overlay process with BZA.

Purvi stated that the memos are very helpful to her and the other commission members and this was helpful to see that they will be going through the SWIPP, but she asked the commission to look at what is within their jurisdiction, and she stated they are charged with looking at the SMS and the ten standards and making sure that they deal with that. Purvi asked Kara if she thought that the erosion control along the top of the bank had been appropriately proposed and if she had concerns with that. Purvi stated if Kara didn't think it was proposed properly then she asks Jennifer if that is something that the commission should condition or if she feels that is something that needs to be revised and resubmitted.

Kara stated that they are proposing silt fencing with staked swaddle is appropriate if it is properly maintained. Kara stated if they want to alter that plan then the commission should propose that they come back to them for a review if they are choosing something different. She stated that what they are proposing is acceptable, it's the maintenance of it during the construction that would be the concern. Kara stated she thought that through the NOI there would be a condition for a pre-construction site walk as well as through the stormwater control permit the city has the right to come and inspect at a point throughout the construction phase.

Jennifer stated that in the proponent's documentation that was submitted with the NOI they are stating that they will have waddles and silt fencing. She explained if they were to change that to compost filter sock you do not stake that through although the manufacturer says to but once you puncture that its junk. Rich stated what they recommend is to install the stakes on the downhill side of the sock so it can rest on it. Jennifer stated if they deviate from the original plan, they should talk to Jennifer about it. Jennifer stated that at any point if they are going to deviate from what they have submitted they need to have a conversation about it.

Purvi stated that in terms of the performance standards they are complying with them for the twenty-five (25) foot river front area and with the bank zone in the BVW.

Jennifer stated that there is no BVW on the property, she stated that there is a bank, and it is an armored slope.

Purvi confirmed its buffer zone to the top of the bank and that there is no work in the buffer zone.

Rich confirmed that that was correct that there was no work in the current FEMA 100-year flood plain with respect to the 2070 and they set the first-floor elevation of the structure about the 23.3/2070 elevation and all the parking and land slope away from the structure. He stated that some of the parking is within 2070 but it is all less than a foot deep.

Purvi stated that the other points in the memo are conditions that they already have.

Jennifer stated that the commission doesn't have a condition on stockpiles. Jennifer is asking the proponents if there is a way that they can depict on a plan where stockpiles will be that is not close to the bank within the twenty-five (25) feet.

Rich confirmed that can supply the commission with that information.

Purvi asked if there was a way for them to talk about the long-term O and M plan, where they will be storing snow, landscaping, and trash storage out of the twenty-five (25) foot river front area.

Rich stated that he believed that all the trash storage and collection will be inside, so there will be no exterior storage of trash.

Jennifer confirmed with Purvi that the commission should not be voting on this if the commission is asking for a plan to come back to them.

Jennifer stated that they should include how will they protect the resource area during construction is what the commission really wants to see. Jennifer wanted to add that DEP has issued a file number 123-321 and they had no technical comments.

David Lyons asked Jennifer and the applicants if there was any need or space for any additional flood storage.

Jennifer explained to David that Wellington Brook is really a steep channel with an armored bank which goes around the site into Blair Pond. She stated that there was no direct hydraulic connection where you could easily create a stormwater basin or wet feature to do the topography of the site.

Rich confirmed what Jennifer stated and said that the site was very flat, and the applicants only have control over the western portion where the development is being proposed. He confirmed that they are not altering any part of the existing flood plain. Rich stated that there is only about a foot or so of cut and fill onsite so they will not be changing any grades. Rich explained that one of the reasons they don't want to lower the elevations too much is that they would not be able to intercept the flood zone which is near the base of the steep slope. Also, in the 2070 flood event the parking would be under 2-3 feet more of water.

Kathryn is trying to understand if there is a change in the flood storage with the construction of these buildings. She stated she understands that they are putting in a lot of additional impervious pavement, but would the volume be.

Rich wanted to confirm if Kathryn was talking about the existing flood plain bordering land subject to flooding that is regulated under the Wetlands Protection Act.

Rich went through the plan which depicted the mean high watermark associated with Wellington Brook and then showed the 100-year flood plain. Rich confirmed that none of their work encroaches into that 100-year flood plain and all of their work is well above that 100-year flood plain elevation. Rich stated they were not displacing any flood plain onsite nor are they providing any compensatory flood storage.

Kara wanted to state to the commission that the flooding in the parking lot in the elevation associated with the building is specifically related to the Cambridge long term flood elevations

which were recently defined by the climate change resiliency zoning and those are associated with the 2070 10 year and the 2070 100-year storm events that Rich is talking about.

Elysse asked since this is so close to Belmont she was wondering if there was any spill over into Belmont and if there would be a need for any coordination from them.

Jennifer stated that everything from Belmont flows into Cambridge, it flows from east to west, so nothing is flowing towards Belmont.

Elysse also wanted to confirm that none of the property will be in Belmont.

Jennifer confirmed that it is 100% in Cambridge.

Erum wanted to thank Kara for her helpful memo. She stated that things are under their jurisdiction but it's also helpful to understand what other permits and reviews it will go through. Erum wanted to ask Jennifer since it's a large project she was wondering if there were any abutters that they needed to hear from and what is the process for that going forward.

Jennifer confirmed that abutters were notified about tonight's meeting.

Rich confirmed that there was only one email from a concerned resident and all their concerns were addressed this evening.

Jennifer stated that Kara brought up all the other public processes that this project will go through which will allow any abutters to speak about the project and ask questions.

Purvi also wanted to add that with every NOI there is an abutter notification process.

Erum asked Rich how long the duration of the project would be.

Rich deferred to David. David stated that the project will take about 10-20 months to complete.

Mike Nakagawa stated he was a little concerned with having a 6-story building in some sort of buffer zone, but concerned about the impacts of large buildings having impacts downstream, thermal massing of the building and its proximity to Blair Pond. Mike was also wondering if there was any sanitary sewer retention during heavy storms, he knows that was done on other projects within the Alewife area and Acorn Park Drive. His concern that this would get mixed in during the heaviest part of the storm when the city experiences CSO's and holding the sanitary sewer might help prevent that. He also wanted to know if they would be using the MWRA stormwater sewers because that might also feed into the CSO's. Mike also asked if there could be some stormwater detention boxes under the parking lots to contain some of the runoff. Mike also stated that they appreciate all the added green space but does not feel that it is enough and is concerned with the impacts that might have on Blair Pond.

Kara spoke about some of the city's infrastructure, she stated that in that area there is separated drain and sewer on Blanchard Road that the project is intending to tie into. Kara stated that only stormwater will be conveyed to the drainage system which discharges to the stream, whether it goes into the road and out to the stream or directly to the stream and the sewerage will be conveyed to a dedicated sewer line in Blanchard Road which is in a separated area and that goes to Deer Island for treatment and there is no combined system at the frontage of this parcel.

Rich stated that with respect to the thermal massing that Mike referred to, that with existing conditions there is a lot of pavement onsite and currently during heavy rains we see in the summer months, that water effectively drains right into the brook untreated so there is a lot of warm water being discharged directly to the brook. Rich stated under the proposed conditions there will be 3 subsurface infiltration systems intended to collect, infiltrate, and store the runoff

from the parking area which would be treated as well from the roof as well. This also will allow them to reduce the peak rates and volumes of stormwater runoff. Rich pointed out also on the proposed plan is the final stormwater infiltration chamber is directed to a series of manholes before it does discharge through an existing 12-inch drain outlet, and they have no plans to increase the size of the drain outlet. Their plan is to keep the existing drain outlet with less water flowing there and what will flow there will have a chance to cool off in the infiltration system before it is discharged.

Jennifer asked if the manholes were new.

Rich confirmed that they will be.

Jennifer stated that given the size of the manholes and the proximity to the wetland resource area she is questioning the construction impacts with the installation of the manholes.

Rich stated that the manholes will be installed behind the limit of the work line, which is going to be at the existing edge of pavement because we are not altering any of the naturally vegetated land beyond the edge of pavement all work will be landward of the edge of pavement.

Jennifer wanted to confirm that they will be installing these manholes and not replacing the outfall pipe.

Rich confirmed that Jennifer was correct.

Jennifer stated if they are in need of replacing the pipe, they will need to come back to the Conservation Commission.

Rich stated it is not their intention to replace it, but they will come back before the commission with the details if needed.

Purvi asked Rich if they did any kind of Tving of the existing infrastructure on site to see what the conditions are.

Rich stated he believes that Hancock did look at the existing conditions.

Jennifer stated that they can add that to this list, they need to look at the construction mitigation and the condition of the existing infrastructure.

Kara stated that the only infrastructure that is onsite is that pipe that goes directly to a catch basin that collects the majority of water from the parking lot area that is conveyed directly to the stream.

Jennifer and Purvi agreed to leave public comment open.

Jennifer stated that the next hearing is January 22, 2024 and the deadline submittal would be January 10th.

Jennifer suggested if anyone is interested from the commission to have a site visit, they could arrange that. Jennifer suggested January 5, 2024, at 10:00 am for the site visit and stated if there would be a quorum of the commission it would be posted on the city's website but January 3, 2024.

9:11 – The commission agrees to continue this to the next hearing on January 22, 2024.

7 – In Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained

9:12 – Administrative Topics

Meeting Minutes from September 18 & October 16, 2023, were approved with amendments on the October meeting minutes.

7 – In Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained

9:22 – Meeting Adjourned

7 – In Favor, 1 – Absent, 0 – Abstained