



## City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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### Public Meeting – Monday, September 20, 2021 at 7:00 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: Jennifer Letourneau (Director), Purvi Patel (Chair), David Lyons (Vice Chair), Erum Sattar, Kathryn Hess, Michelle Lane, Elysse Magnotto-Cleary

Absent Commission Members: Kaki Martin

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, DPW; Bill Conway, Axise Group; John Bolduc, Cambridge Community Development; Christopher Lucas, Lucas Environmental; Brian McCarthy, R.J. O'Connell & Assoc.; Dave Kaplan, Cambridge Water Department; Duke Bitsko, Hatch Associates; Andrew Keel, Hatch Associates; Elizabeth Paden; Michael Brandon

Purvi Patel opened the meeting.

#### **7:00 – Resilient Cambridge Plan Presentation**

John Bolduc, Senior Environmental Planner  
Community Development Department

#### **7:40 – Request for Determination of Applicability**

400 Rindge Avenue – Conduit Installation  
Crown Castle Utility

Christopher Lucas from Lucas Environmental explained to the commission that this project would entail installing utilities along Rindge Avenue from Alewife Brook Parkway moving east toward 400 Rindge Avenue. As a result of the location of the utilities in relation to Gerry's Pond they were asked to come to the commission for a determination. Christopher explained that he tried to gain access to the property located to Rindge Avenue to verify the flags and distance to the project but when he contacted the owner on July 29, 2021 and then again on August 13, 2021 there was no response and was unable to gain access. Therefore, they approximated the one-hundred-foot (100') buffer zone.

Christopher explained they will be installing the four-inch communication cable in the gutter line to reduce impacts to the street traffic on Rindge Avenue. He said trenches will be about one foot

wide and two feet deep and will be paved or covered by plates at the conclusion of the day. They will place filter fabric in the surrounding catch basins as part of the construction.

Purvi Patel stated in the RDA that the flagging in your plans are conservative that they would have less buffer zone impacts. Purvi asked if Christopher had an idea of the impact footage of the buffer zone of the proposed project?

Christopher explained he could not verify the buffer zone to due not being able to access the site but agreed with Purvi. He said that it was about one hundred and ten (110) square feet total.

Kathryn Hess asked about the impacts of the utilities regarding long term implications if the City wanted to change the pavement in the area. What impact would this utility have on those plans? Christopher stated there are a lot of significant utilities along Rindge Avenue and the City would have to take in account for all of them.

Kathryn asked if that is why they are in the sidewalk/gutter line to avoid other utilities?

Christopher deferred to Bill Conway, Bill stated yes, the location was determined to avoid other utilities which were confirmed from their dig safe findings, and other plans received as well to lessen impacts on the roadway was the reason for the location.

**7:51 – Public Comment Closed**

**7:52 –** The Commission unanimously approved a negative determination with the standard conditions.

**7:52 – Notice of Intent**

**DEP File# 123-310**

Little Fresh Pond Shoreline Reconstruction

Water Department: Watershed Protection

David Kaplan, Watershed Manager from Cambridge Water Department stated that this project is part of the Fresh Pond Reservation Master Implementation Plan Project from 2004, over time the site has become in disrepair and in need of some reconstruction. Duke Bitsko from Hatch stated that Little Fresh Pond is a three-acre pond situated between the Fresh Pond Reservation and the Fresh Pond Golf Course. The area that will be under construction is about fifty-six (56) feet, and less than twenty (20) yards in width. This area was reconstructed in 2006 where the commission approved an NOI. In 2009 there was another construction with some timbers which heaved because of ice dams and the paving was also replaced with a porous pavement. As part of this project, they are proposing new porous pavement and reconstruction of the shoreline which has become dangerous for humans and dogs. They brought the proposed project to the Fresh Pond Advisory Board and the Water Board in the spring. The preferred option was the replacement of porous pavement with like kind, the logs are being replaced from round cedar logs to 12 x 12 square Black Locust logs, they found that the round logs when wet become slippery and dangerous and did not hold up well long term and that is why the preferred square Black Locust logs will replace the Cedar ones. The boulders around the tree area will remain for ice damming to protect the shoreline and a stem wall footing system out of concrete to hold the first log in place will be constructed. They are also replacing the low fencing on both sides with the same type of fencing and making a bolder ramp leading into the water to allow older dogs safe access to the pond. The main point to a lot of the work being proposed was to stay on land and not go into the water. Duke stated that back when they permitted the project in 2006 there were no rare or endangered species in the pond according to NEHSP. As part of this project, they discovered

that Little Fresh Pond is a habitat to the Angelman Sedge which is a threatened species. Hatch has sent the plans to MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) so that they could review the project since there is now a rare/endangered species in the area. They are awaiting response from NHESP. Duke stated that the timeline for construction would be fall, less activity, dewater the pond by using the pump from the golf course irrigation system. The dewatering would happen to place the last step at the shoreline. David stated that because of all the rain that they have received this year and the lack of use of the water by the golf course for irrigation there is no benefit to getting this started in the Fall. This would give them a chance to work on contract documents and secure a knowledgeable contractor for spring. This would also allow for fewer impacts to amphibians in the pond, this would give them a chance to hatch and get out of the shoreline. Duke said in 2006 there was flooding in May and the water was across the access road. Duke stated that the contractor should be aware of the possible flooding no matter what season.

Purvi stated that the tabulation of the impacts will need to be adjusted in the NOI. Duke recognized that it was not in there, but it was in the narrative but not in the form.

Purvi asked about the rare species. Duke said it was the Angelman Sedge and it is a vegetation and is considered a threatened species in Massachusetts. He stated that there is no vegetation in the area where construction was going to take place.

Purvi stated that the work is in a polygon but there are no vegetation species. Duke agreed.

Kathryn Hess stated that with her recent experiences with DPW that this flexi pave is in high demand and she asked what the contingency plan is for when they can not get the material. Duke stated that it's been used at the reservation at multiple applications. This application is a small amount, just a couple of inches by hand. Duke stated there are two manufactures, so he thought there would be no issue. Duke stated that they had problem with the porous asphalt over the summer procuring it, but this a different material.

David Lyons asked what the porous paving is? Duke explained that flexi pave was the original material and porous pave is the newer version. Duke explained that this material is 50% stone and 50% rubber, if you would like a certain color the company with spray it with paint. To apply the product an accelerator is added and mixed in a cement mixer and is troweled by hand.

Erum Sattar asked what the duration of the project would be from dewatering to the end. Duke said the project would take a month.

Michelle Lane asked about the contents of the porous material with the spray paint and with the water runoff, will this introduce toxins into the water. Duke said they have been asking the manufacture this question for ten years and the answer they keep getting is that there are no toxins that enter the near by water systems even if water sits on the material. Toxins are not released, and as part of the O & M of this product you blow off debris from the material such as leaves, sticks, etc and a yearly vacuuming. David confirmed there is never any standing water in this area nor significant clogging.

Jennifer Letourneau asked about the calculations of the project and wanted to make sure that they have included all the disturbance and lay down areas and mitigation that will be associated with this project?

Duke stated that there have been some changes to the plans submitted for the NOI. He said that a temporary construction fence will be put up on the perimeter road during the day will access for pedestrians and at the end of the day it will be pushed back. He said that they talked about using the golf course to gain access to the site, and store bins there. He said that they are not bringing a big concrete truck on site, since the amount of concrete needed is not large, they can mix it on-site and use a one-ton truck instead to haul material out. Using the perimeter road and the golf course maintenance shed road to gain access to the site have been thought about.

David said they will use a bin for storage at the golf course maintenance facility. He said they can use some space near the pump station, for temporary storage during the day as well as areas where fencing will be removed and replaced as laydown areas.

Jennifer asked if they could speak about what language they will put in the contract documents that talks about tree protection, landscape protection and damages during construction.

Duke said that they are working on some language. He said they are removing fencing around the pond and replacing it. He said that there will be some tree pruning and vegetation management prior to construction to lessen damage. With these activities before construction that will hopefully help with damage.

Jennifer asked if they were looking to add any landscaping and vegetation as part of this project?

Duke stated that it's all healthy in that area. Additional seeding/plantings will be provided by the owner, so David will provide that materials to lower costs and use existing contracts with vendors for seeding. David said he anticipates that shoulders may need to be loamed and seeded after the project is complete.

#### **8:36 – Public Comment**

Michael Brandon was wondering about the 400 Rindge Avenue project. Jennifer stated they got a negative determination.

#### **8:38 – Public comment closed**

Purvi asked about the ORW for Fresh Pond or Little Fresh Pond? David stated that it's just Fresh Pond.

Purvi asked how much drawn down will happen in Little Fresh Pond?

Duke said the elevation that are going to achieve, but that will be determined in the spring but they were thinking about elevation thirteen (13).

David said Fresh Pond is kept at elevation sixteen (16) and therefore keep other surrounding ponds at a lesser level. David said it will be about a three (3) foot draw down in Little Fresh Pond

Purvi wanted to talk about special conditions regarding Natural Heritage.

Jennifer said that they can send over any documents relating to the sedge from Natural Heritage. Jennifer stated that the typical construction special conditions, start of construction notification/walkthrough, site walks and construction mitigation will be in place. Jennifer see's no issues.

**8:44** – The commission unanimously approved the Order of Conditions

**8:46 – Administrative Topics**

Meeting minutes from August 16, 2021 – approved

**8:53 – Meeting Adjourned**