



City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

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Public Meeting – Monday, September 21 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, Kaki Martin, Elysse Magnotto-Cleary

Absent Commission Members: Ted Pickering

Attendees: Tracy Dwyer, Cambridge Public Works; James Wilcox, Cambridge Public Works; Bryan Walsh, VHB; Andrew Woodward, Bond Brothers; Xuan Phan, MITIMCO; Marissa Valentino, BSC Group; David Biancavilla, BSC Group; Gregory Sampson, Brown Rudnick; Mike Barry, Friends of Alewife; John Chun, Resident; Susan Holland, Resident; Luise Erdmann; Charles LeRoy; Jennifer Smith; Susan Agger; Larry Childs, Green Cambridge & Friends of Alewife Reservation

Purvi Patel opened the meeting.

7:02 – Certificate of Compliance

Talbot Street Outfall
DEP File # 123-279

James Wilcox from the Department of Public Works explained to the Commission that this is a recently completed project as of June 2020 and was a joint effort between the City and MITMICO, which was a sewer separation in Cambridgeport. This project allowed for mitigation of additional sewer flow for the MIT project south of Mass Ave. This project included a new stormwater pipe in the area of Waverly and Talbot Streets and ran down Talbot Street through MIT to the outfall at the Charles River, which was a reestablishment of existing outfall. The structure is City owned with an easement from MIT. MIT now has a bank on sewer mitigation with an agreement with the City on when they can use it. Seeding happened in 2019 and will happen again this week for restoration work. There will be one year trial period but the idea is to connect catchment #1 Amesbury St outfall and catchment #2 the Talbot Street outfall. This project is also going to reduce phosphorus, which is a trial with the City and MWRA. The trial is to push the “first flush” of rain water to the MWRA system which typically has the phosphorus and then the remainder of the stormwater goes into the City’s system and drains into

the Charles River via the Talbot St outfall. Flow meters have been installed in Cambridgeport for on-going monitoring of bacteria. The total net benefit from this is 4.8 million gallons for the sewer system this supports one year six hour storm, 86 acres from the Cambridgeport stormwater.

Bryan Walsh from VHB reviewed the as-builts of the project and restoration photos of the project. Bryan explained that this pipe install was installed by a trenchless system, by pipe jacking under Memorial Drive allowing for vehicles and pedestrians to still have access to Memorial Drive. Bryan said there was dredging in the river as well as some excavation at the river for the outfall structure and all areas are restored.

Purvi Patel asked what the height of the outfall is? Is it one foot or one and half feet?

Bryant stated it was three feet tall.

Erum Sattar asked Jim following the one year monitoring will the other catchment area be connected and would there be more construction? Would they need to come back to the Commission?

Jim explained that catchment #1 the Amesbury Outfall was built about fifteen years ago and they idea is to connect the Talbot Street outfall after a one year trial period to make sure that all is working with the Talbot Street outfall and the system can hold the stormwater. Once the trial period is over the masonry stop that was built in the pipe can be removed to connect the two catchments.

Kathryn Hess asked what the removal of phosphorous pilot was and what is removing phosphorous?

Jim stated that EPA Stormwater permit stated that they remove the phosphorous prior to it being discharged into the Charles River. Jim stated that this happens by directing the “first flush” of rainfall, which is supposed to have the most concentration of phosphorous in the stormwater into the MWRA system, then the remainder of the stormwater is discharged into the Charles River via the Talbot Street outfall.

7:20 – There was no public comment. Public comment was closed.

7:21 – The commission was unanimously approved the Certificate of Compliance.

7:22 – Certificate of Compliance

Alewife Center – Whittemore Avenue (No Work)

DEP File #123-075

Gregory Sampson from Brown Rudnick representing GPC Applied Technologies which is the owner of 62 Whittemore Avenue which is a twenty-six and half acre of property from Whittemore Avenue to Alewife Brook Parkway. This property was sold in late July but during the diligence period the owner leased back and did due diligence to closed out two Orders of Conditions, which no work was done. These orders of conditions were dated back to the 1980's – 1990's, this was for a large development of the area which never happened, and no work was performed. GPC is asking for these Order of Compliance to be closed out.

Purvi Patel asked what was on the property. Was there floodplain?

Greg stated that there are building, parking lots and undeveloped land. There was no elevation changes. Yes there is floodplain, work done near buffer zone of Jerrys Pond.

Jennifer Letourneau reminded the commission last year they approved a negative determination for the repaving of the parking lots.

David Lyons asked Jennifer if she had time to look into these orders. She said that Gregory was right that there was for the build out through planning board but it never happened.

Kathryn Hess asked Gregory was plan from the planning commission? And year of plan?

Gregory said it was attached to the special permit which was issued in 1987, so that plan was from that time, possible a year earlier.

Larry Childs from the Green Cambridge and Friends of Alewife Reservation. These maps were prior to floodplain maps and not our goal to increase flood resiliency. Are the new owners to roll out a plan from the 1980's? Gregory explained that this process is to closed out two old permits from thirty years ago. These are recorded with the Registry of Deeds and show as a defect on the title. GPC was closing out these two permits for the new owner and no development or construction was done or being done.

Purvi thanked Gregory for the clarification and said that she understood there was nothing new proposed at this time. Gregory stated if the new owners were to develop they would have to come back to the commission.

7:34 – Public comment was closed.

7:35 – Approved Certificate of Compliance.

7:35 – Certificate of Compliance

Alewife Center – Whittemore Avenue (No Work)

DEP File #123-080

7:36 – Approved Certificate of Compliance – no work was issued.

7:38 – Information Presentation

Mooney Street Redevelopment

DEP File # Pending

Marissa Valentino from BSC Group went through the Northwest Quad Alewife Project otherwise known as the Mooney Street Redevelopment Project with the commission. Marissa stated that this project is located in the quadrangle area of Cambridge. The project is located on both the north and south sides of Mooney Street, bordered on the north by the MBTA, Blair Pond and Cambridge Highlands neighborhood to the west, warehouses east and offices to the south. The property has seven existing buildings as well as landscape/stockpiles and parking. The new development would consist six buildings of which two are resident buildings, one garage building and three office/lab space buildings. The improvements to Mooney Street would consist of a newly paved street and extension of Fawcett Street. Portions of the project are within the one hundred-year floodplain. Flood waters enter the project from north near Little River. Proposed flood space, elevations lowered to freely flow to buildings A and C which will have comprehensive flood storage underneath them. There will be flood gates installed on the north side. Stormwater will also be collected, detained and let into the stormwater system at a slow rate, each building will be detaining their own stormwater run-off and then let into the system using gravity or pumps. Fawcett St stormwater will be treated before let into the system. They are also proposing porous paving and will be meeting all of the City's Stormwater Management guidelines.

Jennifer Letourneau stated that she was already in receipt of the Notice of Intent for this project. The next hearing would be Monday, October 19, 2020 at 7:00 pm through Zoom in which the commission will hearing this project. Tonight is just an information hearing, not a public hearing.

Purvi said in the future it's a little early to submit incase they need to revise the submittal or plans.

Purvi Patel asked did they look at the 2100 or 100 year storm? In regards to flood storage. Marissa stated that they provided flood storage in each of the building for the 100 year storm which is 6.8. There is also additional flood storage meeting the 2070/100 year sea level storm surge.

Purvi asked if the stormwater standards are for redevelopment?

Marissa stated that yes it's for redevelopment. The stormwater management under buildings are for detention and additional storage in between buildings there are swales.

Purvi also asked the grading of the soils?

Marissa stated that soils are group c and clay.

Kathryn Hess state the there was a lot of flood plain area around Mooney Street and also south and was wondering how it all connects up? Through neighboring property?

Marissa stated that its fairly isolated flood storage areas, all floods are from the north, south are higher elevations and higher elevation around some of the existing flood areas. This is why they chose buildings A and C to collect the flood water from the north.

David Lyons said that buildings A and C were residential and a garage? And do you have plans already for utilities?

Marissa stated yes he was correct about buildings A and C and that utilities are included in the Notice of Intent and electrical will be in the buildings, sewer holding tanks in between buildings and all buildings are also proposed new sewer, water, gas and electric.

Erum Sattar asked what the duration of construction is going to be? Also an explanation of the channeling off the stormwater and assuming you've already done investigating whether that system can handle the runoff?

Marissa stated that there is existing drain line in Smith Place and that is where the overflow will connect to. The larger storm events are detained and slowly let out into the system. Marissa said that ownership is still working out the construction duration.

Kaki Martin asked if this is going to be phased project?

Marissa said Cabot, Cabot and Forbes is working out a phased project and can talk about that at the next hearing.

Kaki said that if it is going to be phased that they need to make sure they are meeting and exceeding the flood storage if it's going to be a phased project.

Marissa said each building has been design for self-containment of storm water management, but for flood storage they need to take that in account.

Mike Barry asked is there a general estimate of/or how much the development will improve storage and treatment of stormwater runoff quality vs present conditions?

Marissa said there is no water quality on site and they will be replacing catch basins with deep water sumps/hoods, water quality units will be installed to help with the stormwater runoff in the roadways and the proposed two year is less than existing 25 year.

Purvi stated that she strongly suggests that they look at what more they can do with stormwater management on site, given with the rising sea levels.

Susan Holland what impact will the stormwater runoff have on Blair Pond which when it floods reaches the backyards of homes on Normandy Avenue and Normandy Terrace.

Marissa we've looked at all of the stormwater runoff in both existing and proposed conditions to the west and quantified the amount that was running off over the property line, in proposed the conditions there is less runoff almost zero run off to the west of the property.

John Chun asked I heard Cabot Cabot and Forbes at a prior meeting state that the elevation will be raised by four feet, is that that whole ground level or the first floor of each building?

Marissa stated each building will be raised four feet to be above existing grade to meet the 2070 one hundred year sea level or rise. Buildings A & C have an open area under to allow for flood waters. Moody Street will be raised in portions at the center it will be raised three and half feet, the rest meets existing grade.

John Chun is there any possible run off in the neighborhoods in the west and south

Marissa stated that all south elevations are higher so there will be no runoff and to the west it is less than existing.

Kathryn Hess does Cabot Cabot and Forbes own the entire parcel at this time? Are the current tenants are aware of the current proposal?

Marissa yes they do own it. The current tenants do know that the land is getting development.

Elysse Magnotto-Cleary said I know there is at least one abutter at the meeting tonight and I was wondering how many notices went out and will there be another round of notices going out?

Marissa I don't have the exact notification list but they will all be notified before the next hearing.

Purvi is there a requirement for a timing of notifications? I know in the Wetland Protection Act there is a distance?

Jennifer the Cambridge goes one step further and requires five hundred feet.

David Biancavilla from BSC Group notifications went out to abutters previous to the hearing.

Do we need to a second notice?

Jennifer stated a second notice does not need to go out if you've noted the correct date and time of the meeting and the contacts for the Conservation Commission. It's the responsibility of the abutter to track the progress of the meeting.

David stated they will double check the notice that went out for that information.

8:05 – Administrative Topic

Meeting Minutes from August 17, 2020 were approved.

The next meeting will be October 19, 2020

8:17 – Meeting Adjourned