

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 30, 2008**

LOCATION: Eliot School Media Center

ATTENDING: Lisa Standley, Paul Alpert, Janet Bernardo, Carl Shapiro, Sharon Soltzberg Kristen Phelps (Agent), Amy Holland, (Office Administrator)

GUESTS: James Emmanuel, Emmanuel Landscape; Rick Merson, DPW; Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager; John Connelly, PPBC; Steve Popper, PPBC; William E. Kuriger, W.E. Kuriger Associates; Fred Hamwey, Hamwey Engineering; Mark Piermarini, Hamwey Engineering; Michael Fields, Winter Street Architects; Dean Coclin, 146 Livingston Circle; Sheila Howard, 351 South Street.

L. Standley opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of October 16, 2008 (as amended) by Janet Bernardo, seconded by Paul Alpert, approved 5-0-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

500 DEDHAM AVENUE (DEP File #234-547) – NOTICE OF INTENT

L. Standley opened the public hearing at 7:45 p.m. Steve Popper of the Permanent Public Building Committee introduced the project team. Representatives present included Fred Hamwey, P.E. and Mark Piermarini of Hamwey Engineering; James Emmanuel, RLA of Emmanuel Landscape; Bill Kuriger, P.W.S. of W.E. Kuriger Associates; and Michael Fields of Winter Street Architects. S. Popper stated that the minutes from the Planning Board meeting of October 16, 2008 had been distributed to Commission members. He added that the Planning Board responded favorably to the proposed project but kept their hearing open until the Conservation Commission has had an opportunity to review the Notice of Intent.

F. Hamwey reviewed the existing conditions on the project site, pointing out all resource areas, buffer zones and no-disturb areas. He then described the existing drainage patterns, noting that there is an existing drainage divide that runs generally through the water building at 484 Dedham Avenue. Runoff to the west of this divide flows into the unnamed channel, while to the east of this divide water percolates into the ground within the grove area. F. Hamwey confirmed that under existing conditions stormwater runoff from the proposed project site does not reach the intersection of South Street and Dedham Avenue.

F. Hamwey described the proposed project which involves constructing a two-story, 21,794 square-foot building with associated parking, utilities, landscaping and site work. Parking (provided in accordance with the zoning regulations) will be added to the rear of the new building (adjacent to the reservoir) and to the west of the water building. The building will be accessed via the existing driveway off of Dedham Avenue and the existing circular drive will remain. A total of approximately 70 trees (not all of which fall within the Commission's jurisdiction) will need to be removed. This represents between 15 and 20% of the mature trees within the pine grove.

For purposes of Stormwater Management, F. Hamwey stated that the majority of the project was considered redevelopment, however the State Stormwater Management Standards have been met in full. He submitted revised documents that had been drawn up in response to the comments from DEP. He then reviewed the proposed stormwater management design which involves the following elements.

- (1) The existing 12" drain line which carries flows from 2 existing catchbasins #1 and #2 and daylights in the bank of the unnamed tributary will be replaced with a 15" pipe.
- (2) Existing catchbasin #5 will be replaced with a stormceptor and will provide 75% TSS removal.
- (3) Total impervious area (inclusive of hard-packed contractor's yard) within the Commission's jurisdiction will be decreased by 6,100 square feet.
- (4) Roof runoff will be directed to a series of subsurface infiltration units (to the east of the proposed building within the limit of work area) sized to handle the 100-year storm. Soils were tested in this area and were found to have good percolation rates.
- (5) The northeasterly parking area will drain to a new, specially-designed catchbasin with a 4-foot sump, fabricated baffle, and a 5" x 24" overflow "outfall" at the bottom of the curb elevation. Flows from the catchbasin will spill out onto a rip-rap splash pad before reaching a 2' wide grass swale (planted with a variety of native grasses) with a 1/2% pitch. The maximum flow rate in the swale is expected to 1.3 c.f.s. in the 100-year storm. The swale ends at the edge of the "limit-of-work" area, but flows will continue toward the South Street/Dedham Avenue intersection in an existing "natural" swale.
- (6) The low area at this intersection will be modified by installing a "berm" to contain any stormwater flows that reach this corner. Additional infiltration will be provided in this area by installing four infiltration galleys. Soils will be tested prior to the next hearing to ensure that the proposed infiltration units will function as intended and will maintain a two-foot separation to seasonal high groundwater.

F. Hamwey stated that a revised request for a waiver for work within the 25-foot no-disturb zone as well as work within the naturally vegetated portion of the 50-foot buffer zone had been submitted (subsequent to the initial NOI submittal) along with an updated Alternatives Analysis for work within the Riverfront Area and a narrative explaining how redevelopment performance standards had been met. Work within the degraded Riverfront Area includes removing the shed and storage building to the rear of the Water Building, constructing parking, modifying the access road layout, grading/landscaping, and installing drain lines and other stormwater management structures. Work within the undegraded portions of the Riverfront Area include installing water and sewer connections, constructing a small portion of the proposed building (with associated grading and landscaping), installing the grass swale, and constructing the modifications – including berms and infiltration galleys – at the corner of Dedham Avenue and South Street.

L. Standley noted that all supplemental information provided to the Commission must also be sent to DEP. She was satisfied with the redevelopment analysis, but would like a stand-alone, Riverfront Area plan that differentiates between new development and redevelopment and indicates what happens to each of these areas in the post-construction condition. She stated that the Alternatives Analysis adequately addresses why the proposed building must be constructed in close proximity to the DPW operations building, but does not address why the building could not be constructed elsewhere on the Town-owned property at and around 470 Dedham Avenue. The Applicant must provide a clear evaluation and statement as to why the proposed building cannot be constructed outside of the Riverfront Area in order to satisfy the Riverfront Regulations.

J. Bernardo asked why the Applicant was proposing galleys rather than other infiltration structures such as culvert units, noting that the latter are more flexible, require less depth and are generally less expensive. She also requested that the erosion controls be revised and that the Applicant explore the possibility of directing roof runoff from the east side of the existing water building toward the grass swale. F. Hamwey stated that the galleys were recommended by the Town's Engineering Department. He added that the requested changes could be made and would be reflected on revised plans.

The Commission raised additional question/concerns about dewatering, the location of the construction entrance, discrepancies between plans (i.e. landscaping plan) and the lack of specificity in the Wildlife Habitat Analysis. The Applicant agreed to provide responses and updated plans/analyses one week prior to the Commission's next hearing.

Motion to continue the public hearing for DEP File # 234-547 to 7:45 p.m. on November 13, 2008 by Janet Bernardo, seconded by Paul Alpert, approved 5-0-0.

5 WOODS END (DEP File # 234-546) – Notice of Intent

L. Standley opened the continued public hearing at 8:45 p.m. The applicant submitted a written request for continuance until December 4, 2008 in order to address a potential zoning issue. **Motion to continue the public hearing for DEP File # 234-546 to 7:45 p.m. on December 4, 2008 by Janet Bernardo, seconded by Paul Alpert, approved 5-0-0.**

COMMISSION ACTIONS

470 DEDHAM AVENUE – Request for tree removal

Parks & Forestry Superintendent Lance Remsen submitted a request to remove a single white pine tree from the contractors yard next to the salt shed on the DPW property at 470 Dedham Avenue. His memo stated that Town arborists have examined the tree and have found it to be suffering from decay and to have several massive cavities, photos of which were included with the request. **Motion to allow the tree removal as an exempt minor activity by Janet Bernardo, seconded by Paul Alpert, approved 5-0-0.**

449 SOUTH STREET – Request for exemption for tree planting

The property owner submitted a request to plant a total of fourteen Arborvitae around a portion of the lawn area he is creating to the rear of the existing house. The lawn/landscaping project was recently approved under DEP File # 234-543, however, that filing did not include the proposed plantings. The proposed work meets the criteria for exempt minor activities [Section 1.02 (4)d]. **Motion to approve the proposed plantings as an exempt minor activity by Janet Bernardo, seconded by Sharon Soltzberg, approved 5-0-0.**

OTHER BUSINESS

149 PINE STREET – Discussion

P. Alpert requested an update on the unauthorized use/disturbance of Conservation land at 149 South Street. K. Phelps stated that NSTAR had loamed and graded the area as directed, however the PPBC contractor for the High School project had since parked their construction vehicles in this area and caused new rutting and disturbance. The contractors are expected to complete all work at the Nike Site by Thanksgiving. K. Phelps will work with Steve Popper to have this area restored by the contractor prior to their departure.

TRAILS PLAN – Discussion

L. Standley stated that the Board of Selectmen had adopted the Comprehensive Master Trails Plan at their October 28, 2008 meeting. One aspect of the Plan that the BOS would like to see expanded is the documentation of existing access easements throughout Town. The possibility of hiring an intern to compile easement information will be explored by the Town Manager.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 13, 2008 at the Needham Public Library Community Room

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Phelps