

Minutes
Watertown Conservation Commission
Lower Hearing Room
Wednesday, June 3, 2015
7:30 p.m.

Conservation Commission Members Present: Marylouise Pallotta McDermott, Patrick Fairbairn, Leo G. Martin, Maria Rose, Charles C. Bering, Louis Taverna,

Commission Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Christopher J. Hayward, Susan C. Jenness

Pallotta McDermott chaired.

- 1) **Public Hearing – Notice of Intent** – Willow Pond Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project - 580 Mt. Auburn Street– Trustees of Mt. Auburn Cemetery Applicant/Owner. Bruce Griffin, PWS, New England Environmental, Inc., representative.

Pallotta McDermott informed the commission and public that the first NOI on for hearing on this agenda has been under consideration for some revisions to the project plans for Willow Pond and Stormwater Improvement Plan for the Mount Auburn Cemetery. A new plan is currently in the works.

Therefore, the party has respectfully requested a continuance for hearing the Notice of Intent to be moved to the July 15, 2015 agenda with revised project plans required to be filed two weeks in advance of the hearing date.

Motion: Taverna made a motion to continue the hearing until the July 15, 2015 meeting. Rose seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote is reached that the hearing for the Notice of Intent for Willow Pond Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project has been continued to July 15, 2015.

- 2) **Public Hearing – Notice of Intent** – Dealtry Pool Facility-Construction of a Spray Deck- 114 Rear Pleasant Street/ - Carol Sanchez, DCR, Applicant/Owner. Kevin E. McHugh, PE, Coneco, Engineers & Scientists, Inc., representative.

Kevin McHugh appeared to represent the applicant. He discussed the plans to replace the old wading pool built in the 1950's with the installation of a new spray deck that is ADA compliant.

The location of the project is inside the buffer zone which is why the Notice of Intent was filed and what gave jurisdiction of the project to the Conservation Commission.

He made a second request for some advanced pruning to be done along the bank of the Charles River with an arborist from the Department of Conservation and Recreation to execute the work. Pallotta McDermott stated that the Conservation Commission would be making the determinations about the pruning aspects of the plan. Hayward stated that the DCR has an expired Vegetation Management plan which would have been applicable here and that the plan has not been reviewed by the commission as is required although a new plan is in the works.

Mr. McHugh stated that the reason for the request for pruning of the trees was for safety/security reasons. He explained that along the Pleasant St. side of the pool where the bath house is located there is no clear path to see inside and a problem lies in not being able to see if the motion sensor lights are being tripped by the wind, animals or maybe an intruder.

He further explained that the DCR has spoken to the Newton and Watertown Police to govern what is going on inside the pool area. They have discussed using selective pruning on the Newton side of the pool to create a clear path to see inside the facility when the motion sensor lights go on inside in the evenings.

Pallota McDermot made it clear that the Commission members will be the ones who determine which trees and vegetation will come down, and that Mr. McHugh will have to inform and include Hayward throughout that whole process.

Hayward advised the commission that the DCR Arborist has taken an early retirement and in light of that and the expired vegetation plan that there should be a written condition in any approved Order of Conditions that no trees shall be cut until the commission has approved it. He spoke briefly of a situation at Greenough Boulevard where trees were removed without any input from the Conservation Commission. He said that the written Order would have prevented that situation from replicating itself here.

Secondly he stated that he is on the Stormwater Advisory Committee and while Watertown is an MS 4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) town we are watched by the Environmental Protection Agency as to what is going into the river. He expressed concern over where this spray water would go. He pointed out the drain in the middle of the pool and asked if it would just empty into the river.

Mr. McHugh stated that the five spray features would operate at 10 gallons a minute and then flow into the river. It will be Drain to waste Operation where there is no treatment involved. All treatment equipment in that existing treatment building goes away. So what goes to the misting heads is drinking water. Once the drinking water gets to the misting heads it goes out to the drain into the outfall.

Hayward stated that Mr. Schuman, the town engineer and Mr. Mee from the Department of Public Works have both stated they would like to take time to review the project and have an opportunity to meet and discuss their concerns.

The commission discussed further and Pallotta McDermott called for a motion on the ordinance fee.

Motion: Rose motioned to waive the ordinance fee. Martin seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote is reached to waive the filing fee. The check is returned.

Public Comment: Joan O'Brien 111 Pleasant St. stated she is not against the project. She is concerned and wants some influence to get a crosswalk at the intersection to get across Pleasant St. She had pictures to offer the commission members.

Rose responded to Ms. O'Brien that the commission has no jurisdiction over the crosswalk piece but we can ask Agent Hayward to speak to officials in town hall to discuss getting the crosswalk issue addressed.

Fairbairn inquired whether or not DCR considered a surveillance systems that can be turned on at night in order to save the trees and vegetation.

Mr. McHugh stated that this has been considered but by the time whoever is monitoring the system sees an intruder, they can be gone. They already have motion sensor lights and that does not work efficiently because sometimes they get tripped by animals and wind. Fairbairn mentioned adding signage to warn the intruders but McHugh said there already are some signs in use by DCR and it does not help.

Rose voiced concern to Hayward that she thinks that he and the Town Engineer should discuss water treatment methods of the spray deck in time for the next meeting.

Hayward stated Jerry Mee is very concerned that he has not met with the applicant yet. His plan is to reach out to Mr. Mee, Matt Shuman, the Town Engineer and Mr. McHugh to set a meeting date and discuss all issues in time for next month.

Motion: Fairbairn made a motion to continue the hearing until July 15, 2015. Martin seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote is reached and the hearing is continued until July 15, 2015.

3) Old Business-

Pallotta McDermott called on Fairbairn who attended a seminar and discussed the possibility for removal of the Watertown dam. There has been some discussion with the Division of Ecological Restoration who believes there are apparent benefits to removing the dam.

Commission members discuss a concern about the accumulation of sediment in the event the dam is removed.

Fairbairn has a date to discuss options about the removal options tomorrow with a representative from the Division of Ecological Restoration.

The commission discussed the legislative records held at the MWRA and Pallotta McDermott confirmed the documents are still held there before anything happens to the dam.

Taverna stated he feels that sediment will be a very big concern when and if the dam is removed. It is agreed that the cost would be exorbitant.

Rose suggested to Fairbairn he find out more about options and to make certain how we can go about doing this without doing any harm. She mentioned the pictures she saw on the Division of Ecological Restoration of spaces where dams had been removed.

- 4) Agent Update/New Business-**The agent discussed the high level of activity in the Historical Commission this month and apologized for not having an Agent Report to outline this evening's meeting as usual.

He plans to attend the DCR/DPW meeting.

He will take pictures of the trees when he makes the visit to Dealtry Pool with Mr. McHugh.

Meeting is adjourned.