

Minutes
Watertown Conservation Commission
Philip Pane-Lower Hearing Room
Wednesday, April 2, 2016
7:30 p.m.

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

Commission Members Absent: Marylouise Pallotta McDermott

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

Martin chaired in the absence of Pallotta McDermott.

- 1) Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – 330-350 Pleasant St. Project - Proposed is a mixed use residential and commercial development at 330, 340, 350 Pleasant Street. Applicant/Owner. Mark Coppola, World Realty & Development, LTD Representative: John P. Rockwood, ECOTECH, INC.**

Martin called the Notice of Intent for Public Hearing. Attorney Terry Morris appeared and introduced the members of the project team.

Dr. John Rockwood, Chief Environmental Scientist with ECOTECH presented the project. He outlined the full presentation as follows:

- a. Overview of the site resources-Dr. John Rockwood, Chief Environmental Scientist with Ecotech.
- b. Overview of the proposed storm water system and irrigation resources-Joseph Porter of VTP Associates, Inc.
- c. Overview of architecture by Dave Anino of Anino Associates, Inc.
- d. Overview of the landscaping plan-Rebecca Bachard-UB-LA

Site Resources Overview

Dr. John Rockwood of Ecotech, Inc. - Rockwood stated that the wetland resources were delineated last April. He walked the site with the Conservation Agent as recently as December, 2015.

The site contains three addresses. 330 Pleasant St., 340 Pleasant St. and 350 Pleasant St. The wetland resources are associated with the Charles River. 3/5 of the land in this project is under the Conservation Commission jurisdiction.

The DCR walking path is located between the project site and the river. The DCR has been called about this project and a copy of the NOI has been served on them as well. At the time of this hearing the project team was still awaiting a response to obtain the necessary Construction Access Permit. Dan Driscoll from the DCR who was at the hearing stated that he would be in touch with the applicant for further review.

Twenty percent of this 99,000 sq. foot formerly degraded resource site will be revegetated and made pervious, thus the NOI was filed as a redevelopment. A copy of the Stormwater Report was attached as required by Stormwater Management Standards.

A list of titles, dates and a complete listing of construction materials was included in the NOI and provided in the cover letter. All property owners were listed. Wetland fees were paid.

Stormwater Overview

Joseph Porter of VTP Associates presented the overview for the proposed Stormwater management portion of the project. There were some concerns expressed in a letter by the town engineer Matt Shuman. Porter said that the project team is in the process of addressing.

The groundwater readings were reportedly taken in the winter. Martin directed the team that he needed to see readings that were taken in the spring in order to measure the readings according to standards.

Architecture Overview

Dave Anino of Anino Associates Architects presented the overview of the architecture of the project. He explained that he has been working with the town's Planning Department team along with design consultant David Gamble of Gamble Associates for over a year due to recent additions to the design review guidelines.

This project was initially proposed as 5 stories and is now at 3 stories. The current version is a by right project in accordance with Zoning and the Pleasant St. Corridor Plan ordinances and regulations.

The 1st floor is approximately 20,000 ft. of retail, restaurant and possibly a bike shop with residential units above. The buildings are separated with a central alley going through the middle of the development that you can walk, ride or drive as well as see right through the site into the river. There is also a proposed residents' river pathway along the eastern side of the proposed structure with direct access to the river.

By the end of the last meeting held to discuss this project, the project had grown in approval. Anino stated at the current time, the entire project has been vetted by the Planning Department.

It was indicated that the project encroaches on the no building zone by 4 ft. Martin explained to the team that he would not accept the 4 foot encroachment. Martin directed them that they would need to correct the encroachment before he would vote to allow an order of conditions.

Landscape Overview

Rebecca Bachard of UB-LA presented an overview of the landscape plan which included the upper level green roof, streetscape, the rear of the structure and the paths along the buildings, leading to the river.

There was some concern voiced by a resident, Elodia Thomas, that synthetic turf may be used in a small amount on the patio; Bachard explained that this plan was still flexible enough for modifications of such issues.

Some discussion will need to take place with the fire department about the use of grills on the patio by the residents prior to anyone moving in.

Agent Comments

Agent Hayward expressed concern about the DCR Paths and urged the project team and CC to consider how pets could impact the surrounding areas.

Morris explained that there has been ongoing concern and discussion about ways in which the leases of the tenants can be used to control the impact that the animals may have on the meadow lands.

Agent Hayward pointed out that this is the final large, currently developable site along Pleasant St. and along the Charles River and urged the CC to schedule a site visit before making any decisions about the Order of Conditions.

Comments from the DCR

Dan Driscoll from the DCR introduced himself and expressed that he saw a lot of good things about this project.

He suggested that Agent Hayward was correct that measures should be taken to protect the resource of the land from being affected by the tenants' animals.

He suggested that the proposed open green space to the rear of the building should be negotiated into an easement and the title could be retained by the owner. Attorney Morris stated that he was interested in the easement; Anino said that the team had been hoping for that to happen.

Commission Discussion

CC members discussed the project with the team and Agent Hayward. CC members were urged to walk the site prior to making any decisions, while the project team worked on addressing the issues that were raised as concerns by town officials. Martin requested that the applicant provide ground water data that is taken during spring seasonal high water. He requested this information be collected by installing monitoring wells. He also recommended that the applicant

gather soil permeability data in the locations for proposed infiltration systems. That information was not provided in the NOI.

Motion: Taverna made a motion to continue a decision on the NOI until after a site visit is conducted by the CC. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached by the CC to continue the decision until after a site visit is conducted.

2) Minutes from March 6, 2016 Meeting.

Motion: Fairbairn made a motion to adopt the minutes from the February 2016 CC meeting with modification. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote adopting the minutes as modified was reached.

3) Old Business

- a. Agent Hayward said that the Filippello Park Meeting on March 21, 2016 went very well and that the concept plan was overall well received.
- b. Fairbairn shared his progress on attempts that he had made to draft Conservation Design Guidelines with CC members.

A unanimous vote was reached to adjourn the meeting.