

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019**

The Glastonbury Conservation Commission (Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency), along with Mr. Tom Mocko, Environmental Planner, in attendance held a Regular Meeting in Town Council Chambers, second floor of Town Hall located at 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury, Connecticut.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members – Present

Judy Harper, Chairman
Dennis McInerney, Vice-Chairman
Kim McClain, Secretary
Brian Davis
William Shea
Mark Temple

Commission Members – Excused

Mr. Frank Kaputa

Chairman Harper called the meeting to order at 7:33 P.M. She welcomed new commissioner, Mr. William Shea.

I. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

- 1. Proposed 29-lot Stallion Ridge Subdivision on 36.2 acres involving a 1,500-foot, cul-de-sac public road and one rear lot – site currently an equestrian facility at 524 Bell Street – Rural Residence Zone and Groundwater Protection (overlay) Zone 1 – Alter & Pearson, LLC - Dutton Associates, LLC – Dependable Construction (Dan Gassner), applicant – Discussion limited to Big, Old Specimen Tree’s Impact on Finalizing Plans for Formal Submission**

Attorney Peter Alter presented the application on behalf of the applicant. He noted that they are proposing a 29-lot open space subdivision. The lots will be serviced by public sanitary sewer and water. He noted that the white oak tree identified on the plan would be removed, and the applicant is requesting guidance from the Commission on how to proceed. Mr. Alter explained that the applicant’s efforts are at a halt until they know what to do with the tree.

Mr. James Dutton of Dutton Associates, LLC explained that the tree is located on the edge of the road. The vertical alignment of the road would remove about 6 feet of soil. The alternative alignment does not look much different, as the biggest change will be the vertical alignment of the road. He acknowledged that the situation is less than desirable.

Mr. Jody Kretzmer, Licensed Arborist, of Sullivan Tree & Landscape explained that back in early June there was not enough material on the tree to make an educated decision on whether

the tree was healthy or not; he spoke at that time with Dan Gassner of D&D Construction, informing him that he could not write a definitive report. He revisited the property afterward to inspect the tree again; Mr. Kretzmer passed around pictures of the tree which show visible conditions that are negative to the tree, such as bittersweet and poison ivy. He explained that in this report, he listed the estimation of the health of the tree at about 60%, plus or minus 5%. It had only 60% of its leaves and every single one had holes in them, which is an indication of insect damage and stress.

In Mr. Kretzmer's second report three months later, on September 10, he came across a new condition: a fungus. He noted that this tree is not on the Connecticut's Notable Tree list. Due to the tree not producing enough energy for itself, the bittersweet vines, insect damage, gypsy moss (caused by drought), followed by a very rainy season this past spring, which caused a fungus, all of these conditions indicate that the tree is ultimately going to die from all of its stressed conditions.

Mr. Dutton passed around branches from the tree in question and two other white oak trees (on Tryon St. and Main St.) to compare and show the damage and unhealthiness of the tree in question. Mr. Alter stated that Mr. Gassner has made every effort to find a way to preserve the tree. He explained that the better design from an engineering standpoint is to remove the tree and Mr. Gassner is prepared to plant other trees in its place. Mr. Dutton added that there once were two trees at that property, hence the name for an earlier farm "Twin Oaks Farm," and the second tree has already died years ago.

Chairman Harper opened the floor for comments. Commissioner Davis expressed dismay and disappointment at the current condition of the tree, stating that if the previous property owner had considered it an asset when the troubles were just beginning and committed to rehabilitating it, it might be in much better condition. Secretary McClain agreed, stating that she views this as tragic. If the rehabilitated tree could have been a feature of the Town development, that would have been a great story.

Commissioner Shea asked for clarification on the matter that the June 4 report was deemed no longer viable on September 10. Mr. Kretzmer said that is correct. The June 4 report stated that the plan was to preserve the tree, but the September 10 report showed that is no longer viable because in just three months, the tree took a complete detriment from a 60% growth to -50%, which is an extreme amount. Mr. Kretzmer added that if the tree were on the notable tree listing and treated even just five years ago, it might have stood a chance, but now, it has very little to no defense mechanisms left.

Commissioner Temple said that the tree is about 400 years old and expressed disbelief at a four-year drought destroying it. He asked if the other compromising conditions Mr. Kretzmer listed were there before. Mr. Kretzmer stated that, over a period of time, many things compounded. Mr. Temple asked Mr. Mocko for his expertise. Mr. Mocko replied that he understands the applicant's rational approach that this tree has many problems, but he does not have enough expertise to advise otherwise. Vice Chairman McNerney expressed disappointment in the applicant's initial design. Commissioner Davis agreed, stating that, at that time, the Commission did not know that the tree was distressed. Vice Chairman McNerney remarked that the tree should get the benefit of the doubt to save it.

Commissioner Temple asked about the timing of the project. Mr. Dutton explained that it will take close to two years before they ever get to the tree. Commissioner Temple added that the Commission may consider a contingency approval plan, monitoring the effort and possibly saving the tree in the end, if progress is made. Secretary McClain agreed, stating that miracles do happen. Commissioner Davis also concurred. Attorney Alter noted that the design was based on the June report, and they were also startled by the September report. He agreed to come back to the Commission at a later date.

2. Proposed Car Wash Facility at 70 Oak Street – redevelopment involving a 5,187 square foot, 1-story building and 25 parking care stations on an existing 1.4-acre residential property south of Melzen’s Farm Supply and the child daycare facility under construction and north of Kreiger Lane – Planned Commerce Zone and Groundwater Protection Zone 1 – Alter & Pearson, LLC – Anchor Engineering Services, Inc. – Car Wash Services MD, LLC (c/o Mark DiTomasso), applicant

Attorney Meghan Hope presented the application on behalf of the applicant. She explained the layout of the site, noting that the facility needs to be 125 feet from the street line, but the applicant obtained a variance for 75 feet. She also explained the traffic flow of the site, which is a two-way access point. Attorney Hope noted that the Beautification Committee approved the landscape plan.

Mr. Matt Brown, PE, for Anchor Engineering Services, Inc. explained the topography of the site. He noted that the property slopes, plus or minus 15 feet. In total, about 6,500 cubic yards of net material will be removed from the site. Test pits were conducted for the site stormwater plan. The discharge from a 100-year storm is very low, primarily due to the quality nature of the soil associated with the site. Site development would result in 38% impervious coverage and does incorporate a bunch of concrete pad areas. The facility system is completely automatic. Mr. Brown described the infiltration, noting that their groundwater recharge meets the requirement. He also noted that the proposed lighting will be 12 feet in height and dark sky compliant.

Vice Chairman McNerney asked what kinds of materials would be used during the car wash/treatments available at the facility. Mr. Mark DiTomasso, contract purchaser and applicant, explained that all of the chemicals are biodegradable and standard practice.

Commissioner Temple asked a series of technical questions for the applicant, which he noted need to be addressed in their application, such as information on the layout, a maintenance plan for the oil water separator and sand separation, and stormwater features. Mr. Brown agreed to prepare a site-specific stormwater maintenance plan/program for this proposal. Attorney Hope went over some of the sustainability components of the car wash site.

Secretary McClain asked what is the maximum percentage of gallons that could be recycled at any car wash anywhere. Mr. DiTomasso said 50%, which is what he is currently doing. Secretary McClain noted that there are very few shade trees on site and inquired about the number of parking spaces for vacuuming. Attorney Hope replied 25, which is the minimum number of parking spots, as per the regulations. She noted that the two larger shade trees on site were specifically chosen by the Beautification Committee, but there are four shade trees. She also

explained that the committee felt that those locations were the best spots for those trees. Mr. Brown added that the concrete pads under the vacuums help to minimize increases in temperatures.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the business hours of operation. Mr. DiTomasso said about 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Chairman Harper summarized that the applicant should have the following prepared for their next meeting: maintenance plans detailing, among other things, the proposed stormwater management system, the chemical storage, safety data sheets, internal drain layout, and a spill plan.

- 3. Proposed Office Building at 340 Hebron Avenue and 18-20 Linden Street – redevelopment involving a 20, 015 square foot, 3-story office building (6,702 square foot footprint) and 85 parking spaces on 1.2 acres located at the corner of Hebron Avenue and Linden Street, just south of the new roundabout – Town Center Zone and Residence A Zone – Alter & Pearson, LLC – Dutton Associates, LLC – Trinkaus Engineering, LLC – 340 Hebron Avenue, LLC and 20 Linden Street, LLC (c/o Gottfried & Somberg Wealth Management, LLC), applicants/landowners**

Attorney Hope presented the application, noting that the current landowners have been on the property since 2005. 10 years later, they acquired the property near it. In 2018, they purchased the two-family house on 18-20 Linden St. Their goal is to get everyone in this business in one building, so they are proposing a three-story office building. Attorney Hope explained that the site is located in two different zones, and the applicant chose not to change the residential zone. She noted that they had a meeting with their neighbors, where they discussed the issue of construction traffic and buffering. To resolve these concerns, the applicant is proposing to make the exit a left turn only and adding a little berm and trees to replace the fence to provide buffering.

Ms. Hope explained that the lighting plan includes dark sky fixtures, with a pole mounting height of either 11 or 12 feet, which will be on timers. The applicant will also be installing solar panels on the roof. There would be 35.1% open space on the site, which exceeds the zoning regulation requirement. She noted that there is a possibility that the applicant will deal with the groundwater when they construct parts of the project. Their goal is that the basement for the building will be dry.

Secretary McClain remarked that the Commission does not have the site plans, only the narrative. Mr. James Dutton explained the lighting plan. They dug two test pits on the site and monitored them for several months through the wettest part of the season. The stormwater management system is in the northwest corner of the site. The site has unusual topographic conditions and the water quality system uses a polyethylene pipe, with a good-sized capacity and is relatively easy to clean. All of the collected storm runoff will run through that system.

Attorney Hope explained the landscape plans of the site. Mr. Dutton added that they worked out a plan with their western neighbor to remove the invasive, damaged trees and replant new trees on the neighbor's land.

Chairman Harper opened the floor for public comment.

Ms. Margaret Bassette of 7 Linden Street lives across the street of the proposed site and expressed frustration at the current state of traffic in the area. She added that the left lane turn only serves to add confusion and now with an additional 85 parking spots, the traffic and congestion will only get worse. She stated that it is no longer a quiet little neighborhood.

Attorney Hope replied that, office-wise, the office area for the two existing buildings is about 5,000 to 6,000 square feet. There are currently at 23 parking spots and by increasing the size of the proposed building to over 20,000 square feet will necessitate the increase in parking. Though, she noted that there will be other non-medical offices to lease there, too.

Ms. Kathryn T Cross of 17 Linden Street also lives across the street from the project and echoed her neighbor's concerns. She explained that dust and dirt, from the construction along Sycamore Street, into her house has been relentless. Ms. Cross acknowledged that the tree on site was invasive but expressed disappointment in its removal. She also thanked the applicants and the Commission for considering their statements.

Attorney Hope stated that they will submit a traffic report to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, as well as to this commission. She reiterated that, based on the comments the applicant received at the initial neighborly meeting, they chose to restrict the lane to a left turn only. Mr. Mocko noted that a lot of the concerns raised by the neighbors are under the purview of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, and urged them to express their issues to them, as well.

Commissioner Temple asked when construction would begin. Ms. Hope replied that if all goes through, the building demolition on Hebron Avenue would begin sometime in the winter. She also added that an erosion and sediment control plan will be submitted, but they are awaiting comments from the Engineering Department, to ensure that they are all on the same page.

4. Proposed Mixed Use Building at 311 Hebron Avenue – redevelopment involving a 3-story mixed use (retail and restaurant on 1st floor and residential on 2nd & 3rd floors) building with a 2,847 square foot footprint and 23 parking spaces located at the corner of Hebron Avenue and House Street – Town Center Zone – Dutton Associates, LLC – Rosy Kapur, applicant/landowner

Mr. Dutton presented the application on behalf of his client. The proposal is for a mixed-use building: two 1-bedroom units and two 2-bedroom units on the second and third floor. The first floor is a juice bar. The applicant might have some basement storage. The building has significant overhangs on the structure all around. The site is 78% impervious. The drainage was designed to mitigate all of the stormwater events, up to the 100-year storm. The median groundwater elevation was 56. Mr. Dutton explained that they received comments from Engineering, which expressed a great deal of confusion on this project. He noted that when they submitted the plans for this project a while ago, the intention was for an informal review.

Mr. Hans Hansen of Hans Hansen Architectural Design explained the landscaping plans. He noted that they attended a second Beautification Committee meeting yesterday, and were given a few suggestions, such as planting columnar Callery pear trees. Mr. Mocko stated that will be a

problem for this commission. Secretary McClain agreed, explaining that Callery pear trees are an invasive species.

Mr. Hansen stated that there is very little site to vegetate. There will be a fence line to divide the property from neighbors, and the trees will be planted about 12 feet tall. Mr. Dutton explained that there is an existing retaining wall, which will be removed, and new walls will be constructed along the north and west property lines. Secretary McClain asked if there will be any shade trees to break up the asphalt. Mr. Hansen said that because the site is so small, it will all be rooftop equipment. They are not doing a full basement.

Chairman Harper summarized that the applicant shall prepare the following before their next hearing: submit the erosion & sediment control plans, reconsider the invasive trees, and try to fit in more shade trees. Secretary McClain added that she would like the applicant to also consider installing a bike rack and possibly solar panels on the roof.

II. POTENTIAL FORMAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission concerning a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review for informal #4 above *Not considered*

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting of July 25, 2019

The minutes were accepted as presented.

IV. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS *None*

V. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report

Chairman Harper explained that the Commission can arrange an in-service education meeting in December to discuss invasive species with other commissions, such as the Beautification Committee.

2. Environmental Planner's Report *None*

3. Correspondence to the Commission

Mr. Mocko discussed the email sent to the Commission from Mr. Roger Emerick. Commissioners asked Mr. Mocko to respond to Mr. Emerick and provided suggestions as to what to include.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Harper adjourned the meeting at 11:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk