

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2020**

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 at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members – Present

Judy Harper, Chairman

Kim McClain, Secretary

William Shea

Frank Kaputa

Brian Davis (arrived 7:20 P.M.)

Commission Members – Excused

Dennis McInerney, Vice Chairman

Mark Temple

Chairman Harper called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

I. INFORMAL DISCUSSION

1. Proposed parking lot expansion at St. Paul Church – 2577 Main Street and Assessor’s Lot W-38A Main Street properties – either 111 or 115 new parking spaces in two areas that encroach upon inland wetlands and upland review areas – Town Center Zone – Megson, Heagle & Friend, C.E. & L.S., LLC – Davison Environmental, consultants – Alter & Pearson, LLC – The Community of Saints Isidore and Maria at St. Paul Church, applicant

Mr. Peter Alter of Alter & Pearson, LLC presented on behalf of his client, St. Paul Church. He explained the history of the application and Phase One of their plans, which includes an expansion of the parking lot to 270 parking spaces. Attorney Alter noted that they altered their plans to incorporate the Commission’s original comments, and while they do not have to build all of the parking at this moment, it would make sense to do so before engaging with the expansion plan for the rest of the church campus. The applicant also previously included a report which concludes that the ponded area is not a vernal pool.

Mr. Mark Friend, soil scientist from Megson, Heagle, & Friend explained his redesign plan, which included monitoring the groundwater for wetlands. They relocated the previously proposed parking (around the cell tower) representing about 6,000 square feet of wetlands disturbance in an area that was already disturbed and currently inundated with invasive species. Mr. Friend stated that they also added several landscape islands with shade trees within the

parking lots, and a conservation easement, which will encumber the remaining wetlands area on the site, and a wetland enhancement area to tackle the invasive species (knotweed) problem. The goals of the stormwater management system are twofold: to treat the water quality for the runoff that is coming off the proposed parking lot, and to improve the water quality of the existing runoff that goes untreated into the wetlands area. He concluded that the proposed mitigation is the conservation easement, a permanent dedication of the resources, an enhancement of the disturbed wetlands, treatment of the existing runoff, and shading of both the proposed and existing parking areas.

Mr. Eric Davison, soil scientist and wetlands scientist, went over their approach for managing the stormwater basin and the wetlands enhancement area. He proposed planting the following: 1,000 plugs, 200 shrubs, and 20 trees. He explained that they will continue to mow the area once or twice a year, in order to help control the knotweed. Commissioner Kaputa asked if there is a long-term plan to control the knotweed. Mr. Davison replied that they would like to get to a point where there is some kind of passive control, but unfortunately, they will never completely get rid of it.

Commissioner Kaputa inquired about the rain garden's size. Mr. Friend stated that it is roughly 7 feet wide and 18 inches deep. Commissioner Kaputa disagreed with the applicant's assessment that the disturbance in this proposal is similar to the previous one because that concerned paving over a dirt road, while in this case, they propose paving over natural wetlands. Mr. Friend explained that while it is a gravel driveway, it is submerged most of the time, so as far as the function it provides as a wetland, it is very similar.

Commissioner Kaputa stated that while he wants the Church to be successful and build what they want to build, he has great trouble with it being done at the expense of the wetlands. He does not support paving over the wetlands. Attorney Alter stated that this is not a pristine wetland. It has already been excavated and disturbed a number of times, so the tradeoff of 6,000 square feet, including an area that has a sanitary sewer going through it, is not that big because it gives the opportunity to reclaim a wetland. Commissioner Davis inquired about the difference in impervious between the previous plan and this one. Mr. Alter replied that this is 3,000 square feet less of total pavement, at 113,000 square feet.

Secretary McClain noted that, a while back, they had discussed including a bike rack. She inquired whether that is still part of the applicant's plans and if that area will no longer be a bus stop. Mr. Friend stated that the Church is fine with the bike rack, but they have not gotten to that level of planning yet. Attorney Alter stated that the bus stop is part of an ongoing dispute between the Town of Glastonbury and the state of Connecticut over the snow plowing and maintenance. Mr. Alter explained that since there is no resolution yet, they do not have permission for a bus to go through there.

Secretary McClain also asked about the lighting plan. Mr. Alter stated that the lighting will be dark-sky compliant and appropriate for the parking lot. He noted that while he cannot promise what the heights of the poles will be, he will relay the Commission's concerns to make them no taller than 14 feet. Secretary McClain also suggested requiring an automatic shutoff (so that the lights are motion-sensitive) or timers (so that the lights are not on all night).

Chairman Harper inquired about the condition of the runoff and what it is doing to the existing wetlands. Mr. Friend explained that the existing parking lot has the typical contaminants that are in a parking lot. While parking lot runoff impacts the wetlands area, he could not say exactly how much in this case. Mr. Davison added that there is no insect life in the water, and the other section is just as disturbed. Since this is a completely degraded piece of wetland that is being filled in, he believes that this is a reasonable approach to accomplish what the landowner wants without affecting the wetland in a negative way. The intention of this project is to take the gunk out of the runoff before it gets into the ground. Chairman Harper asked about the long-term maintenance of the wetland. Mr. Davison stated that the Commission can include that in the conservation easement restrictions.

Attorney Alter explained that while they need 262 parking spaces, they propose 270 spaces. Secretary McClain asked if they removed the extra 8 parking spaces, would that impact the wetlands less. Mr. Alter said probably not, but Mr. Friend agreed to look into it.

Chairman Harper summarized the Commission's requests for the applicant to provide the following:

- a multi-year plan for the control/elimination of knotweed and maintenance. Mr. Alter noted that they had proposed a three-year plan, but if that is not enough, they could continue it. He suggested leaving that up to the Environmental Planner to decide.
- a plan for the rain garden maintenance
- a lighting plan
- bicycle rack accommodation
- a draft conservation easement.

2. Proposed 2-lot Dorothy Place Subdivision – two rear lots on an interior, 4.3-acre parcel identified as 181A Main Street located to the rear or west of the existing 181 Main Street residential lot – Rural Residence Zone and Groundwater Protection Zone 1 – Richard F. Mihok, P.E. – Guaranteed Maintenance and Development, LLC (Paul Jacques), landowner/applicant

Mr. Richard Mihok, P.E. from Marlborough, represented the applicant, Mr. Paul Jacques, who is proposing 2 interior lots served by a common driveway on Main Street. The entire parcel is an open field and all of the soil on site is gravelly. They propose MDC water and on-site leach fields for each lot. There are no wetlands on the property or anywhere around it. The applicant lives directly across an existing common driveway. The topography of the area is pretty much level, though it slopes down in one area. All of the runoff from the roofs and driveways will be contained so that no water will leave the site.

Secretary McClain suggested that, since it is an open field, it is perfect for solar. Mr. Mihok stated that he does not know whether the applicant will they put solar panels on their roofs. Chairman Harper asked what will happen to the bare lots. Mr. Paul Jacques, the landowner, replied that there are some trees on the property, and some more will be added, though it will be a personal preference for the new owner, if they would like to add more plantings. Mr. Mocko asked the applicant to address the issues raised by the Engineering Department. Mr. Mihok stated that they have been addressed and the updated plans will be sent over soon.

3. Proposed 4-lot Dorothy's Place II Subdivision – raze existing house at 180 Main Street(east side) to create two frontage lots and two rear lots on 8.33-acres – Rural Residence Zone, Country Residence Zone and Groundwater Protection (overlay) Zones 1 & 2 – Richard F. Mihok, P.E. – Guaranteed Maintenance and Development, LLC (Paul Jacques), landowner/applicant

Mr. Richard Mihok, P.E. from Marlborough, again presented on behalf of his applicant, Mr. Paul Jacques. He noted that the parcel is directly across from the previous 181A Main Street proposal. There are existing structures on the site, which will all be taken down, and they propose a total of 4 residential lots on the site: 2 will be front lots with individual driveways. Presently, there are 2 driveways, and they will add one common driveway, which will serve two rear lots. All of the activities will be outside of the wetlands and the wetlands buffer. The site is very gravelly and has been tested for leach fields; MDC water will serve each dwelling. There is a higher mound located to the rear, and they propose a roughly 4.5-acre conservation easement to cover the rear portion of the property. Once again, all of the runoff from the roofs and driveways will be contained so that no water will leave the site.

Chairman Harper noted that during her site visit, she saw a nasty invasive weed all over the property. She submitted an informational handout on the invasive to the applicant. Mr. Mihok said that, at one time, they were raising pheasants there so it could be a holdover from that. He noted that the house is from the 1800s. Chairman Harper stated that if there are any specimen trees on the parts that are being developed, she would like to see those on the plans.

Secretary McClain pointed out that the Engineering notes state that the applicant should have just one common driveway. Mr. Mihok remarked that the number of vehicles leaving the site will be the same whether they have 3 or 4 driveways. Secretary McClain explained that if they had only one common driveway, even if it had to be a bit wider, it would likely require less pavement. It is also a more prudent alternative to have one driveway for 4 houses. Mr. Jacques replied that he does not think it would make a big difference to the impervious. He also stated that he has a shared driveway with 3 other houses, and it has been quite problematic. The biggest complaint from his recent buyers is that they do not want a common driveway. Secretary McClain stated that it is a self-imposed hardship. An analysis of the difference in total pavement area between what the applicant desires (individual drives for each frontage lot and a common drive for the rear lots) and what the Engineering Department requests (one curb cut and a common driveway for all lots) should be presented upon returning for formal action.

Commissioner Kaputa stated that he appreciates the conservation easement and that the development is being done outside of the uplands and wetlands review area, as it should be; furthermore, he will attempt to visit the site to check for specimen trees. Chairman Harper asked if the houses will need a little grading to put the driveway in. Mr. Mocko said yes. Commissioner Davis proposed turning the orientation of the rear houses so that they face an east-west access, which will better allow for solar.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Special Meeting of November 14, 2019

Minutes were accepted as presented.

2. Special Joint Meeting of December 11, 2019

Minutes were accepted as presented.

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

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report

Chairman Harper stated that four commissioners attended the CACIWC Annual Meeting, which they thoroughly enjoyed. Chairman Harper realized that she needs to brush up on her knowledge of the regulations, which are available online. The Chairman also noted that she and commissioners McClain and Kaputa attended former commissioner Ed Richardson's funeral. Commissioner Kaputa added that former commissioner Helen Stern is not doing well.

Mr. Mocko stated that an email will go out soon, listing all of the meeting dates for the 2020 calendar year. He noted that the next meeting, which was scheduled for January 30, might be canceled due to a lack of applications that are ready.

2. Environmental Planner's Report *None*

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Harper adjourned the meeting at 8:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk