

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING OF MINUTES THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020**

The Glastonbury Conservation Commission (Inlands 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
Brian Davis
Frank Kaputa
William Shea
Mark Temple

Commission Members- Excused

Kim McClain, Secretary

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

I. INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Proposed expansion and renovation of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library (with major outdoor element being a 2-story, 1,300 square foot footprint addition off the library's southwest corner) – 2407 Main Street – Reserved Land Zone – Kaitlyn Stublic, Langan Engineering – Dave Sacchitella & Barbara Bailey for the Town of Glastonbury, applicant

Mr. Jesse Saylor of TSKP Architects and Ms. Kaitlyn Stublic of Langan Engineering presented a series of slides of the proposed expansion and renovation of the Welles-Turner Memorial Library. Ms. Stublic briefed the Commission that the areas of interest on the slides include a few small pockets of wetland areas, the parking space, grading and drainage pipes on site, new patio areas and half an acre of plantings.

Mr. Saylor explained that the design element of the library expansion was inspired by the history of rural Glastonbury, particularly the old colonial houses on Main Street. The library addition will also have a maker space which will support community hobbies. Mr. Saylor mentioned maple sugaring and a greenhouse art gallery as examples of maker spaces that tie in with the Town. The overall design of the library will be a mix of contemporary and historical

architecture. He pointed to a slide and highlighted that a field of sage and low grass will be the general backdrop. The same slide also shows the hardscape and seating area which will contain pockets of bright color from flowers and a ginkgo tree. The slide presentation continued on to the lighting which would be farm house style fixtures on the building and near the bike rack. Mr. Saylor also pointed out that the children's terrace will have a larger glass wall and windows which will allow programming to move outside.

Ms. Stublic stated the landscape will mostly consist of native plants that are drought tolerant. The trees on site will be protected and there will be a small net decrease in the site's impervious cover; all respecting the town zoning regulations. The slide presentation was concluded.

Chairman Harper asked if anyone had any questions. Commissioner Kaputa pointed out that ginkgo trees and English ivy are not native plants. Chairman Harper asked how tall the lighting would be. Mr. Saylor said they will be mounted on the building 6 feet above the ground. Mr. Mocko asked if there would be any additional light posts. Mr. Saylor said they will be wall mounted and on several bollards along the entrance way.

Chairman Harper brought up the issue that the library is located right near a neighboring parking lot. She also pointed out that the path between the library and neighbor is too narrow. Commissioner Harper questioned how they would be able to construct a path with lighting in such a narrow space. Mr. Saylor said the property line is 6 feet from the property line and a path will fit. Chairman Harper asked if there will be a barrier or a curb to indicate the end of the library property. She explained that the neighbor doesn't want people to continue parking on her property.

Mr. Mocko asked about snow removal plans. Ms. Stublic said the property line is actually closer to 8 feet and there should be sufficient space to remove snow if smaller equipment is used. Chairman Harper commented, "definitely smaller." Ms. Stublic stated that the space is an existing non-conformity.

Vice-Chairman McInerney asked about the sustainable elements of the project. Mr. Saylor said that the lights have been converted to LED and it reduces energy.

Chairman Harper had a question about the end wall (shown on the slide) where the light comes through. She wanted to know how it would be constructed. Mr. Saylor said the material would consist of glass and fiber cement.

Commissioner Temple stated that the sidewalk on the south section is a bad idea because the melting snow will cause slip and fall issues. He asked how this issue would be resolved. He also stated that this can be problematic because the snow would go in the neighbor's yard. A worst-case scenario would involve snow being pushed against the building entrenching it on both sides. Commissioner Temple asked the architect to find a way to do it better.

Chairman Harper asked if the sidewalk would be used year-round. Mr. Saylor said it is only intended for emergencies and not meant for year-round use.

Chairman Harper thanked Mr. Saylor and Ms. Stublic. She informed them that the Commission wants to see more detailed information on wetlands, buffers, and sustainability.

II. SHOW-CAUSE HEARING

Resolution of an inland wetlands and watercourses violation involving the piping of a small, intermittent watercourse and filling of its valley on residential property at 68 Hickory Drive – Charles E. Collins, IV & Mary E. Collins, landowners

Chairman Harper invited Mr. Charles E. Collins, IV and Ms. Mary E. Collins, landowners of 68 Hickory Drive to give opening thoughts. The owners said they wanted to fix the situation and were unaware of wetlands violations.

Chairman Harper looked at a map of the property and asked if the yellow highlighted section is the original house. Mr. Collins said he needed to look at the diagram and plans. He then said he took out a total of 3 permits. He estimates that in 2012 he took out a permit for an addition expansion. Back in 2008 or 2010 he said they also had a permit for the garage. He also estimates that back in 2017 they took out another permit for a pool.

Chairman Harper asked the homeowners what the red highlighted section on the diagram is. Mr. Collins said it is a patio area that has always existed and to the left is a little shed which they relocated behind the garage. Also in the back of the property is another shed. When they constructed the pool, the shed was moved slightly to the north. Mr. Collins explained that when they had their addition done in 2012 or 2013, they arranged a lot line modification of a quarter of an acre from their neighbor (located on 84) in order to successfully complete their addition. Mr. Collins stated that they have talked to sanitation about testing for a reserve septic system. He then stated that the next step is to get the lot line modification complete and get a building permit.

Commissioner Kaputa asked the owners about the watercourse that was piped. He asked them what they did and who did it. Mr. Collins explained that the section from the lot line to the right pipe is from the neighbor's property. The pipe goes under the drive into the other neighbor's property located at 56. He said the previous owner put the pipe in because in the winter it would flood into the basement.

Mr. Collins said he looked at the size of his neighbor's pipe (10 inches) and bought a pipe that was the same dimension all the way through. He then explained that he covered it with topsoil. He said the pipe opens up and flows into the woods and there is no erosion. He also noted that he maintained the "naturalness" of the property. He said that trees are growing, and there is no erosion or flooding. Mr. Collins stated that it has always been swampy land that is naturally wet. He also said the only change made was the upgrading of the existing pipe.

Commissioner Kaputa pointed out that the owner had taken out wetlands permits before and should have realized his property has wetlands. Mr. Collins said he is not trying to claim ignorance but did not recall someone saying he had a wetland in the backyard. Commissioner

Kaputa asked if the contractor handled the pool. Mr. Mocko said in 2016, he met the pool consultant with Mrs. Collins present and pointed out the wetlands issue, explaining why they are there. He also informed them that a silt fence is required to protect the brook. Mr. Collins stated that his comment was not meant to be argumentative. He is not here to argue points and wants to find a way to resolve the issue.

Mr. Kaputa asked if the owners had a contractor and where the fill came from. Mr. Collins said a lot of it came from the pool. There was a lot of dirt and rocks. Vice-Chairman McInerney asked if the homeowners were trying to find a solution to the flooding. Mr. Mocko said he did not visit at a time when there would be flooding in the basement. Vice-Chairman McInerney said the Commission would not pipe a watercourse. Mr. Mocko stated whether it is a big pipe or a small pipe it would need a permit. Commissioner Davis asked if the flooding was due to a pipe failing. Mr. Collins explained that in the spring, snow would melt and flood. The issue is the melting snow and the leaves getting stuck in the pipe.

Commissioner Temple asked where the wetlands across the street drain and if there is a culvert. Commissioner Kaputa stated that what the owners have fits the legal definition of a watercourse. Commissioner Temple stated that had the owners applied for a wetlands permit, a pipe could have been an end result or one of the options to solve the flooding. He told the owners that they need to come back and apply for a wetlands permit.

Mr. Mocko explained that there are 2 solutions: getting a permit or pipe installation, or removing it. Removing it will not solve the flooding problem and would cause an open-wound erosion situation flowing down to Grindle Brook and Great Pond. Mr. Mocko stated that he is in favor of the owners going through the permit process after the fact.

Commissioner Shea recommended for an engineer to look at the site to find additional solutions. The Commission members were in agreement about having an engineer write an evaluation report with recommendations. They were also in agreement about the owners obtaining a permit after the fact. Mr. Mocko stated that getting the engineer's recommendations and the permit will be helpful in the future when the house is sold.

The Commission asked the owners if they are willing to dedicate a strip of land to conservation easement. Mr. Collins said he is open to the idea but prefers the conservation easement to be the area of the lot line modification. He stated his suggestion was not meant to be argumentative. Mr. Collins explained that the area of the lot line modification is more wet and the other area was drier.

Mr. Mocko told the owners that they need the services of an engineer. He said he would like to meet with the engineer and visit the site to insure the owners understand what the Town and Commission are looking for.

Commissioner Davis asked the property owners if they can spread the word that the Town takes wetlands preservation seriously. They need the help of everyone they can enlist.

Chairman Harper thanked the property owners for coming in. She stated that these proceedings are going in a good direction.

The property owners thanked the Chairman and the Commission.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of February 13, 2020

Minutes were approved as submitted.

IV. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Kaputa informed the Commission that he was contacted by Mike Corcoran of the Land Heritage Coalition of Glastonbury. They wanted to make a proposal to the Town Council to name a section of forest (MDC open space) after Edward Richardson, a long time Glastonbury conservationist and Commission member who recently passed away. Chairman Harper stated that normally there is a period of time (5 years) before you can name something after someone. Commissioner Harper also informed the Commission that the forest parcel has a 3-million-dollar debt attached to it by MDC. Commissioner Temple asked why that property posts no trespassing signs if it is town-owned. Commissioner Harper stated that it may have something to do with insurance. Commissioner Temple asked if Mr. Mocko visited the site. Mr. Mocko said the site exhibits areas of older growth trees and could use some forestry management, and the Town can investigate it. Vice-Chairman McInerney commented that there are not any areas where the land can be kept wild and not managed.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report

Commissioner Harper discussed seeing an advertisement in *The Citizen* regarding a 72-acre parcel of land in South Glastonbury. She was curious about where exactly the parcel was located. The Commission members speculated that it may be located in the Matson Hill Road area.

Commissioner Harper updated the Commission about the joint Beautification Meeting and said it would take place on March 23. They will finalize a time and come up with an agenda. Commissioner Davis stated that an earlier time meeting is preferred. Commissioner Temple wanted to discuss the difference in the usage of trees between the two Commissions and the criteria that is used to determine which tree or planting to use. An example he brought up was vertical trees versus shade trees that was discussed during a past hotel application.

2. Environmental Planner's Report

Mr. Mocko informed the Commission that the Town will need to send out a survey crew to the Greyledge Farms/ Diamond Lake area. A homeowner is cutting down trees and regrading the land that is on Town property. An intermittent watercourse was also channelized. The Commission members agreed that it is a problem.

Commissioner Harper moved the discussion to Cotton Hollow. Mr. Mocko said the area is very rocky, but that they will still need to keep an eye on erosion. It would be problematic if any removed stone falls into the brook. Mr. Mocko said the vertical walls are not completely dismantled. Commissioner Harper stated it is the Commission's authority to protect the brook but they have no authority over the historic elements. Vice-Chairman McInerney said there is low risk to the brook being damaged because a silt fence is providing protection.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Harper adjourned the meeting at 8:21 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

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Recording Secretary