

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES of Thursday, November 12, 2020**

The Glastonbury Conservation Commission (Inlands Wetlands & Watercourses Agency), along with Mr. Tom Mocko, Environmental Planner, in attendance held a Regular Meeting via ZOOM video conferencing.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members-Present

Judy Harper, Chairman
vacancy, Vice-Chairman
Kim McClain, Secretary
Brian Davis
Frank Kaputa
William Shea

Commission Members- Excused

Mark Temple

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

I. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

1. Proposed 3-lot Casella Subdivision – 1 frontage and 2 rear lots on 11.7 acres located east and south of the easternmost cul-de-sac of Knollwood Drive – Rural Residence Zone and Groundwater Protection Zone 2 – Dutton Associates, LLC – The Estate of Jon Casella (c/o Michael Pucci), landowner/applicant

Mr. Jim Dutton of Dutton Associates, LLC announced that he thought he had submitted the application for a wetlands permit. He believed that he had submitted almost everything and all that remains are minor issues. Mr. Dutton will clarify the erosion sedimentation controls. He also noted that the biggest concern from the last meeting was the downstream storm flow into the wetlands. Mr. Dutton said that Mr. Mocko's concern was the volume, which has been addressed. He explained that some of the runoff will be diverted on lot 2 to the sub-watershed to the east, instead of letting it drain to the west and south. Mr. Dutton stated that the water that is diverted will go through the property currently owned by the applicant, with the runoff ultimately ending up in Roaring Brook.

Mr. Dutton informed the Commission that the initial comments from the Engineering Department were minor and had to do with labeling issues. He noted that the only storm event without a decrease in volume reduction was the 2-year storm. Mr. Dutton explained that this

increase might be the result of the software that was used. Mr. Dutton said that there will not be an adverse impact to downstream properties.

Mr. Dutton stated that he did not adjust the site plans with solar orientation in mind. He said lot 1 is not conducive to solar; lot 2 has potential and with lot 3, it might be possible to rotate the house if compromises are made in the design. He explained that there are steep slopes and stockpiled soil that make it difficult to re-orient.

Mr. Dutton could not find a better way to access the detention basin from the north. He explained that the septic system for lot 3 was initially located to the west of the detention pond and then moved to the north of the detention pond, away from the upland review area. Mr. Dutton noted that he did not hear back from the Health Department.

Mr. Dutton stated that they are proposing a conservation easement to the north, which is triangular in shape and located on lot 1. He also noted that in the near future, the Casella estate will give the land south of the subdivision to the Town.

Secretary McClain expressed that it is deeply disappointing that solar access is not a given feature in a new development. She explained that buyers are looking for solar access and consider it a fundamental feature. Secretary McClain continued, saying that solar energy increases property values. Commissioner Davis inquired if discussions regarding solar energy have taken place.

Mr. Dutton said that not every site is conducive to solar; two-thirds of the site has potential, but it would be up to the homebuyers to compromise on some aspects. Mr. Dutton reminded commissioners that solar panels do not have to be on the roof and noted that solar is not always the best choice. He explained that solar panels have a shelf life and questioned what could be done with the expired panels. Mr. Dutton said that geothermal wells are a better solution for saving energy. Secretary McClain inquired if geothermal wells will be included in the plans. Mr. Dutton said that he does not think it is appropriate to put them on a subdivision plan; it should be up to the owners.

Commissioner Kaputa mentioned that he knows that it is not Mr. Dutton's job to bring up energy saving features. He added that Mr. Dutton is knowledgeable and inquired if he discussed the issue with developers. Mr. Dutton replied yes and noted a property at Andover Lake which is considering geothermal wells. Mr. Dutton added that he has clients on Clark Hill Road who will have 5 geothermal wells; Secretary McClain thought that is great.

Mr. Dutton explained that he encourages his clients to look at plans and house styles that they like. He also noted that he reviews different energy systems with his clients and how their parcels of land dictate different features.

Commissioner Davis inquired if the detention basin near the driveway would flow to the south. Mr. Dutton said that a large section of underdrain will control the water quality volume. He explained that the underdrain will take the water in through an orifice and it would take

approximately 40 hours to drain out of the detention basin. Mr. Dutton noted that the underdrain is extra-long on purpose to prevent clogging. The water will flow out from the orifice and through the stone layers and will not clog. Mr. Dutton stated that not much water comes out of a 13/16-inch hole. He added that the system is durable.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the easement and asked if they are removing a driveway. Mr. Dutton said that they are not relocating any homes, adding that was a previously approved lot. Commissioner Davis inquired if the conservation easement that is being proposed crosses the driveway on lot 3. Mr. Dutton replied yes and noted that the land belongs to the Casella estate. He explained that the house is accessed by a common driveway, which was previously approved.

Commissioner Davis asked Mr. Mocko if there are any issues with the plan revisions to date, to which Mr. Mocko replied no.

Commissioner Shea inquired if the lot owners have responsibility for the shared infrastructure. Mr. Dutton said that homeowners will maintain the sewer system and the drainage system including the detention basin. Commissioner Shea inquired whether that responsibility is written in the individual deeds. Mr. Dutton responded yes, and added that a common driveway agreement specific to each lot would be included in the deeds.

Mr. Mocko informed the Commission that the Engineering Department mentioned the responsibilities of the individual owners within their recent memorandum and requested that those responsibilities be adequately noted in the deed.

Mr. Dutton declared that he will address the technical items within the memorandum from the Engineering Department and added that he will file the wetlands permit application next week. Chairman Harper asked Mr. Dutton how close he is to having a finalized report. Mr. Dutton said it should be done before the next meeting.

2. Proposed site improvements (building modifications, additional paved areas, stormwater management system, site lighting, sidewalks and landscaped areas) and usage as a Motor Freight Transportation Terminal or Garage at 107 Eastern Boulevard – Planned Employment Zone and Groundwater Protection (overlay) Zone 1 – BL Companies, Architecture, Engineering, Environmental, Land Surveying consultants – WE 35 National Drive LLC (c/o Winstanley Enterprises, LLC, 150 Baker Avenue Extension, Concord, Massachusetts 01742), landowner/applicant

Secretary McClain recused herself from this item.

Mr. Matthew Bruton, Engineer for BL Companies, began the presentation. He indicated that the area of the proposed development consists of 12.5 acres and is in the Planned Employment Zone. Mr. Bruton said that all abutters are commercial and industrial in nature.

Mr. Bruton displayed the existing utility easement and noted that the small portions of wetlands are in the northwest corner of the site. He passed the presentation over to Ms. Jessica Schumer of Amazon.

Ms. Schumer shared that they are proposing what they call a Last Mile Delivery Station. She explained that a package starts out at a fulfillment center and arrives in the overnight hours at the Last Mile Delivery Station. She displayed a plan with the parking for the Amazon associates was shown in yellow. Ms. Schumer said that there will be about 25-40 full time Amazon employees and also some part-time employees. Ms. Schumer remarked that in the morning, a third-party contract company employs drivers to deliver the packages. The parking spots for these drivers were noted in blue. She explained that there are about 24 vans that pull into the loading area and depart around 10:00 am and there is a 10-hour delivery time. Ms. Schumer said that the cycle continues until all the vans are out.

Ms. Schumer stated that the site is designed for the peak season and will have space for approximately 100-120 vans. The site will not operate at peak for 10 months out of the year. Ms. Schumer said that the flex drivers are like Uber drivers. They arrive late in the afternoon and do not return to the site unless they have an undeliverable package.

Commissioner Davis inquired where personal vehicles would park. Ms. Schumer indicated that there are 24 reserved spots marked in blue. Commissioner Davis inquired if the trucks come in at the red area, unload and leave, with the majority of activity happening in the overnight hours; Ms. Schumer responded that is correct.

Commissioner Davis inquired if any visitors would come to the site to which Ms. Schumer replied that normally no outside personnel would visit.

Commissioner Davis asked if vendors show up. Ms. Schumer indicated that the spaces in yellow are for full-time staff and added that there should be enough parking for any visitors during the day.

Commissioner Davis questioned whether they would have more parking spaces if the site had more land. Ms. Schumer said that the site fits their needs and reiterated that it is designed for peak periods. She noted that if they need more stations they would want them dispersed. Ms. Schumer noted that there is a similar Amazon site located in Bristol.

Chairman Harper inquired if the applicants calculated the undeveloped portion of land and if it meets the Town standards regarding open space and impervious coverage. Mr. Bruton replied that they will provide the information. He showed an image outlining the site and indicated that there will be a canopy to cover the loading area. Mr. Bruton said that there are curb cuts for vans departing the facility and that the information was provided in the packet. He noted that the associate parking is shown in yellow.

Mr. Bruton stated that they are proposing sidewalks and a bike rack. He also noted that they are reusing the loading spaces which have been converted to Amazon standards. They are also proposing landscaped islands and concrete pads for future EV charging stations.

Mr. Bruton remarked that there are no direct wetlands activities, but the site falls in the upland review area. He stated that there is currently a storm water management system on site which discharges on National Drive. Mr. Bruton said they will mitigate the peak flow and make sure the discharge is clean. He noted that the system is in compliance with the Connecticut Stormwater Manual and meets the Town standards. Mr. Bruton then showed a grading and drainage chart. He noted that the site falls under the Ground Water Protection Zone and they easily meet the nitrogen loading standards. Mr. Bruton indicated that they have a system in place for soil erosion and sediment control and that was included in the packet that they submitted. He explained that they will utilize silt sacks, silt fences, and soil stockpile areas. Mr. Bruton turned the presentation over to Mr. Wayne Violette, Landscape Architect.

Mr. Violette reported that the landscape design would include parking lot islands, canopy trees that provide shade and heat cooling, as well as native plant species. Most areas have multiple canopy trees and will have a simple ground cover for the parking island. Mr. Violette said that they plan to maintain the Norway maples and sugar maples along the frontage of National Drive. He noted that they will add other trees as needed.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the number of Norway maples and the maturity of those trees. Mr. Violette replied that there are about 3 or 4 of them and they range from 8 to 12 feet tall. Commissioner Davis remarked that they are invasive species and suggested the applicants remove them. Mr. Violette indicated that they will consider it and that he understands that they are invasive. He also noted that they are open to doing it if it is listed as a condition.

Mr. Violette stated that they will plant a restorative seed mix in the area of the parking lot near the northwest corner where the wetlands are located. They will also limit the site disturbance and the ground cover will be restored as lawn. Mr. Violette said that they will plant additional plantings if needed.

Mr. Violette posted the planting list, for which Mr. Kaputa thanked him.

Mr. Bruton announced that he will now address the lighting plan. He Bruton noted that the light fixtures are LED and dark sky compliant to minimize light spillage. He said that they are 13 feet high and added that he understands that the Commission prefers lower height fixtures.

Commissioner Davis inquired if they have thought about lights for security purposes. He explained that most of the activity is happening at night and questioned if security is an issue. Commissioner Davis inquired if security cameras will be installed. Mr. Bruton said that the lighting is adequate for security cameras.

Mr. Bruton summarized the key points from the presentation:

- The property is zoned for Planned Employment (PE)/ Groundwater Protection Zone (GW-1).
- Motor Freight Transportation Terminal or Garage is a grandfathered use per Section 20.5 of the zoning regulations.
- No direct wetland impacts, only upland review areas
- Stormwater management improvements
- Bike rack and bus stop provided
- Proposed light fixtures- LED, dark sky compliant, 13-foot height
- Future electric charging station for delivery vans
- Future solar panel roof readiness

Mr. Bruton indicated that he did receive comments from Town staff regarding stormwater management. He asked if there were any other questions.

Commissioner Davis asked Mr. Mocko to explain what the errors were in the wetlands permit application. Mr. Mocko said that the application involves a special permit from the TPZ. Part B was completed, but the part A response was not. He explained that they were not expecting an application to be submitted, because the process starts with an administrative review by staff (which was held) followed by an informal review by Conservation. He also noted that he thinks the applicants are trying to get through the process as quickly as possible.

Chairman Harper inquired whether the applicants have gone to the Beautification Committee, to which Mr. Bruton replied not yet.

Commissioner Davis returned to the issue of the Norway maples. Commissioner Kaputa said that his recommendation would be to eliminate them because the applicants will already have the machinery and space to do so. He noted that the Norway maples are not very large and it would not be a lot of work. Commissioner Davis said that there will be no shade once those trees are removed. Mr. Bruton indicated that they will address that.

Chairman Harper inquired if zoning allows for such dense usage on the property, to which Mr. Bruton responded yes. He confirmed this by displaying a zoning table.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the impervious surfaces coverage now and after development. Mr. Mocko echoed Commissioner Davis' question and asked Mr. Bruton about the current impervious coverage. Mr. Bruton stated it is "around 43 jumping to 63" and is not sure if he has the current numbers on him. Commissioner Kaputa explained that the Commission needs present and then post development percentage of the impervious cover. Mr. Bruton reported that he will get that information. Commissioner Davis inquired what the maximum allowable impervious coverage is. Mr. Bruton responded it is 32 percent.

Commissioner Davis asked Mr. Mocko about the impact the site would have on the upland review area. Mr. Mocko replied that the area is a small pocket of isolated wetlands along the electrical transmission corridor. He noted that the area is used by many animals for migration,

including the eastern box turtle. Mr. Mocko added that the area is north of Salmon Brook. He noted that the ultimate recommendation is for the land north to be encumbered with a conservation easement to preserve the wildlife corridor.

Commissioner Shea inquired about the maintenance of the proposed section of the conservation easement. Mr. Mocko explained that Eversource will maintain their utility easement and there might be some opposition from them. He also noted that it is where the project attorney should come in.

Mr. Bruton noted that the blue highlighted area on the plan is the utility easement.

Attorney Thomas Cody said that they will look into adding something to preclude active development of the area and they will discuss it with Eversource. Mr. Cody explained that Eversource has rights that cannot be changed. Commissioner Kaputa wondered if a conservation easement might work. He noted that utilities have rights and can remove large trees but smaller ones can be replanted. Mr. Cody stated that they will explore the area and see what can be done with Eversource.

Commissioner Davis asked if an aerial photo could be shown with the tree line highlighted near the end of the proposed parking area. Mr. Bruton marked the tree line in green. Commissioner Davis wondered once the tree line is taken out, what is being conserved. Commissioner Kaputa commented that it is a good point and noted that there might not be room for an easement.

Mr. Bruton stated that he is open to the removal of the Norway maples. Commissioner Davis asked the applicants to replace the Norway maples with a native species. He noted that there is very little shade cast in the parking areas and more trees need to be added.

Chairman Harper commented that there may be too little soil on the developed site to support good tree growth. Commissioner Davis explained that large trees have been put in small sections in cities. Chairman Harper noted that some species are better than others. Mr. Mocko noted that is up to the landscape architect. Mr. Bruton said that he will ask Mr. Violette his thoughts on adding the additional trees.

Mr. Cody asked for clarification on a comment in the staff memorandum. Mr. Mocko explained that the end of his report, number 1 refers to testing being done at the southerly portion of the site. Mr. Mocko explained that much of the soil in the southerly portion is disturbed. Therefore, for the site to be low impact, a test pit in the northerly or uphill location would be better suited for a meaningful underground infiltration structure. Commissioner Davis said that, in light of Mr. Mocko's point, he would like clarification about the drainage for the area to the north.

Mr. Bruton stated that the site is fitted with catch basins along the grass lines which capture water and direct water to the municipal system. He noted that the standards have changed since the system was built and they have done test pits showing some infiltration capacity. Mr. Bruton added that an underground system is beholden to soil characteristics.

Mr. Mocko commented that he was not involved in the test pit selections and was only invited to observe areas that they have selected. He noted that the area higher north makes more sense to explore in order to see if some infiltration potential exists there.

Commissioner Davis remarked that there are 2 parking lots to the north. He suggested that if the test pits show that the soils are more accommodating, a swale can be created instead of having to mechanically pull everything down to the municipal system. Mr. Bruton said that they will explore that, although because of the high slopes, they might not have enough room.

Mr. Mocko stated that surface swales do not work if there is not enough room. He explained that a subsurface system would be more favorable. An inlet structure would direct flow into subsurface pipes with perforations set at a flat gradient surrounded by rock. Mr. Mocko noted that the area falls within the Groundwater Protection Zone. He added that he does not want to leave any stone unturned. Mr. Bruton indicated he understood. He noted that the area is staked out if any Commissioners want to visit.

Commissioner Davis asked Chairman Harper to add “more test pits done on the north part of the site” to the list of requests. Commissioner Davis suggested that the language for the list should be “include an appropriate number of test pits in a number of appropriate locations in the north part of the site.”

Chairman Harper inquired if it is a slab building, to which Mr. Bruton replied yes, it has no basement.

Commissioner Davis inquired if there are trench drains that capture oil. Mr. Bruton responded that he does not believe so. He added that the majority of trailers and trucks are covered.

Ms. Schumer interjected that trucks and vans are not serviced on site except for tire changes.

Chairman Harper commented that it is a very intense proposal and added that anything to soften the impact on the environment is beneficial. She noted that there is a lot that needs to be addressed and cannot guarantee that they will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Chairman Harper stated that the Commission has a list of requests that need to be addressed:

- The plantings
- Potential conservation easement
- Comments from Mr. Mocko and the Engineering Department
- Removal of the Norway maples
- Solar issue
- Recharging stations
- Add more shade trees
- Adequate lighting for security cameras
- Include an appropriate number of test pits in a number of appropriate locations in the north part of the site

II. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - NONE

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting of October 15, 2020

Motion by: Secretary McClain *Seconded by:* Commissioner Davis
MOVED, that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency accepts the minutes of the regular meeting of October 15, 2020.

Result: Motion passes unanimously (5-0-0)

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report

Chairman Harper reminded the Commission that her term is up at the end of the year and that the Nominating Committee needs to fill 2 vacancies. Chairman Harper asked the Commissioners to set up a time to discuss potential candidates.

2. Environmental Planner's Report

Mr. Mocko explained that now the administratively-issued wetlands permits are handled by a part-time employee for which the Commission had sought. He noted that a good job is being done and the department has been very busy. Mr. Mocko remarked that 2020 has been the "year of the pool".

Commissioner Davis inquired if a generator requires a wetlands permit. Mr. Mocko explained that only those properties that are within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetlands need to apply for a wetlands permit. Commissioner Davis inquired who would file the building permit. Mr. Mocko said that it is often a contractor and explained that many make the mistake of checking off the wrong box, indicating that they are not within 100 feet of a wetland/watercourse when they actually are.

Commissioner Kaputa asked for more information regarding the shed for the Town of Glastonbury Fire Department. Mr. Mocko stated that the shed will be placed on a flat area and there will be very little disturbance.

Mr. Mocko reminded members that the next meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2020. He anticipates the Casella Subdivision proposal will be back for a wetlands permit. Mr. Mocko also noted that St. Paul's Church has submitted a wetlands application for their parking lot expansion proposal.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the procedures to select a new chairman. Mr. Mocko explained that they need to create a nominating committee. Secretary McClain said that the nominating committee has already been created. Commissioner Davis inquired if there are

limitations due to party affiliation. Secretary McClain explained that the choice of candidate is determined by the majority party. Commissioner Davis asked if they are bound to those procedures. Chairman Harper stated that there are exceptions for highly qualified people. Secretary McClain explained that it should be about the best candidate and not so much the party affiliation. Commissioner Davis agreed. Commissioner Shea inquired if the two Commission member vacancies would need to be one Democrat and one Republican. Chairman Harper explained that the candidate is officially appointed by the Town Manager, taking into consideration what the majority party recommends. Chairman Harper explained that former Vice-Chair Dennis McInerney was unaffiliated and had to switch. She said that her recommendation would be to select someone who will serve best and take it from there.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Harper adjourned the meeting at 8:59 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

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Recording Secretary