

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING OF MINUTES THURSDAY, January 14, 2021**

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

vacancy, Chairman
vacancy, Vice Chairman
Kim McClain, Secretary
Brian Davis
Mark Temple
Frank Kaputa
William Shea

Commission Members- Excused

(None)

Secretary McClain called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. and explained the public hearing process to the applicants and members of the public.

I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Secretary McClain announced the nominations:

Commissioner Kaputa, Chairman and Commissioner Temple, Vice Chair, and Commissioner McClain, Secretary.

Motion by: Commissioner Davis

Seconded by: Commissioner Shea

MOVED, that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency elects the officers as proposed.

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

II. FORMAL ACTION & RECOMMENDATION

- 1. Application of Michael Pucci for: an inland wetlands and watercourses permit; and recommendations to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission for subdivision approval and a Section 6.8 (rear lot) Special Permit – proposed 3-lot Casella Subdivision – 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**

Mr. Jim Dutton of Dutton Associates, LLC began his presentation. He recapped that the proposed subdivision will include 3 residential lots on 11.7 acres. Mr. Dutton noted that access is provided from the cul-de-sac using a shared driveway.

Mr. Dutton announced that the drainage calculations mitigate both the peak flow and volume; the plans have been accepted by Mr. Mocko and the Town Engineering Department. He noted that some minor comments were made, which will be addressed when they make application to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission. Mr. Dutton said that there is no direct wetlands activity, only the upland review area. He also noted that the detention pond is adjacent to the wetlands and is not encroaching. Mr. Dutton informed the Commission that the Health Department instructed for the old well on the site to be removed. Mr. Dutton assured the Commissioners that a properly qualified individual will remove the well.

Mr. Dutton stated that the E&S plan has been upgraded and modified. Mr. Dutton said that he separated the infrastructure construction from the lot development construction. He noted that the revised soil erosion and sedimentation controls were accepted. He reported that there were no changes made to the conservation easements and added that approximately 30 percent of the site will be encumbered with conservation easements.

Commissioner Shea inquired about the grey hatched area on the plan; Mr. Dutton explained that it represents slopes greater than 20%, and added that the land to the south and east of the proposed subdivision will be conveyed to the Town as open space.

Chairman Kaputa inquired about the size of the proposed open space parcel. Mr. Dutton admitted that he is not sure and that it is sizeable and estimated that the land is about 10 to 12 acres. He added that the proposed open space does not include the lot area to be assigned with the existing house.

Chairman Kaputa asked the Commissioners if they have any questions. Commission Davis inquired about the slope on the drive, to which Mr. Dutton responded it varies, but does not exceed 14.5 percent.

Commissioner Davis asked Mr. Mocko if anything is missing and indicated that he would like a seal of approval before proceeding. Mr. Mocko confirmed that nothing is missing.

Motion by: Secretary McClain

Seconded by: Commissioner Temple

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

MOVED, that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency issue an inland wetlands and watercourses permit to Michael Pucci for the construction of a stormwater treatment basin within the upland review area and its subsequent discharges towards an adjacent downhill wetlands at the proposed 3-lot Casella Subdivision, in accordance with plans on file at the Office of Community Development, and in compliance with the following conditions:

1. Adherence to the Town Engineer's memorandum dated January 7, 2021.
2. A private conservation easement shall be established as generally depicted on the site plans and this area shall henceforth not be disturbed from its present condition until the conservation easement is in force. The precise delineation shall be recorded by bearings and distances. The easement shall be recorded on the land records. The conservation easement shall be marked with oak stakes labeled "Conservation Easement" with waterproof ink and tied with red flags. These stakes are to be located at each change of boundary direction and at every 100 foot interval on straightaways. All conservation easement corners shall be permanently marked with iron pins. In addition, numbered "Glastonbury Conservation Easement" signs, available from the Town's Office of Community Development, shall be nailed to trees that are within two feet of the easement area's boundary line, at approximately 100 feet intervals. The sign shall be installed facing outwards at about 7 feet above grade, using two 3 inch or greater aluminum or galvanized nails, with the nails left protruding from tree trunks about 1-1/2". Where no trees are suitable 7 foot metal or long-lived wood posts with easement signs attached shall be used. Such placement of signs shall be performed under the supervision of a Licensed Land Surveyor prior to land-clearing or earth-moving activities and notice shall be provided to the Town's Office of Community Development upon its completion.
3. In order to protect the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the wetlands and watercourses and water quality, the following conditions shall apply:
 - a. Pesticides and herbicides shall not be disposed of within the designated conservation easement areas;
 - b. Pesticides and herbicides shall only be applied utilizing best management practices for integrated pest management; and
 - c. The developer agrees to recite these conditions in the deed to the individual property(ies).
4. There shall be strict adherence to the soil erosion and sedimentation control plan and narrative as exhibited on the site plans.
5. Installation of soil erosion and sedimentation control and stabilization measures shall be the Permittee's responsibility. Once installed these measures shall then be inspected by the Environmental Planner prior to land disturbance activities. Afterwards it then shall be the Permittee's responsibility to inspect these control measures during, and immediately following, substantial storm events and maintain and/or replace the control measures, when needed, on a regular basis until the site is vegetatively stabilized. Hay bales shall be replaced every 60 days. The Environmental Planner is hereby authorized to require additional soil erosion and sediment controls and stabilization measures to address situations that arise on the site.
6. Underground fuel storage tanks shall be prohibited to reduce the potential of contamination to wetlands, watercourses, and groundwater resources.
7. The plot plan required for building permit application shall contain and comply with these conditions of approval. If construction including limits of clearing is proposed in

areas other than the indicated locations on these plans, the Office of Community Development shall be notified and the Office of Community Development and the Chairman of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission are hereby authorized to approve or deny the alternative. Each plot plan shall indicate the limits of vegetative clearing, existing and proposed contours, soil erosion and sediment controls, all subsurface drainage, all stockpile areas, and temporary and permanent vegetative stabilization measures, including details of seedbed preparation, seed mix selection, application rates, seeding dates and mulching requirements. Vegetative clearing for stockpiling shall be minimized and subject to the approval of the Environmental Planner.

8. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, certification from a professional engineer shall be required confirming that the stormwater management system was constructed in conformance with the approved design.
9. The Permittee shall be fully responsible for damages caused by all activities undertaken pursuant to this permit that may have a detrimental effect on wetlands and/or watercourses, and all such activities that cause erosion and sedimentation problems. If the Permittee sells individual building lots to other builders, the Permittee shall thoroughly review all conditions of this permit with the buyer, and the buyer shall consult with the Environmental Planner before the buyer commences any work on the site.

Motion by: Secretary McClain

Seconded by: Commissioner Davis

MOVED, that the Conservation Commission recommends to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission subdivision approval and approval of a Section 6.8 (rear lot) Special Permit concerning the proposed 3-lot Casella Subdivision located east and south of the easternmost cul-de-sac of Knollwood Drive, in accordance with plans on the file in the Office of Community Development, and in compliance with the following conditions of approval:

1. Adherence to the Town Engineer's memorandum dated January 7, 2021.
2. A private conservation easement shall be established as generally depicted on the site plans and this area shall henceforth not be disturbed from its present condition until the conservation easement is in force. The precise delineation shall be recorded by bearings and distances. The easement shall be recorded on the land records. The conservation easement shall be marked with oak stakes labeled "Conservation Easement" with waterproof ink and tied with red flags. These stakes are to be located at each change of boundary direction and at every 100 foot interval on straightaways. All conservation easement corners shall be permanently marked with iron pins. In addition, numbered "Glastonbury Conservation Easement" signs, available from the Town's Office of Community Development, shall be nailed to trees that are within two feet of the easement area's boundary line, at approximately 100 foot intervals. The sign shall be installed facing outwards at about 7 feet above grade, using two 3 inch or greater aluminum or galvanized nails, with the nails left protruding from tree trunks about 1-1/2". Where no trees are suitable 7 foot metal or long-lived wood posts with easement signs attached shall be used. Such placement of signs shall be performed under the supervision of a Licensed Land Surveyor prior to land-clearing or earth-moving activities and notice shall be provided to the Town's Office of Community Development upon its completion.

3. In order to protect the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the wetlands and watercourses and water quality, the following conditions shall apply:
 - a. Pesticides and herbicides shall not be disposed of within the designated conservation easement areas;
 - b. Pesticides and herbicides shall only be applied utilizing best management practices for integrated pest management; and
 - c. The developer agrees to recite these conditions in the deed to the individual property(ies).
4. There shall be strict adherence to the soil erosion and sedimentation control plan and narrative as exhibited on the site plans.
5. Installation of soil erosion and sedimentation control and stabilization measures shall be the Permittee's responsibility. Once installed these measures shall then be inspected by the Environmental Planner prior to land disturbance activities. Afterwards it then shall be the Permittee's responsibility to inspect these control measures during, and immediately following, substantial storm events and maintain and/or replace the control measures, when needed, on a regular basis until the site is vegetatively stabilized. Hay bales shall be replaced every 60 days. The Environmental Planner is hereby authorized to require additional soil erosion and sediment controls and stabilization measures to address situations that arise on the site.
6. Underground fuel storage tanks shall be prohibited to reduce the potential of contamination to wetlands, watercourses, and groundwater resources.
7. The plot plan required for building permit application shall contain and comply with these conditions of approval. If construction including limits of clearing is proposed in areas other than the indicated locations on these plans, the Office of Community Development shall be notified and the Office of Community Development and the Chairman of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission are hereby authorized to approve or deny the alternative. Each plot plan shall indicate the limits of vegetative clearing, existing and proposed contours, soil erosion and sediment controls, all subsurface drainage, all stockpile areas, and temporary and permanent vegetative stabilization measures, including details of seedbed preparation, seed mix selection, application rates, seeding dates and mulching requirements. Vegetative clearing for stockpiling shall be minimized and subject to the approval of the Environmental Planner.
8. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, certification from a professional engineer shall be required confirming that the stormwater management system was constructed in conformance with the approved design.
9. Healthy mature trees shall be preserved and saved when possible. Said trees shall be protected with the use of high visibility construction fence during construction or otherwise protected as required by staff.
10. In the event blasting is required for construction, pre-blast and post-blast surveys shall be required for nearby properties.

11. Tree stumps and blasted rock material shall not be buried at the site.
12. Metal waste containers shall be provided at the site to facilitate the collection of refuse material generated from construction activities. Such material shall not be buried or burned at the site.

Discussion:

Mr. Mocko suggested adding condition #13 to the motion. He explained that when he was writing the report he did not have the health department memorandum. Mr. Mocko suggested:

13. Adherence to the Health Department's memorandum from the Sanitarian dated January 5, 2021.

The motion's mover and seconder agreed to adding the condition.

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

2. Application of the Saints Isidore and Maria Parish Corporation (aka Saint Paul's Church) for: an inland wetlands and watercourses permit; and a recommendation to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission for a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review concerning an expansion of its parking lot (119 additional spaces) at 2755 and Assessor's Lot W-38A Main Street – Town Center Zone – Megson, Heagle & Friend, C.E. & L.S., LLC – Davison Environmental, consultants – Alter & Pearson, LLC

Attorney Meghan Hope of Alter & Pearson, LLC began the presentation. She remarked that this is the fourth time this proposal has been before the Commission. She explained that three informal meetings took place in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Attorney Hope explained that the first phase of the application is to expand the parking lot and the second phase is a 3-story addition, which will be located behind the church. The church property is 7.25 acres. The buildings on the site include the church, rectory, garage and a residential building (Knights of Columbus Hall). Attorney Hope pointed out that there are 3 curb cuts on Main Street and one on Welles Street. The proposed addition will be used for public gatherings for funerals, receptions, classrooms, and offices. Attorney Hope displayed the proposed parking and addition. She also presented aerial photographs from 1965, 1986, and 1990 showcasing the communication tower and the wetland area over the years.

Attorney Hope showed the proposed plan from 2018 and noted that the area near the communication tower is non-wetlands and suitable for a parking lot. She noted that they have made changes to the proposal since the 2018 plans, and showed the new proposal. This proposal will increase the parking by 118 spaces. Attorney Hope explained that the stormwater management basin is shown in blue and the wetlands enhancement area is shown in yellow. She noted that there is a multi-year plan to target the invasive species and that they will be adding shade trees to the landscape.

Mark Friend, Professional Engineer, Megson, Heagle, & Friend, began his presentation. He described the wetlands. He noted that this area of wetlands was disturbed greatly from farming activities, then from the FAA towers and most recently, the communication towers, the underground activities and existing parking lot. Mr. Friend reported that the undisturbed wetlands soils matched the Walpole Series soils. He explained that the soil near the proposed parking lot is sandy and gravelly and will help with the storm management and drainage system. He noted that the stormwater management starts in the southerly portion of the site, where the first catch basin is located. Mr. Friend pointed out the depressed island rain garden installation that will filter out sediment and treat the water. He explained that this stormwater management system is consistent with the Town requirements and regulations. Mr. Friend said that this system treats the quantity and quality of the water. He noted that they are proposing to treat 93 percent of the existing parking lot's runoff, and 100 percent of the new parking lot's runoff. Mr. Friend explained that the remaining 7 percent will go through a grass filter strip before sheet-flowing into the southern portion of the site's wetlands.

Mr. Friend reported he received the Engineering Department report and addressed the issues. He explained that one issue had to do with a concrete weir that had to be adjusted 6 inches higher than the earlier plans submitted. Mr. Friend explained that this adjustment is in accordance to the MS4 requirements. Mr. Friend noted that other issues are minor and will be addressed on the final plans.

Mr. Friend explained that the site area is overgrown and noted that the Town mows over the sanitary sewer easement occasionally. He explained that there are 2 force mains, one abandoned and another maintained by the Town. He reiterated that there is much past wetlands disturbance on the site. Mr. Friend stated that they are proposing a 3-year maintenance plan to target the invasive species and they will plant suitable canopy trees to create shade that will help control the invasive plants. He recapped that 93 percent of the existing parking lot's runoff will be picked up in the storm management system components, which is an improvement from the current condition.

Mr. Friend then shared the proposed planting list. He indicated that a fairly nice wetland will be created in the basin and the addition of the canopy trees and plantings will create shade.

Mr. Eric Davison, Wildlife Biologist and Soil Scientist, discussed the wetlands area and site plan. He noted that there were questions regarding the makeup of the pool and further state it was not a true vernal pool. He explained that seasonal flooding creates this pooling area within the wetland. Mr. Davison noted that he conducted a survey in the area to the south of Welles Street in 2019. He then displayed a photograph from 1970 that showed the pool/wetland. Mr. Davison stated that the hydrology was a result of road runoff after a rain storm. He noted that debris from the roadside has resulted in this wetland being in poor condition. Mr. Davison said that there is not enough forest coverage to support vernal pool species. He explained with regard to investigating the vernal pools on Town land south of Welles Street, he conducted egg mass counts for the amphibians and noticed more males. Mr. Davison reported that the project site's pool is more urbanized and not a true vernal pool. He reiterated that he was able to confirm that it is not a vernal pool and asked the Commission to look at the report of the soil profile.

Mr. Davison stated that there is no other land suitable for a parking lot. He explained that they are proposing a stormwater basin, which will be an improvement to the site, and added that they will naturalize the site and treat the stormwater. Mr. Davison showed the wetlands enhancement area. He said that they will plant basin plantings, shrubs, and seed mixes. Mr. Davison added that they will plant 9 trees in the parking lot islands and 17 trees in the wetland area for enhancement. He asked the Commissioners to view the planting list for more details.

Mr. Davison reported that there is good infiltration of surface runoff to capture the flow. He also mentioned that the rain gardens are a pretty useful method to catch storm runoff from the parking lot. Mr. Davison explained that the rain garden is long and linear and looks like a typical island break, except that it is not elevated but concave, so the water flows in it. He said that they will place a deep layer of organic topsoil within the rain garden, and the result will be a densely planted strip of vegetation that will look nice, which will also result in more treatment of the parking lot's runoff. He explained that the site plan is natural and multi-layered. It will treat pollutants and have a natural look.

Mr. Davison reported that the knotweed is a challenge and difficult to control. He noted that a summary letter was added to the application materials which specifies that a 3-year treatment using the chemical Imazapyr will be used to kill the knotweed. Mr. Davison said that the knotweed will not be fully eradicated and they will use a weed trimmer to keep it under control as the planted shade trees mature to partially shade out the knotweed.

Attorney Hope shared the added provision regarding the conservation easement. She directed the Commissioners to sheet 11 of the plans and noted that she can revise the provision if the Commissioners wanted to amend anything. Attorney Hope then showed the lighting plan. She explained that the Town has put up 16-foot poles nearby and that they are proposing a very similar fixture, measuring 14 feet with a 2-foot concrete base, totaling 16 feet.

Chairman Kaputa announced that he is disappointed with the proposal, specifically paving over 5,000 square feet of wetlands. He explained that he does not want to get into a debate over the value, function and condition of the wetland and noted that he would not be voting in favor of this application. Chairman Kaputa asked the applicants about the existing impervious coverage. Mr. Friend mentioned that the existing pavement is about 72,000 square feet. Chairman Kaputa noted that those numbers do not include the buildings. Attorney Hope further offered that the impervious coverage will be 31.7 percent of the site.

Chairman Kaputa asked if the numbers include the sidewalks, to which Attorney Hope answered that the numbers do include the sidewalks.

Mr. Friend confirmed that they are adding 30,880 square feet to the impervious coverage total.

Chairman Kaputa remarked that the planting plan is excellent and asked the Commissioners if they had comments or questions.

Vice Chairman Temple asked whether the Connecticut Department of Transportation will continue to provide snow plowing of the parking lot due to its commuter parking status. Attorney Hope said that there is no longer an arrangement with the DOT, and added that the Town and the Church will be coming to an agreement. She explained that an agreement will happen because the Apple Harvest Festival and Riverfront Park events require the extra parking. Attorney Hope reported that the Town Manager and Father Mark are discussing the details.

Vice Chairman Temple asked where the snow will go when it is plowed, and whether it would be placed in the rain garden. Mr. Friend remarked that the rain garden is one of the holding spots for snow and noted that the snow gets pushed off to the west and will end up in the future storm water management area and small islands. He also said that if the snow is too heavy it will have to be removed from the site. Vice Chairman Temple recommends a snow management plan be devised. He also informed the Commission that he is not a current member of the church, but was years ago. Vice Chairman Temple mentioned that he noticed people would parallel park on Main Street and inquired if there is a rationale to maintaining the parking spots in the green area as shown. Mr. Friend stated that they are trying to meet the requirements of the Engineering Department while fitting as many parking spots as they can.

Vice Chairman Temple inquired if they can remove 1 or 2 of those parallel parking spots and noted that they are dangerous. He also informed the applicants that he has parked there and it would be very dangerous especially with children getting in and out of the parked cars. Mr. Friend said that they can put an island that would separate the parking spaces from the traffic. He thanked Vice Chairman Temple for this idea.

Vice Chairman Temple inquired of Mr. Davison whether the pool might become a vernal pool with all of the site improvements, canopied trees and plantings. Mr. Davison responded that he does not think there is enough upland woodlands area to support viable obligate vernal pool species. He added that the biggest issue is fragmentation. He explained that, because of Welles Street, there is no habitat to the south.

Vice Chairman Temple asked Mr. Mocko his thoughts on the plan. Mr. Mocko stated that he believes this project will end in a net environmental benefit compared to the status quo.

Commissioner Davis remarked that the proposed future expansion encroaches into a drive lane and noted that the location of the proposed addition is at odds with the traffic configuration. Attorney Hope reported that they did have an architect design the 3-story addition. She explained that the bottom floor will be a basement and the upper 2 floors will be used for funerals, classes, etc. She also said that, with the current plan, they are still short 20 spaces and Mr. Friend is trying to fit spots in the front, even though it is not preferred by the Town Plan & Zoning Commission. Mr. Friend explained that the right-of-way on Main Street is wide and it would enable them to add some landscaping. Attorney Hope noted that they can look at the possibility of decreasing the size of the proposed addition. She added that, in order for the Church to build, a feasibility study would need to be done. Once they receive approval from the Town Plan & Zoning Commission, the church will begin the fundraising process to pay for the proposed addition.

Commissioner Davis noted that the rain gardens have an extended length and inquired whether there are any pedestrian crossings in that area. Mr. Friend said that he should have anticipated that question and informed the Commission that he will add them.

Commissioner Davis inquired about any time limits for invasive control. Mr. Davison proposed that they can clear out as needed and it can be discussed. Mr. Mocko remarked that the applicants can always come before the Conservation Commission.

Commissioner Shea asked to specify the location of the wetland that is proposed to be paved. Attorney Hope noted that 5,500 square feet of wetlands will be disturbed. Commissioner Shea asked the applicants to show the exact area of the wetlands, which Attorney Hope did.

Secretary McClain asked the applicants why the building proposal and the parking are not done at the same time. Attorney Hope explained that fundraising can take up to 3 years. She also noted that they need the extra parking spaces now.

Secretary McClain asked the applicants to look at the big picture rather than rely on a guessing game. She feels that post-COVID19, the number of parishioners might not be the same, and that their prediction of needing all this extra parking might not be correct.

Attorney Hope said that she asked Father Mark that question and he explained that the COVID19 pandemic increased the number of parishioners. Attorney Hope added that Father Mark has told her that there has been an exodus from New York to Fairfield, and from Fairfield to Glastonbury. He explained that many people are choosing the Church in Glastonbury and when it is safe, people will come back to in-person services. Attorney Hope remarked that they are using the Town's Building-Zone Regulations as the guideline for parking.

Secretary McClain pronounced that the current parking regulations are outdated. She added that she strongly agrees with the position Chairman Kaputa has taken. Secretary McClain recommends the applicants eliminate all of the parking spaces that are filling in the wetlands. She noted that they can put some spaces in the front and make the parking work. Secretary McClain reiterated that she agrees with Chairman Kaputa and added that it is wrong to fill in wetlands to make more room for parking. She asked the applicants if they can discuss finding another location instead of filling in the wetlands. Chairman Kaputa remarked that this would be up to the applicant. Commissioner Shea noted that the wetlands area is small the impact seems minimal and the overall benefit to the site is greater.

Commissioner Davis offered that, if they are to believe what is being said, losing a wetland, paving and revegetating something of poor quality and enhancing it may have some benefit. He also noted that the parking along on Main Street is not something they want to promote. Commissioner Davis inquired if the number of parking spaces is derived from an analysis or from the zoning requirements. Attorney Hope said that the number came from the zoning requirements.

Commissioner Davis stated that there is a possibility of expanding the parking outside of the wetlands. He added that, until there is a determination of need, the applicants can request more parking later. Commissioner Davis noted that this plan would save money and there would not be the creation of unnecessary parking spaces. He added that it would be a win on all levels.

Secretary McClain agreed with the points and added that the applicants can ask for a parking waiver. She also noted that the church needs to fundraise and the parking waiver will save money. Chairman Kaputa said that the arguments make sense, but it will defer the issue.

Commissioner Davis agreed that it would be a deferred approach and suggested the applicants get a waiver to reduce the parking. He said that once the need is demonstrated that gives impetus to pave over a wetland.

Vice Chairman Temple noted that there is significant traffic in that area and pointed out that there is parking at the bank and around Main Street. He suggested that the applicants look into the Knights of Columbus building for the extra parking. Vice Chairman Temple remarked that parking in front of the church will look awful. He added that as other local churches close, then more parishioners will be heading to Saint Paul's.

Secretary McClain noted that the applicants need to look at the big picture and inquired if they have added electric vehicle charging stations and bike racks to the site plan. She also suggested 12-foot high light poles would be better than 16-foot high light poles. Mr. Friend pointed out the location of the proposed bike rack.

Commissioner Davis remarked that the site plan is a cost issue.

Chairman Kaputa asked Attorney Hope if they would like to come back with a new proposal. He suggested tabling the application and discussing the concerns with Father Mark. Chairman Kaputa asked Mr. Mocko the logistics for tabling the application. Mr. Mocko explained that it is not a public hearing and recommended a motion to table any action, with the application being presented at a later date.

Commissioner Davis inquired if Father Mark can participate and added that the location of the site is very important. He also noted that a solution is possible and they want to promote conversation. Commissioner Davis remarked that the Commission wants to find a solution for this application and they do not want to reject it. Commissioner Shea agreed with the points and suggested that Father Mark join for an informal meeting with the Commission and Mr. Mocko.

Vice Chairman Temple inquired if they had any informal meetings with the Town Plan & Zoning Commission. Attorney Hope replied yes.

Attorney Hope asked the Commissioners if they are okay with the red area on the plan.

Chairman Kaputa stated that there is good reason to manage the knotweed, and added that the area would revert back to a natural state.

Commissioner Davis said that the number of parking spots is his primary concern, and noted that many parking lots sit at 60 percent full.

Vice Chairman Temple asked the applicants to find out from Father Mark the number of registered families. His guess would be 3,000.

Vice Chairman Temple noted that he is in agreement with Mr. Mocko and added that the site will be an improvement and not an unreasonable project. Commissioner Shea agreed with the points and reiterated that it would be a net benefit to the land.

Commissioner Davis suggested the applicants come back with empirical data for the proposed number of parking spaces.

Chairman Kaputa explained that just about every wetland in Town was either cleared or farmed. He noted that he is considering the legal definition of wetlands and that development can be done without paving over wetlands. He also noted that the status quo will not be maintained and a development will happen. He reiterated that the wetlands do not have to be paved and suggested the applicants reconfigure the plans. Chairman Kaputa pointed out that the size of the building is driving the number of parking spaces. He noted that no one wants to see parking in front of the church and suggested that something can be done aesthetically to address the issue.

Chairman Kaputa noted that the church owns the cornfield located further west which has not been discussed. He explained that the Commission has approved small disturbances, but this proposal entails the permanent destruction of over 5,000 square feet of wetlands, which is his issue with the application.

Motion by: Secretary McClain

Seconded by: Commissioner Davis

MOVED, that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency tables the application for consideration at a later date.

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

III. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Judy Harper, former Chairman, said that she wanted to check in on the Commissioners and stated that the Town is lucky to have them. The Commissioners thanked Ms. Harper.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting of November 12, 2020 - TABLED

Several Commissioners reported that they did not receive the minutes in their packet. Mr. Mocko suggested postponing any action until the next meeting.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

1. 2021 Meeting Schedule - Tabled

Several Commissioners reported that they did not received a draft schedule. Mr. Mocko said he will have the office re-send the minutes and schedule.

Vice Chairman Temple inquired about moving the meetings to 6:30 pm and noted that it is his preference to start earlier and end earlier. The other Commissioners were in agreement.

Chairman Kaputa suggested that the next meeting start at 7:00 pm because it is already published, and the meetings after that can start at 6:30 pm.

2. Chairman's Report

Chairman Kaputa gave the Commissioners an update on the Diamond Lake violation. He said that Mr. Jim Dutton surveyed the area and put in a clear boundary demarcating the conservation easement. Chairman Kaputa stated that the homeowners agreed to the planting plans and gave a verbal agreement that they would not clear or mulch the land again.

3. Environmental Planner's Report

Mr. Mocko informed the Commissioners that Khara C. Dodds, AICP, Director of Planning & Land Use Services is leaving the state and her last day is January 29, 2021. He also informed the Commissioners that Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner will be having surgery and will be out for 10 weeks. Mr. Mocko remarked that he will do the best he can. Chairman Kaputa commented that is all Mr. Mocko is expected to do and informed the Commissioners that Mr. Mocko will be retiring on October 31, 2021.

Chairman Kaputa informed the Commissioners that one nominee (Democrat) is being considered. He also noted that he is happy that the position of Vice Chairman went to Mr. Temple.

The Commissioners discussed preservation of wetlands and applications they had approved in the past. Vice Chairman Temple noted that he agrees with Chairman Kaputa about the protection of the wetlands as the first priority.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Kaputa adjourned the meeting at 9:18 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

Nadya Yuskaev
Recording Secretary