

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
MEETING OF MINUTES THURSDAY, May 12, 2022**

The Glastonbury Conservation Commission (Inlands Wetlands & Watercourses Agency), along with Ms. Suzanne Simone, Environmental Planner, in attendance held a Meeting via ZOOM video conferencing.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members-Present

Frank Kaputa, Chairman
Kim McClain, Secretary
Brian Davis
James Parry
William Shea
vacancy

Commission Members - Excused

Mark Temple, Vice-Chairman

Chairman Kaputa called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. and explained the public meeting process to the applicants and members of the public.

I. FORMAL DISCUSSIONS

- 1. Recommendation to the Town Plan & Zoning Commission concerning a CGS Section 8-30g application for the construction of an apartment building containing 74 units, with parking and other site improvements – 1199 Manchester Road - Planned Business & Development Zone and Rural Residence Zone – Attorneys Timothy Hollister & Andrea Gomes – Wes Wentworth, P.E. – Alan Lamson, AIA AICP – Manchester/Hebron Avenue, LLC, applicant**

Chairman Kaputa noted that the formal discussion item on the agenda is a highly visible project. The Chairman explained that, since there are no wetlands on site, once the formal discussions conclude, the Conservation Commission will provide a recommendation to Town Plan & Zoning Commission (TPZ). Several Commissioners specified that traffic concerns are not addressed by this Commission. Chairman Kaputa noted that this application will go before the TPZ and all other questions can be addressed at that public hearing.

Attorney Andrea Gomes of Hinckley Allen provided the Commission with a list of presenters. The presenters included Attorney Timothy Hollister, Mr. Wes Wentworth, P.E., Mr. Richard Hayes, Jr. (project developer), Mr. John Alexopoulos, RLA, and Dr. Clarence Welti, P.E., P.C. Attorney Gomes stated that they had submitted the application materials and went through a staff review process. She noted that they are scheduled to go before TPZ on May 17, 2022. Attorney

Gomes reiterated that there are no wetlands or watercourses on site. She noted that they have received staff comments and will address the issues at the next public hearing.

Attorney Gomes noted that the site is comprised of 2.4 acres and is in the Planned Business and Development Zone (PBD) and a small portion is in the Rural Residence Zone (RR). Attorney Gomes explained that the site is presently wooded and is located in a transitional area with a number of commercial uses. She noted that located to the north and west are Highland Park Market, Walgreens, St. Dunstan Church, and a Shell station. Buckingham Park and Glastonbury Fire Department Fire House No. 4 are located to the north. Single family residences are located to the south, southwest and east. Attorney Gomes explained that the development will consist of 74 units in one “L” shaped building. She noted that the housing will meet a variety of housing needs and the units will include 9 efficiency units, 52 one-bedroom units and 13 two-bedroom units. Attorney Gomes explained that the proposal will qualify as a “set-aside development” under the Connecticut General Statutes §8-30g. She noted that 30 percent of the units (23 units) will be set aside for reduced rent for 40 years. Attorney Gomes explained that the proposed site plan under §8-30g may not be denied on the ground that it does not fully comply with underlying zoning requirements of an area.

Wes Wentworth, Principal Engineer and Soil Scientist, addressed the slope elevations. Mr. Wentworth stated that the site is vacant and wooded. He pointed out the lowest elevation of the site, which is at grade 352. Mr. Wentworth stated that the soils on site are Manchester, sandy loam and are excellent for development. They also have a low chance of mobilizing sediment and will stabilize well.

Mr. Wentworth stated that there will be a 2-way access to the site. The parking areas were pointed out. Mr. Wentworth noted that Versteeg Associates conducted a review of the plans and found that the proposed building complies with the Connecticut State Building Code, Connecticut Fire Safety Code and the Connecticut State Fire Prevention Code. The site will be serviced by MDC water. The proposed building, which is currently within Glastonbury's sanitary sewer service area, will also be served by public sewer, which is accessible along Hebron Avenue to the west of the site.

Mr. Wentworth stated that the proposed lighting on site will be full cutoff, high efficiency lights that conform to Town standards. There will be no light spillage impacting the nearby properties. Mr. Wentworth stated that they are looking into EV charging stations and a high efficiency heating and cooling system. Mr. Wentworth noted that the drainage plans were submitted. He explained that the excavation will be on a 2:1 vertical slope, with the proposed building located on a plateau about 40 feet below the top elevation of the slope. The slopes will be stabilized with topsoil, vegetation and erosion control blankets prior to continuing with the section of the excavation. Mr. Wentworth explained that the slope will be secured with retaining walls on the north side of the site, along Hebron Avenue, and to the west of the building. The retaining wall will also minimize visibility to the adjacent properties.

Mr. Wentworth reiterated that the soil conditions are excellent for development. He explained that the runoff is collected by pipe and catch basins, passes through a sediment removal chamber

and discharges into an underground infiltration chamber with large perforated stone. Mr. Wentworth stated that information on the 2 year to 100 year storm calculations is available in the packet. He noted that the chambers will fill up and slowly release. The site has been designed to keep post development peak flow rates the same or at reduced levels. Mr. Wentworth explained that excavation will start from the top, working their way down. He stated that they have done this kind of excavation before and they have a sequencing plan outlined in the erosion control notes on the plan. Mr. Wentworth stated that there is a note regarding cleaning and maintaining the sediment chamber.

Mr. Wentworth informed the Commission that they have received a letter from CT Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB), which identifies a single species of concern. The letter indicates that Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection does not anticipate negative impacts to the species of concern resulting from the proposed development. Mr. Wentworth then discussed the slope plan. He noted that he took a picture of the nearby slope, located next to the gas station. Mr. Wentworth explained that these slopes are very stable and have been like that in excess of 50 years. He noted that they propose a similar grade to the slope shown on the photo. Mr. Wentworth stated that there are no signs of erosion and added that the soils will continue to be stable in the long term. Mr. Wentworth concluded that it is his professional opinion that there are no adverse impacts to public health, safety or welfare resulting from the construction of this development as designed.

Mr. John Alexopoulos, RLA, explained that the site will include a variety of evergreens and deciduous plants which will provide screening. The existing vegetation, located on the western and southern part of the site, will remain. The trees, which include oaks and white pine, will also remain. Mr. Alexopoulos stated that they will add fir trees and interplant the area. They will interplant along the boundaries and put up screening on the west side, which faces a garage. Mr. Alexopoulos stated that the design plan utilizes native plants. He noted that they will put in aromatic sumac in the parking areas as well as other varieties as specified on the site plans. Mr. Alexopoulos noted that the selected plants are hardy varieties that are disease/insect resistant. The slope will be stabilized with an erosion control blanket and a conservation seed mix. Mr. Alexopoulos noted that shade trees cannot be added to the east side due to utility poles. Mr. Alexopoulos concluded that it is his professional opinion that there are no adverse impacts to public health, safety or welfare resulting from the construction of this development as designed.

Dr. Clarence Welti, P.E., P.C., stated that he has experience with slope stabilization. He noted that the slope behind the gas station is very stable. He explained that in his professional report, steps are outlined to ensure the earth work and cutting the slope to 2:1 occurs before any other work is done. Dr. Welti stated that in his report he instructs a vertical cut at grade 372 to 360 and also outlines steps detailing the soil nailing process and the installation of the retaining walls. Dr. Welti stated that the work can be done correctly as long as the steps are followed and concluded that it is his professional opinion that there are no adverse impacts to public health, safety or welfare resulting from the construction of this development as designed.

Commissioner Parry stated that he agrees with Dr. Welti's assessment that the slope can be stabilized. Mr. Parry noted that, during construction, serious erosion can occur. He referred to

the Engineer Department's memorandum which specifies that reverse slope benches are required for the proposed 2:1 slopes. Mr. Parry noted that, other than Dr. Welti's report, he has not seen an infiltration report. He asked about the infiltration capacity and pointed out that, over time, unwanted material can reduce the capacity. Dr. Welti stated that he cannot say what the length of seepage into the ground is and added that oils and other things impact the infiltration ability in the long term. Dr. Welti explained that sites are designed with a sufficient detention system that serves as a major backup. Mr. Wentworth stated that he agrees with Dr. Welti and added that the underground chamber drains out in 24 hours; the same with the water quality system. Over time, after decades of use, the drainage may stretch out to a period of 48 hours. Chairman Kaputa asked the applicants to address the Town Engineer's comments and noted that the comment about benching ties into a maintenance plan. Mr. Wentworth explained that the drainage system will be inspected annually, which also includes cleaning the catch basins. The areas can be further stabilized if needed with crushed stone and vegetation. Mr. Wentworth noted that the property owner will know how to maintain the stormwater management system. Commissioner Shea asked who would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance. Mr. Wentworth stated that it would be the owner, or a contractor would come out and conduct the maintenance.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the type of roof and the approximate elevation of the roof. Mr. Wentworth stated that the top of the slope is around 426 feet and it would stick out about 20 feet above that grade. Mr. Davis remarked that a presenter noted that the building would not be seen because of the slope. Mr. Wentworth explained that the steep grade and the existing vegetation would minimize the building's visibility. Mr. Davis asked about the roof design. Mr. Wentworth responded that the roof is sloped. Mr. Davis asked the applicants if they considered the impact the development will have on the neighbors and asked if the slope near the gas station is natural or the result of excavation. Mr. Wentworth stated that the slope appears to have been excavated and added that it has been there for at least 50 years. Mr. Davis asked if the slope would be fully vegetated. Mr. Wentworth stated that a conservation seed mix will be used.

Mr. Alexopoulos explained that the slope would not just have grasses, but will have shrubs and wildflowers which provide habitat. He noted that there will not be any trees on the slope. Commissioner Davis noted that surrounding homes in the area have mature trees and remarked that overtime it is nice to see a mix of trees. Mr. Kaputa asked the applicants to outline their plans on invasive plants. Mr. Alexopoulos responded that it is all about maintenance and explained that an erosion control blanket will keep out quite a bit of the noxious plants. Mr. Kaputa asked the applicants if they are confident about the planting selection for the slope. Mr. Alexopoulos replied yes, and explained that they have used these plants before. Mr. Davis noted that, without any trees on the slope, the area will look out of place and unnatural. He asked the applicants to put in trees that will grow over time, which will help the appearance. Attorney Gomes stated that they will take that under consideration and added that the developer is experienced and takes pride in his work. She stated that the maintenance plan will be followed and they will take the comments under advisement and will go back to the drawing board if needed. Mr. Davis noted that the roadway easement is not shown on the landscape plan and asked the applicants to point that out. Mr. Wentworth asked Mr. Davis if he meant the area along the south property line. Mr. Davis noted that easement may be the wrong word and asked what that strip of land is. Mr. Wentworth stated that it is a right-of-way and the area will be

mowed grass. Mr. Davis asked if the State would mow the grass. Mr. Wentworth stated that the owner might do that. Mr. Kaputa pointed out that it is State-owned land and not a right-of-way. Mr. Wentworth clarified that it is land owned by the State.

Secretary McClain asked the applicants if they considered a plan to include solar energy. Mr. Wentworth explained that keeping the tall trees limits how much sun the site would get. He noted that they can look into it and added that he does not think it will pan out. Attorney Gomes confirmed that they will look into it. Mr. Davis suggested adding solar panels to the parking area. Ms. McClain remarked that the parking area on the plans amounts to a sea of asphalt. She asked the applicants to look into adding shade trees and solar. Attorney Gomes stated that they will take that under advisement. Ms. McClain noted that the applicants included a vague list of sustainable features. She asked the applicants to provide the Commission with a precise list of what the sustainable features would be. Ms. McClain also stated that the Commission would like to see a detailed lighting plan. She asked the applicants if they can specify which plants on the list are helpful for pollinators. Mr. Alexopoulos responded that aromatic sumac and the conservation mix on the slope are pollinators. Ms. McClain asked the applicants to include more pollinator plants on the plans. Mr. Alexopoulos agreed. Ms. McClain remarked that EV charging stations are required under new regulations and asked where on the plans will they be located. Ms. McClain asked the applicants about bike racks.

Attorney Gomes explained that they have a lighting plan that was submitted to Town staff. She noted that the lighting plan was not requested and they can submit it to the Commission. Attorney Gomes stated that they propose indoor bike racks, outdoor bike racks and indoor bike storage. Mr. Kaputa noted that there are pollinator plants on the list and added that about half are native. Ms. McClain remarked that it is good news. Mr. Kaputa noted that he did not see a number for the impervious coverage. Mr. Wentworth stated that it is under the zoning chart. The impervious coverage is approximately 51,000 square feet or 48.3 percent of the site. The open space is over 51 percent.

Chairman Kaputa asked about the proposed high efficiency heating and cooling system. Mr. Wentworth explained that Mitsubishi came out with a unit that blends into the air ducts and it is being widely used instead of oil heating. Mr. Wentworth stated that the system utilizes a high efficiency air pump which is energy efficient. Chairman Kaputa asked if a backup system was in place in case of a power outage. Mr. Wentworth replied no. Commissioner Davis remarked that the utility poles are much more apparent and asked if there were any thoughts on underground utilities. Mr. Wentworth explained that the existing utilities are off-site and not part of their development. The Commission asked the applicants to address the concern noted in the Town Engineering Department memorandum regarding the recommendation for the applicant to consult with the State Department of Transportation concerning inclusion of a true pedestrian phase within the Hebron Avenue/Manchester Road traffic signal cycle. Attorney Gomes stated that they will address the comments made by the Town Engineering Department.

Mr. Kaputa asked the applicants to detail the previous use of the site. Mr. Wentworth noted that a portion of the site had a farm. He explained that the soil is not rich for agriculture and remarked that it might have been used for pasture lands. Chairman Kaputa asked the applicants

if any tests were done for contaminants. Mr. Richard Hayes, Jr., the owner and applicant, explained that when they bought the property they had to conduct tests because it is near a refueling station. He explained that the groundwater travels towards the gas station and the soils have been tested. Mr. Kaputa asked the applicants to provide the results. Several Commissioners asked about sidewalks. Attorney Gomes explained that building a sidewalk that does not lead anywhere is dangerous. She noted that it is not the applicant's responsibility and stated that, if the Town is willing to build some portions, they are willing to have discussions on the matter. Ms. McClain remarked that a sidewalk has to be started and this is the way the process begins. Attorney Gomes stated that they will take this under advisement.

Mr. Parry asked the applicants to address the benching comment made by the Town Engineering Department and noted that there is a concern that, during construction period, erosion control issues can become significant during rain fall. Attorney Gomes reiterated that they will address the Town Engineer's comments.

The Commission asked the applicants to complete the following:

- Benching and slope stabilization during construction period
- Address the comments made by the Town Engineer
- Solar energy use; View shed/solar site assessment to evaluate roof lines for solar
- Sidewalks
- Lighting plan
- Reports for contaminants in the groundwater
- Add trees to the slope
- Add more pollinators/label the pollinators on the list
- List of specific sustainable design elements

Mr. Davis thanked the applicants for a clear and concise presentation.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. On-Site Meeting of April 13, 2022

The Minutes were accepted as presented.

2. Regular Meeting of April 14, 2022

Mr. Kaputa noted that on page 5, the middle of the 3rd paragraph, the end of the sentence states, "the explanation that Mr. Mocko provided is consistent with the approach the Commission takes." The Chairman explained that it should be corrected to "the explanation that Mr. Mocko provided is consistent with the way he approached conservation easements." Several commissioners stated that is how they remember it. The Commissioners agreed to the change.

Mr. Davis noted that on page 7, paragraph 3, the sentence states, “The Commission discussed the credentials needed for an arborist to certify tree hazards.” The Commissioners agreed to change the sentence to “The Commission discussed the credentials needed for an arborist to certify tree hazards with a certification in risk assessment.” On page 8, the bullet point section should include “from a certified risk assessment arborist.” The Commissioners agreed to the change.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

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

III. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chairman Kaputa asked the members of the public to keep the comments related to conservation and environmental issues. He noted that other questions can be asked at the TPZ meeting. Ms. Simone informed the Commission that there were no written comments prior to the meeting.

Mrs. Anne Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive remarked that she appreciated the discussion about native and pollinator plants, as well as solar panels in the parking area. She thanked the Commission.

Mrs. Pam Lockard of 10 Southgate Drive thanked the Commission for their knowledge and added that she appreciates the comment regarding the sidewalk connection.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kaputa discussed a violation in a conservation easement in his neighborhood. He noted Ms. Simone will follow up with the next steps. The Chairman noted that he will recuse himself from the discussions and will make a comment as a citizen.

2. Environmental Planner’s Report

Ms. Simone noted that she has spoken with Mr. Paul Reddington, the East Carriage Condo Association president, and was given an update. The condo association was in touch with an arborist certified in risk assessment. Ms. Simone informed the Commission that the Town has received a notice from CT DEEP regarding a wetlands violation in the southern side of Route 2, Hubbard Brook area. She explained that the Department of Transportation is working in that area and the State included the Town in the notification. Ms. Simone noted that restoration of the area is being done and she will keep the Commission updated on the progress.

Commissioner Davis asked if there was any information regarding the vacancy. Ms. Simone stated that the Town Manager is working it. Secretary McClain asked if the Chairman can be involved with the process. Ms. Simone noted that she will follow up on that as well. Chairman Kaputa remarked that he is willing to meet candidates. Ms. Simone stated that she will pass that

along. Commissioner Parry noted that the applicants did a nice a job with their presentation.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Kaputa adjourned the meeting at 7:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

Nadya Yuskaev
Recording Secretary