

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 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
Mark Temple, Vice-Chairman
Kim McClain, Secretary
Anna Gault Galjan
William Shea

Commission Members – Excused

James Parry
Brian Davis

Chairman Kaputa called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. and explained the public meeting process to the applicants and members of the public.

I. FORMAL ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Application of Precision Land & Drain LLC for an inland wetlands and watercourses permit concerning pipe installation traversing the front yard to a watercourse to allow for sump pump drainage improvements - 88 Crescent Road – Residence AA Zone – Robert & Setsuko McNabb, owners

Mr. Tim White, Owner of Precision Land & Drain LLC explained that the homeowner, Mrs. Setsuko McNabb, contacted him because of problems relating to saturation caused by a flat grade. Mr. White explained that they will install a 4-inch SDR35 PVC pipe from the end of the existing sump pump outlet which will drain into the existing watercourse.

Chairman Kaputa noted that the Commission received information in their packets. Vice-Chairman Temple asked how long the SDR35 pieces measure. Mr. White responded that they are 14 feet long. Mr. Temple noted that erosion is a concern and asked Mr. White to confirm on the record that measures will be taken to prevent erosion; Mr. White confirmed. Ms. Simone explained that the plans outline the placing of flat rocks below the outlet of the pipe to act as a level spreader will diffuse the energy of the water as it enters the stream channel. Mr. Temple asked about the riprap. Mr. White replied that 6 to 8 inches of riprap will be installed. Commissioner Shea wanted to confirm that the watercourse is the small stream that the discharge will flow to. Ms. Simone replied yes and added that the watercourse originates in the open space area west of the property. Mr. Kaputa noted that eventually the discharge flows into Smith Brook. Ms. Simone stated that the records indicate that the watercourse is a perennial

stream. Mr. Kaputa noted that he went to the site. He asked how far the pipe would extend. Mr. White said that he does not have the exact footage and noted that the current pipe discharges a few feet from the house. Mr. Kaputa asked about the sheet flow and the current conditions. Mr. White explained that there is nothing happening now because of the drought-like conditions. He reiterated that the property owner's house is on a very flat grade and the soil holds water making the ground saturated.

Mr. Kaputa asked how wet the basement gets. He remarked that this summer is not a good data point and asked Mrs. McNabb to explain the conditions. Mrs. McNabb explained that the ground is saturated during heavy rain and the sump pump is activated about once an hour. She noted that during the current summer conditions there is no saturation. Mrs. McNabb explained that, during the snow melt, the sump pump runs about once an hour and sometimes more often. Mr. Kaputa asked Mrs. McNabb about the brook. Mrs. McNabb responded that the stream is small and keeps flowing. Mr. Kaputa asked about the conditions during large rain and snow events. Mrs. McNabb stated that the stream is always moving. Mr. Kaputa noted that he does not remember the Commission getting an application regarding sump pump drainage into a watercourse. Ms. Simone explained that this specific property contains wetland soils. She noted that such requests would not come from newer developments. Ms. Simone added that the option outlined in the plans is the only way to get the water away from the property.

Mr. Kaputa asked about the possibility of contaminants from the basement getting into the brook. Mrs. McNabb replied that the sump pump catches the water before it goes into the basement. Mr. Temple asked Mrs. McNabb what type of heating system they used; Mrs. McNabb replied oil. Mr. Temple noted that it could be a concern, but with the oil tank being located on the opposite side of the basement from the sump pump it would take a leak of 100 gallons to reach the sump pump. The Vice-Chairman advised Mrs. McNabb to unplug the sump pump if there is a catastrophic release of oil. Mr. Temple remarked that, usually, basements are free of hazards. He added that most people store hazardous materials in their garage. Commissioner Gault Galjan wanted to confirm that the sump pump is not activated when it is not raining. Mrs. McNabb stated that, currently, the sump pump is not active at all. She noted that the sump pump starts when it rains. Ms. Gault Galjan asked if a more powerful sump pump might be needed. Mr. Temple noted that the sump pump does not run every 5-10 minutes. He explained that the Buttonball area gets a lot of water and this specific situation is not too bad. Mr. White explained that they initially wanted to put in a larger pipe but the prices got very high. Mr. Temple noted that larger pipes may attract animals; Mr. White agreed. Mr. Kaputa confirmed that there is no motion for tonight. Ms. Simone replied correct and added that there would be at the next meeting. She noted that the language in the motion will include the installation of 6 to 8 inches of riprap.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting of July 28, 2022

The minutes were accepted as presented 4-0-1, with Commissioner Shea abstaining.

III. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (NONE)

Mr. Bruce Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive explained that he has been reaching out to different committees and commissions in order for the Town to take action on climate change. Mr. Bowman noted that climate change is here and is real and added that he is hopeful that the Town may adopt a climate crisis resolution. He explained that the discussions regarding the development proposal at 1199

Manchester Road lacked any consensus on the percentage of native plants and native pollinator plants. Mr. Bowman noted that the developers showed a lack of understanding about loss of habitat and the importance of pollinators. He stated that he hopes to see the Town of Glastonbury take steps to require developers to put in 100 percent native plants which will help mitigate habitat loss. Mr. Bowman noted that the Architectural Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC) does not accept public comments. He added that he appreciates this Commission for accepting public comments. Mr. Bowman noted that he has listened in to the Conservation Commission meetings and appreciated the requirements about appropriate lighting. He added that he hopes that solar canopies can be added to new developments. Mr. Bowman said that the solar canopies would mitigate heat gain and would be would be a step to address climate change. He explained that developers should be required to select building materials that have less of a carbon footprint. Mr. Bowman thanked the Commission for their willingness to listen.

Chairman Kaputa thanked Mr. Bowman for his comments and added that good points were made. He explained that he reviews the plants and the Commission does not allow any non-native invasive plants. Mr. Kaputa noted that the Commission discusses native plants. The Chairman remarked that Secretary McClain has done a great job pushing native pollinators. Mr. Kaputa noted that the Commission can do better with the percentage of native plants and added that he sees no reason that the Commission cannot push for 100 percent native plants. The Chairman stated that he thinks it is doable, that they will take it to heart, and push it more.

Vice-Chairman Temple asked Mr. Bowman if he has spoken with the Beautification Committee. Mr. Temple explained that this Commission recommends putting in larger shade trees in the parking area to cool the pavement. He noted that it seems like a no brainer but this Commission often loses out to the Beautification Committee. Mr. Temple noted that it is a tradeoff and Town Plan and Zoning Commission makes the decision. He noted that the wetlands are the sector for which this Commission is responsible. Secretary McClain agreed with Mr. Temple's points and asked if the Beautification Committee is now part of the ASDRC. Ms. Simone replied yes. Mr. Kaputa asked about the sequence of the ASDRC meetings. Ms. Simone explained that they meet about once a month and there is no formula. She added that it depends on the submission dates. Mr. Shea noted that the ASDRC meetings do not have public comment. Mr. Bowman confirmed that the ASDRC Meetings do not have public comments and added that he went through the Town Manager, Rebecca Auger and Brian Davis. Mr. Bowman explained that he was told that public comment was not allowed because the ASDRC is an advisory and not a regulatory committee. Ms. McClain noted that this is not acceptable and should be taken to the Town Council. Mr. Shea agreed.

Mr. Bowman noted that he spoke again with the Town staff and found that there was no consensus about native plants and added that he has heard that a perennial planting can count as a tree. He asked the Commissioners if they can bring up these issues to the Town Manager. Ms. McClain asked Mr. Bowman if he is aware of any towns that have a standard formula. Mr. Bowman stated that Newtown, Connecticut mandates that developers are required to put in 100 percent native plants. Mr. Bowman noted that native plants do not have any effect on the cost of the project. He added that the Town of Middletown has passed a resolution requiring the reduction of emissions. Mr. Bowman explained that Glastonbury has no goals to reduce emissions. He remarked that many places are experiencing fires and climate disasters and action has to be taken. Ms. McClain asked if it would be feasible for the

Commission to send a letter to TPZ and the Town Council that details the ordinance in Newtown. She further explained that the Commission supports having a similar ordinance and added that it is important to set a standard.

Ms. Gault Galjan said it can be difficult to be a strict nativist. She explained that in her experience she had seen a situation where there was 80 acres of land with horrible invasives and vines. The area is habitat for owls and raptors that need cover. She explained that native plants can take years to develop and added that this delay might be harmful to the wildlife. Ms. Gault Galjan noted that a recommendation from a forest ecologist would be helpful in making decisions. She remarked that she would like to hear more on how Newtown came to the decision to have 100 percent native plantings.

Mr. Kaputa explained that the Commission mostly sees development applications and not much ecological plans. He noted that in most cases the Commission can push for native plants. Mr. Kaputa stated that, in other cases, an ecologist can be brought in. The Commissioners discussed the criteria of how to define a native plant. Mr. Temple said that he would like to see what the Newtown ordinance looks like. Ms. McClain asked Ms. Simone to discuss the good news that this Commission has achieved. Ms. Simone explained that, in her discussions with developers, they are aware of the expectations and the requirement to evaluate solar into the site plans. She explained that developers would be required to provide a narrative about why solar would work or why it would not work. Mr. Temple noted that using geo-thermal energy should be included in the discussions as well. Ms. McClain noted that they also discuss the lighting plan requirements. Ms. Simone added that EV charging stations are discussed and reiterated that the Commission promotes native plantings. Mr. Bowman thanked the Commission. Ms. McClain thanked Mr. Bowman.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman's Report - NONE

2. Environmental Planner's Report

Ms. Simone updated the Commissioners on the conservation easement violation in the Thompson Street area. The Commissioners discussed the next steps, which include the planting plan and the timeline.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Kaputa adjourned the meeting at 7:24 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

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Recording Secretary