

**GLASTONBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
(INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES AGENCY)
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 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
Brian Davis
Anna Gault Galjan
William Shea

Commission Members – Excused

Kim McClain, Secretary
James Parry

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 ACTION

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

Chairman Kaputa noted that 6-8-inch riprap has been included in the motion. He asked the applicants if they had any new changes to present. Mr. White and Mrs. McNabb stated that nothing has changed. Vice-Chairman Temple asked Mrs. McNabb if she agrees with the stipulated changes in the motion. Mrs. McNabb stated that she is fine with the changes.

Motion by: Commissioner Davis

Seconded by: Commissioner Shea

MOVED, that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency grants an inland wetlands and watercourses permit to Precision Land and Drain LLC for sump pump pipe extension at 88 Crescent Road, in accordance with the application dated August 4, 2022, and in compliance with the following stipulations:

1. Permittee is responsible for the proper installation of subsurface pipe and discharge into a watercourse, as described in the above referenced application and testimony at the meeting of August 18, 2022.

2. Site work shall be conducted in low flow conditions of the watercourse. The splash pad and stone shall be installed at the same time the pipe extension work is conducted.
3. Permittee shall contact the Environmental Planner a minimum of 24 hours prior to the commencement of site work covered in this permit.
4. The erosion control pad installed in the watercourse at the terminus of the pipe shall be comprised of large flat stone(s) and supported in place by 6” to 8” riprap.
5. The permit is valid for 5 years from date of issuance, and shall expire on September 1, 2027.

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

Mr. White stated that he will be in contact with Ms. Simone and added that he will give more than a 24-hour notice. Mrs. McNabb thanked the Commission.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Regular Meeting of August 18, 2022

The minutes were accepted as presented. (4-0-1)

(Commissioner Davis abstained because he was not at the meeting.)

III. COMMENTS BY CITIZENS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – NONE

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kaputa noted that he looked over the native plant information that was sent out. He explained that the Commission should continue to push harder for native plants and added that there is no need to have a specific number or percentage that is required. Mr. Kaputa noted that he will continue to provide native plant alternatives as a replacement for non-native plants. The Chairman remarked that Secretary McClain has done a great job pushing for solar and added that the Commission can approach pushing for more native plants the same way. Commissioner Davis noted that there is no need to have a specific set of metrics. He explained that the Commission should look at the overall number of native plants. Commissioner Gault Galjan noted that invasive plants should not be introduced in any circumstance. She explained that it is useful to see how other regions came up with their metrics regarding native plant percentages. Ms. Gault Galjan noted that the Commission can ask for a high number of native plants and added that it becomes more doable with smaller plots of land. She explained that if someone is looking for specific metrics, looking at the size of the acreage is a good starting point. Ms. Gault Galjan stated that the vast majority of plants should be native plants. Mr. Davis suggested that applicants should be required to provide an explanation or a rationale for the planting of non-native species. Several Commissioners agreed with the suggestion made by Mr. Davis.

Vice-Chairman Temple noted that he had come across an article about 2 or 3 weeks ago regarding the American chestnut tree. He explained that the 70-year-old variety might have been found in Connecticut. The tree survived disease and DNA had to be conducted to determine if the tree was the actual American variety. Mr. Temple explained that the article raises issues about different varieties. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Temple for bringing up the article. Ms. Gault Galjan noted that, if an applicant is looking for exotic varieties of plants, planter boxes may be an option to consider, since they are not placed into the ground and do not pose a danger to the ecosystem. Mr. Kaputa noted that he does not recall any applications that included large planters in the design plans. The Chairman remarked that he is in agreement with Ms. Gault Galjan's point that the vast majority of plants should be native. He noted that the Commission has been good about preventing developers from putting in invasive plants. The Commissioners agreed with coming up with a statement regarding native plants that will be shared with prospective developers and applicants.

Mr. Temple remarked that Mr. Kaputa has done a great job pushing for native plants and offering substitutions for non-native varieties. The Vice-Chairman noted that he likes Ms. Gault Galjan's suggestion that native plants should be the vast majority. He added that developers should know that the Commission has a high expectation and a specific percentage is not needed.

Commissioner Shea noted that Chairman Kaputa has been very good at pushing for native plants. He added that just as Ms. McClain pushes the solar issue, this Commission can do the same. Mr. Davis noted that it is important for applicants to understand the expectations for a high percentage of native plants. He reiterated that justification must be provided for plants that are not considered native.

Mr. Davis asked Ms. Simone about the process by which applicants are made aware of the Commission's expectations. Ms. Simone explained that the Town conducts an administrative review process. Developers submit their proposals to the Town and many departments are involved. Ms. Simone continued, saying that she has started to convey the expectations that should be included into the design and plans. She noted that geothermal, lighting, solar and native plants will be discussed with the applicants. Several Commissioners asked Ms. Simone about the language of the document that will be shared with developers. Ms. Simone explained that she will share the framework and it could be something that goes before the full Commission. Several Commissioners noted that it will be good to review the document.

Mr. Kaputa noted that they have not added any conservation easements this year. He remarked that it is something to keep in mind. Ms. Simone explained that the Town staff are in discussions with developers about upcoming projects that would involve conservation easement areas. She noted that the applications that have come before the Commission this year are not large divisions of land or subdivisions, but mostly building additions and smaller projects. Ms. Simone noted that the next agenda will include a proposed conservation easement that will be part of the application materials.

Mr. Temple noted that he wanted to comment on the drought and some of the misunderstandings that the public may have. He explained that many people are avoiding watering their lawns because of the drought. Mr. Temple explained that according to the Metropolitan District

Commission's (MDC) website, the water reservoirs are at about 93 percent capacity. People who utilize MDC water do not have to cut back on watering. Mr. Temple noted that MDC uses part of their income to fix the infrastructure and carry out other repairs and work. He reiterated that people who use MDC water do not have to conserve water unless specified by MDC. Mr. Temple explained that, if there was a problem and if the water levels were low, the MDC would notify the public. Mr. Kaputa thanked Mr. Temple for his comments and noted that this affects the public who are on public water. Mr. Temple confirmed that it is public water and not water coming from individual wells. He noted that he responded to a comment that was posted on the *Patch* website. The Commissioners discussed MDC water use being recharged into the ground. The Commissioners discussed issues related to hydraulics and ground water fluctuations. Mr. Temple noted that he can share some data with the Commission.

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 timeline and looking into whether a tree that was damaged by lightning is determined to be a hazard. Ms. Simone explained that the homeowner has discussed the possibility of including in the plans a removal or replacement of the tree damaged by lightning.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Kaputa adjourned the meeting at 7:04 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev

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Recording Secretary