

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 27, 2018**

LOCATION: Public Services Administration Building (PSAB), Charles River Room

ATTENDING: Peter Oelhkers, Artie Crocker, Stephen Farr, Alison Richardson, William Murphy, Debbie Anderson (Conservation Specialist), Elisa Litchman (Administrative Assistant).

GUESTS: Alan Cloutier, Tom Carrier, Kathy D'Addesio, Marshall Dennis, Jamie Falise, Chris Garcia, David Glenn, Hank Haff, Shirley Klepadlo, Rustom Mehta, Julie Meyer, Jorge Oslan, Michele Rogers.

P. Oelhkers opened the public meeting at 7:35 p.m.

MINUTES

Minutes for the meeting of September 13, 2018 were distributed and reviewed by the Commission.

Motion to approve the minutes of September 13, 2018 by S. Farr, seconded by A. Crocker, approved 5-0-0.

HEARINGS:

187 BROOKLINE STREET – NOTICE OF INTENT (DEP File #234-816)

P. Oelhkers opened the public hearing at 7:45pm. Hank Haff, Project Manager for the Town presented and explained the materials submitted for the project including a detailed planting plan, and two emails: one from Principal of the Mitchell School, and the other from Ed Olsen, Superintendent of Forestry describing his assessment of the trees after going to the site. Christopher Garcia from Garcia, Galuska, DeSousa Inc. and Michele Rogers from Dore & Whittier described the background behind the proposed project. The Mitchell School is overcrowded. Four modulars were added to the site a number of years ago. Two are used for kindergarten, one is an art room and one is used for the after-school CASE program. The goal for Needham is to establish full-day kindergarten next year which creates the need for more classroom space. The proposed new modular would create a space to which the art room from the existing modulars would move and the music room in the existing main school building would be relocated.

The location chosen for the new modular has the most open space on site without taking away playing fields, has better soils and also has best visibility; the new modulars would be seen from the main building's administration office. Access to the new modulars is very important and there are several doors that allow for this though the proposed modulars do not have direct access through the main building. A potential site at the rear of the school didn't provide monitored student access and the bearing capacity of the soil was not adequate. More practically speaking, the nature of the new classroom modulars (with the coming and going of students) allows pick-up and drop off to be easier as it is located close to the driveway into the school site.

The preferred site for the modulars shows a slope that becomes steeper towards Brookline Street. Options for grading became important in the site location decision and also connecting utilities to the building. Stormwater management will be handled similarly to that of the existing modulars; gravel beds are created under the building and downspouts will bring the roof runoff down beneath the building where it will infiltrate. In order

to install the gravel bed, they need to create a flat area under the building. To grade around building they would need to take out a number of trees. They would remove 10 trees within the jurisdictional area and a total of 18 trees. The 2:1 ratio per the Conservation Commission tree removal policy would be followed and more so they propose overplanting to restore the area with 21 trees. The delineated resource area appears to be more a Bordering Vegetated Wetland than an intermittent stream. C. Hayward had suggested that it was an intermittent stream. C. Garcia stated that it appears to be more of a bank and still has a 100-foot Buffer Zone. A. Crocker stated that the channel is wet much of the time. H. Haff stated that from the test pits done last time there's a layer of peat, and soils deposited from prior construction. A. Richardson asked what types of trees exist there now. H. Haff said primarily oak, some pine, and a number of witch hazel in the understory. The oaks are so dominant that they are shutting out the understory. They want to create diversity when they plant the area and enhance the food available for wildlife. These modulars would remain on site until the Mitchell School building is fully redeveloped which wouldn't be until the Sunita Williams School is complete. The pre-feasibility diagrams show various locations for buildings and driveway. It's premature to say where the final school will be located. It is possible that the modulars could be used at another site when Mitchell is being rebuilt.

Silt fence will be used along edge for erosion control. The Commission recommended erosion control blankets on the slopes for stabilization. As for the building materials, M. Rogers explained that they will be similar to the existing modular and will have the same look as the other modulars. Because of ledge on-site it will be very difficult to put infiltration chambers in the ground. All new utilities would be needed. Four downspouts from the roof would be used to mitigate runoff and a 2' stone diaphragm underneath the building would be used to deal with runoff as well. A small outfall 4" pipe would also be installed to bleed out runoff overtime for mitigation.

D. Anderson mentioned that the stormwater management is working with the existing modular so it is likely to work with this project.

Motion to continue the public hearing for 187 Brookline Street (DEP File #234-816) to October 11, 2018 at 8:15pm by W. Murphy, seconded by A. Crocker, approved 5-0-0.

MASSDOT – HIGHLAND AVENUE (DEP File #234-8XX)

P. Oehlkers opened the hearing at 8:30pm. Tom Currier from MassDOT introduced the representatives involved in this project on Highland Avenue. Stantec staff representing MASSDOT explained the details. Marshall Dennis of Stantec stated that there are existing resource areas, including the Charles River. An ANRAD was approved 8 years ago. Essentially the area is all existing pavement. Dave Glenn from Stantec is involved with stormwater management and infiltration systems. He oriented the Commission to the stormwater management.

They plan to take runoff from 1st Ave and discharge it to the Charles River. There will be no increase in impervious area. Drainage improvements will meet current standards, and include catch basins, new piping, a new headwall that will be pulled back and rip rap.

Jamie Falise is the landscape architect from Stantec. The trees proposed for removal are part of the roadway improvement. A total of 8 trees are proposed for removal, 1 dead and several small trees which are competing with larger trees' canopy. He presented the trees and shrubs proposed for mitigation, including 188 shrubs, and ferns. A maintenance access drive is proposed for trucks to go in once or twice a year. An existing 36" oak tree

will be protected by installing a tree well. P. Oehlkers asked what species are predominant on site. Jamie stated oak and maple. A. Richardson asked that they put the retaining wall 5' away or further from the tree. She also asked about the seed they're planning on using. J. Falise said it is for erosion control but would get the exact answer to the Commission. They will put the tree wall 6' halfway around the tree.

The timeline for this project is that they're advertising for construction in April and hope to begin construction in the fall 2019. D. Anderson stated that she had attended a site visit and there's been quite a lot of discussion about the planting plan for this project.

Motion to continue the public hearing for Mass DOT (DEP File #234-8XX) to October 11, 2018 at 8:30pm by W. Murphy, seconded by A. Crocker, approved 5-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

LINDEN/CYPRESS STREET – TREE DISCUSSION

D. Anderson explained that the Commission has photos of the four River Birch trees installed at Linden St/Cypress St. E. Olsen, the Town Superintendent of Forestry went out to the site and assessed the trees to be healthy and no physical issues with them. The abutter, Kathy D'Addessio was in attendance and stated that she is not pleased with the type of trees installed. Mr. Jorge Oslan, the contractor, was in attendance and stated he had chosen and planted the trees as required by the OOC and the species was recommended by Chris Hayward. If the contractor and the abutter want to work something out they can but the contractor did what was required of him. K. D'Addessio stated that she had requested that no trees be planted there but maybe bushes. She is now requesting that nothing be planted there as the trees will encroach on her property since they are 2' away from her property and grow very large. She understands that they are gorgeous trees and suggested that she will incur the expense of having an arborist take them out and give them to Conservation. She feels that she is being punished by having these trees put there and that she will have to take care of them and have this burden. She doesn't feel that these trees are appropriate in this location.

The trees are mitigation/replacement trees for tree removal. This area was identified as one of the only areas within Con Com jurisdiction where there is room to install the mitigation plantings. Ms. D'Addessio had spoken to the Commission when the trees were first installed. The Commission had stated that if the trees didn't survive and become established through the summer it would have been up to the contractor to replace them with something else. But they are healthy and J. Oslan and Ed Olsen said that they grow together and form a screen. A. Richardson stated that they do fill out. A. Crocker asked to see where the plantings are and where the buffer zone is. D. Anderson and J. Oslan indicated on the plan where everything was located. The Planning Board required arborvitae plantings as a natural screen on her property from Cypress Street. Ms. D'Addessio stated that the River Birch will damage her arborvitae, her maple tree, lawn, block her sunlight and get in the way of power lines and she is asking the developer to take them out. She offered to have an arborist remove them and have a town truck take them to the town tree yard. A. Richardson asked how these trees were chosen. What was the procedure? D. Anderson answered that the developer needed to refer to the recommended list of trees. The abutter objected to any trees planted there. A. Richardson said that it would have been better for K. D'Addessio to speak up when the project first came to the Conservation Commission to discuss the tree mitigation plan. K. D'Addessio stated that she was never here at the hearings. A. Richardson stated that she recognized her and then she said she wasn't sure if she was there with her attorney. A. Richardson pointed out that after-the-fact is a bit difficult. A. Richardson said that they would have to overturn a decision. A. Richardson added that they should refer to the minutes of the hearings to see what was discussed

at a minimum. J. Oslan added that the Planning Board also had to approve the plans and that the builder needed to comply with the Board as well. A. Richardson stated that they can't decide this tonight.

A. Crocker understands that her attorney and the contractor had some communication as far as the arborvitaes. K. D'Addessio said that she honestly thinks the issues that brought her to the hearings were only about drainage but there was nothing about plantings discussed when she attended. She only attended the planning board meetings regarding the plantings. There was no other discussion between her and the developer about plantings. K. D'Addessio stated that she has 134' of access to street in the deed to her property. The trees are violating her access to street. She specifically allowed the arborvitaes to stop at a certain point and not to continue to Linden Street and not be in buffer zone because it is within her right. K. D'Addessio recalls that the builder didn't take down any trees in the buffer zone.

P. Oehlkers stated that there's not enough information to make any decisions. D. Anderson will review the minutes from previous hearings and attendance to gather more information. There was a legal process and decisions were made. At this point no determination can be made. J. Oslan looked at the plans with the Commission to see if there would be any other area where the trees could be planted. For the sake of the trees not being where D'Addessio wants them J. Oslan suggested other potential locations for them. A. Richardson stated that you cannot dig them out in the fall or they will die and D. Anderson stated that E. Olsen stated that they can't be transplanted in the summer. K. D'Addessio steadfastly stated that she was not privy to the decisions about these trees when it was approved. J. Oslan is concerned that this issue may interfere with the Building Department signing off on the project or not abiding by the Planning Board's decision.

D. Anderson will need to contact the two parties once the subject is brought to another meeting.

28 ROBINWOOD AVENUE (DEP File #234-735) - REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Christopher Porter, the owner was present. D. Anderson explained that this was a landscape project with a stairway (hardscape). The area consists of restoration plantings and installation of permanent bounds. J. Rockwood's report stated that most of the plantings were installed, and some additional plantings were installed but were not required by the Con Com. The photos distributed show that the mitigation area has taken well. S. Farr asked if stone bounds have emblems on them currently. D. Anderson stated that they do not and explained to the owner that he should attach emblems to the four bounds and that they can be purchased at the Conservation Department.

Motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance for 28 Robinwood Avenue (DEP File #234-735) by S. Farr, seconded by A. Crocker, approved 5-0-0.

9 ALDEN ROAD (DEP File #234-775) - REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

D. Anderson stated that the original project and the Order of Conditions issued consisted of several additions, and the construction of a new garage. The owners decided to scale back on it. Rustin Mehta, the owner introduced himself and explained the deviations to the project from the OOC. He was supposed to put in a gravel driveway for the new garage but he has left it as lawn. The pervious pavers that were approved in the rear of the house for the patio is now gravel.

Motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance for 9 Alden Road (DEP File #234-775) by S. Farr, seconded by A. Crocker, approved 5-0-0.

UPDATES:

An environmental teacher at Needham High School emailed the Conservation Department stating that the high school students are doing student projects in neighboring towns. They're hoping to have a contact here in Needham and some guidance as to potential team building projects in Needham such as removing invasive plants. A. Richardson suggested the Rosemary Pool SCA bridge is potentially a good location where they could remove invasive plants. P. Oehlkers said there's black swallowwort at Ridge Hill Reservation which should be removed. A. Richardson added that the Needham bike trail has ragweed that could really use some removal.

D. Anderson also distributed an update on the beaver issue at Rosemary Brook. There was an Emergency Certification issued for the beavers in late August. Two beavers were trapped and now Mike Callahan from Beaver Solutions LLC will send photos of what they would propose going forward. He has suggested fencing to keep the beavers from reconstructing their dam in the same area. The Beaver Deceiver device would not work in this area. D. Anderson has spoken with Chris Seriac, Superintendent of Water and Sewer who told her the fencing would need to be cleaned out on a regular basis.

1516 CENTRAL AVENUE is now mowed which the owner has been permitted to do once a year. M. Lenahan, the landscaper wanted to mow a few weeks ago. Now there is a horse on the property to make it look more equestrian so that the owners can sell the property as a potential horse farm. D. Anderson said the pipes(bounds) needed to be reinstalled. S. Farr asked if there's some way that once the property is sold that the new owners come in and meet with the Department or the Conservation Commission. D. Anderson explained that the mowing plan is recorded with the deed so that any new owner should see this. M. Lenahan who has maintained the property for years will most likely continue to maintain with new owners and would inform them as well.

The Green Collaborative will be having a fair on November 10th at Town Hall and A. Crocker asked if some pamphlets could be available at the fair for the public. D. Anderson said that we plan to have more educational information on the website for the public and publications that can be more easily distributed. J. Bernardo has some sample pamphlets and has asked D. Anderson about money in the budget for producing publications. A. Richardson said that she had worked on the rain garden pamphlets for distribution to the Walker Pond residents. A. Richardson thought it was more general. Discussion about the drafting of pamphlets on protecting water quality, constructing rain gardens, installing pervious pavers, and other information that is consistently recommended by the Conservation Commission should be a project.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn by A. Crocker, seconded by W. Murphy approved 5-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING:

October 11, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. in the Public Services Administration Building, Charles River Room.