



**Waltham Conservation Commission
November 4, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting took place via public Zoom call with participation information posted at City Hall, Government Center, and on the Commission's page of the City web site. Zoom information was circulated directly to all applicants and others on the public agenda.

Meeting called to order at 7:01PM.

Attendees: Chair Philip Moser, Vice Chair Bill Doyle, Gerard Dufromont, Michael Donovan

Absent: Matthew Deveau, Bradley Baker

Public Meeting

Request for Certificate of Compliance (DEP File # 316-0765)

Applicant: Nick Abruzzi, City of Waltham Recreation Department

Property Location: 314 Totten Pond Road

Peter Hedlund appeared for the applicant. Project is essentially complete except for some minor work. City will possibly open it to the public next week for Veterans Day. The landscaping work has held up well in recent heavy rains. The Commission has made a site visit [Mr. Donovan]. They have planted 49 new trees, 416 new shrubs and grasses, thousands of other plantings. Reduced impervious area by 7%. Storm water is now all being treated before flowing into the stream, which was not the case previously. There is a new pavilion. Mr. Hedlund credits the Commission with the suggestion to move the pavilion to a location that works much better than in the original plan. There are new sidewalks and better parking without losing any spaces. He is very happy with it, as is the Rec. Department. The contractor, Green Acres, has done a very good job. Mr. Donovan concurred based on his site visit. Mr. Dufromont has also visited and agrees. Mr. Doyle asked for clarification regarding any remaining work and whether this request is for a partial or full COC. Mr. Hedlund confirmed that the remaining work does not involve any of the conditions issued by the Commission. Mr. Moser asked about the stabilization of the ground and seeding, and whether erosion controls are still in place. Mr. Hedlund stated that the seeding is in place and stabilized. He noted that this is a good time of year to open, as there will be less traffic on the grass. The contractor will also reseed in the spring. Erosion controls are still in place, but he plans to remove them as soon as the Commission allows. Mr. Donovan asked about scouring around the catch basin in recent rains. Mr. Hedlund believes this has mostly filled in and will be reseeded; there is a 1-year warranty on all plantings. Mr. Donovan suggested leaving the filter fabric in place in this area for now. He also asked after the fence along Totten Pond Road suggested by the Mayor, to prevent rink traffic from trampling plantings. Mr. Hedlund said that this is quite expensive and that Mr. Abruzzi is looking into this, and that if it happens it will be in the spring. Mr. Donovan also asked about the snow tube hill work. Mr. Hedlund noted that the work done in that area to date was based on the plans, but that future work might be done to accommodate this, per discussions with the Mayor. The ground there will need to be

Approved 11-18-2021

stabilized before any additional clearing is done. Mr. Moser asked about a clogged pipe noted during an early site visit. Mr. Hedlund informed the commission that site work revealed that there was no drainage structure in that location, only a concrete pad probably left over from when the area was used for skiing. What appeared to be drainage was actually just a debris pile on top of the pad. Mr. Doyle moved to grant a certificate of compliance. Mr. Donovan seconded. All present voted in favor.

Motion passed.

Mr. Moser congratulated and thanked Mr. Hedlund for doing excellent work on a difficult project. Mr. Hedlund noted that early input by the commission proved extremely valuable in this project and thanked them for their involvement.

Commission Business

- Approval of meeting minutes from 10-21-2021. Motion to approve by Mr. Dufromont, seconded by Mr. Donovan. All present in favor. **Minutes approved.**
- Storer Conservation Land Encroachment. Mr. Moser reported that the mayor has set aside some additional money for surveying and marking the property. The legal department has not yet reported on all questions.
- Baby tree locations update. The Commission has ordered tags for labelling trees.
- Fernald Stream Daylighting project update (DEP 316-0748). Mr. Moser reported that the city has put this project out to bid. The Mayor has asked the Commission to assign a member as a project representative, similar to what Mr. Doyle has done on the new high school project. Mr. Doyle volunteered to take on the same role for this project. Mr. Dufromont offered to step in as a backup.

Correspondence

- Informational: Catch basin cleaning and other storm water maintenance at 187 Lexington Street this week (DEP 316-0541). A report will be sent when work has been completed. Notification and reporting are conditions of the COC.
- Informational: DCR has contacted the Commission with early notification of a major invasive species control project in the Charles River (affecting Watertown, Newton, Waltham, Weston). Filing is expected in a few months with work to begin July 2022.
- Informational: Ale Echandi from DCR informed the Commission that they are doing Buckthorn Management in Beaver Brook Reservation this week (11/3).
- Informational: Nick Skoly of VHB sent an update on 180 Third Ave and offered to arrange a site visit if the Commission wants one. Project does not seem to be in jurisdiction but might have appeared before the Commission as an RDA some time ago. Mr. Skoly may have made this offer as a courtesy.

Old Business

- Remote vs. in-person meetings. At the 6-24-21 meeting the Commission voted to revisit this item at the 11-4-21 meeting. Current state rules allow fully remote meetings to continue until April 1, 2022. The Commission office has booked the basement meeting room for all scheduled meeting dates in 2022, with the expectation that meetings prior to April 1 will be remote and those room reservations will be cancelled. The Commission agreed to continue with the previously voted-on policy of remote-only meetings until April 1.

Site Visit Reports

- New High School. Mr. Doyle visited to see how the vegetation is coming in. Things look good and the ongoing work is not near the plantings, so they should be able to grow undisturbed as the project continues. Erosion controls will be left in place until spring.

- Mokema Woods. Mr. Moser has visited and finds nothing different since the previous visit. The landscape architect agrees with this assessment. The contractor, Green Acres, will reseed and will return in the spring to replace dead trees and shrubs. Erosion controls will remain in place and the request for a certificate of compliance will be made in the spring.

Committee Reports

- **CPC:** Next meeting is November 16, 2021. No new report.

New Business

- Mr. Moser reported that the Commission has received an application for the conservation agent position. He will be interviewing them tomorrow (11/5). He noted that the candidate seems well qualified and offered to involve other commissioners if they are interested.
- Mr. Moser summarized his appearance before the city council earlier this week regarding potential land purchases using the conservation trust fund. Two Councilors offered suggestions. Another raised concerns about discussing land purchases publicly without first approaching owners. A list will be compiled of these parcels for review. We will have the assessor's office research whether parcels have outstanding taxes and thus might be easier to acquire.
- Mr. Dufromont asked if there have been any updates on the collapsed building on Moody Street [220-26 Moody Street]. There has been no action by the Commission since rescinding the Emergency Certification on 10/13/21. The building appears to have had some minor work done for stabilization or to prevent trespassing.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Donovan. All present in favor. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.