



**Waltham Conservation Commission
November 3, 2022
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 7:01 PM.

Attendees: Chair Philip Moser, Vice Chair Bill Doyle, Gerard Dufromont, Michael Donovan, Bradley Baker, Alexander Sbordone.

Absent: Louis Andrews.

Public Hearing

Notice of Intent (DEP File # 316-0812) (Continued from 10-20-2022)

Applicant: Keir Evans – 1265 Main Street LLC C/O Boston Properties

Property Location: 1265 Main Street

Project Description: Development at 1265 Main Street. Phase I consists of 270,000 sq.ft. of lab/office space, two amenity buildings totaling 22,400 GSF, 685 surface parking spaces, access drives, utility improvements, ancillary landscape/pedestrian improvements, and site preparation for anticipated future development.

Applicant has requested a continuance. They are still resolving Zone A concerns with DEP and Cambridge Water Department. Motion to continue by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Baker. **Motion passed.**

Public Hearing

Notice of Intent (DEP File # 316-0813)

Applicant: Gerald Autler – Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Property Location: 123 R & 139 Moody Street, 71 AFT & 71 ADJ Felton Street.

Project Description: Improvements to an existing 0.58 mile section of the Charles River Greenway in Waltham located on the north side of the Charles River within the Charles River Reservation between Prospect Street and Moody Street. Activities include the reconstruction of the shared-use path, an improved road crossing, replacement of benches, landscape plantings, landscape amenities, stormwater management, and invasive species management. The activities are located in Riverfront Area, Bordering Land Subject to Flooding, and/or 100-foot Buffer Zone.

Gerald Autler of DCR introduced the project. Aleece D'Onofrio of Stantec and Andrea Kendall of LEC were also present. This began as a repair project but has evolved into "a generational investment in this important property." He noted the recent "unfortunate events" in the area [there have been 2 or 3 assaults reported in recent weeks]. Ms. Kendall presented specific information on current site conditions and planned improvements. She highlighted specific areas. Work will include bench

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refurbishment or replacement, new crosswalks, some bank stabilization and restoration, reseeding and replanting, and fence removal and replacement. Some vegetation removal will be done, including invasive species. The trail will be elevated slightly in a small number of places to accommodate tree roots. A new bio-retention area will be built for flood storage in an area that is currently lawn. New native shrubs will be planted; no trees will be removed. The Moody Street entrance will have pavers removed and the sharp turn and slope will be changed. She noted soil contamination on former Nova Biomedical property, which will be managed by a licensed professional.

Mr. Dufromont raised the issue of lighting based on the recent incidents. Mr. Autler noted that as a conservation property, lighting is not normally installed. No similar property has lighting. Mr. Moser asked if the property has official open hours; Mr. Autler stated that it does not and has open access at all times.

Mr. Doyle asked specifically about the Moody Street entrance hazards and ADA compliance. Ms. D'Onofrio clarified the new plan details and noted that it will be ADA compliant. Mr. Doyle also pointed to erosion around the drain pipe near Prospect Street where several feet have eroded in recent years. Discussion of causes and how to protect from future erosion or restore bank. The pipe is owned by Nova Biomedical and drains the parking area. Mr. Donovan noted that the 4th of July fireworks will now be in this area, so it will see very heavy use at that time, including booths at the Moody Street end. The durability of landscaping in that area was discussed. Mr. Baker asked about the pruning of trees on the northern edge, which would improve lighting without needing to install new. Ms. D'Onofrio said some work will be done. Mr. Moser noted the balance between conservation goals and the heavy downtown use of this space. He noted he is in favor of allowing a durable repair to the drain pipe to prevent erosion. He agreed with the concerns about the landscaping durability. He also would like more information on invasive management. He noted that this parcel is not really a functioning ecosystem, so he is not opposed to improvement work which would not normally be favored by the commission. Ms. D'Onofrio is working with DCR so that invasive treatment practices would be in line with the existing DCR management plan. Volunteer efforts were noted. View clearance and riverbank concerns were noted. There was a brief discussion of river access points, regarding access (for fishing, etc.) and bank damage/stabilization. Mr. Moser opened the hearing for public comment.

Kumi Wauthier spoke. She was assaulted on the property recently. She appreciated the work being proposed and noted the high traffic and the need for safety measures. She also asked about long-term conservation efforts and about funding for lighting. Mr. Autler addressed lighting and other issues and will review with DCR. He noted the cost of this project has grown, but there is no final estimate. He views this project as a once-in-a-generation investment and if there is a compelling argument for lighting it should be included. He feels that Waltham has very good partners for long-term maintenance.

Chris Hammer spoke. He echoed lighting concerns and asked about the ability of the public to view the plans. He spoke as a member of the public with concerns specific to cycling. Mr. Dufromont asked if solar lighting might be an option, to minimize electrical wires, etc.

Mayor McCarthy spoke and expressed safety concerns. She supports this project and noted city involvement. She raised the idea of a safety call box. She noted that the more beautiful the property, the more people will come. She thanked those involved for their efforts.

Mr. Hammer commented on the misalignment of the crosswalks and entrances on both sides. The mayor clarified that the city plans to fix this as part of the project, and that the new crosswalk signals will be solar powered.

Mr. Moser suggested a site visit, which was scheduled for 11/10, 9 AM. This will be open to the public.

Motion to continue by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Dufromont. **Motion passed.**

Commission Business

- Approval of meeting minutes from 10-20-2022. Motion to approve by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Mr. Doyle. All present in favor. **Motion passed.**
- Storer Conservation Land Encroachment. Mr. Moser reported recent correspondence with the city engineering department regarding the granite markers. Permission of abutters is needed. Engineering is working on this with the law department. Mr. Moser also confirmed that the letter requested by the abutter at 711 Beaver Street has been sent.

Correspondence

- Regarding Azalea Road, Mr. Dufromont reported that he has asked the city engineer to include ConCom if the mosquito control people make a visit. Some discussion of site conditions.
- Discussion of resolution of 143 / 147 Riverview Ave reported potential violation. Address was incorrect and the work was properly permitted.
- Upcoming exempt Boston Gas / National Grid work noted.

Old Business

- Mr. Doyle noted that 326 Lexington Street has been subdivided. Discussion of applying the issued conditions to all involved lots, old and new, other concerns.

Site Visit Reports

- Paine Estate: pine tree to be removed by tree warden. Mr. Donovan reported on a visit and showed photos. Commission agreed that the tree cannot be saved and it is a safety issue. Approved of removal by tree warden. Recommended he also remove any invasive Ailanthus along the route used by the removal equipment.

Committee Reports

- **CPC:** Next meeting is November 22, 2022. Mr. Doyle noted the last major item before the CPC was a review of properties around Hardy Pond which might be purchasable with CPA funds.

New Business

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.