



**Waltham Conservation Commission
February 8, 2018
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Bill Doyle, Brad Baker, Mike Donovan, Gerard Dufromont, Vice Chairman Philip Moser (arrived at 7:03 p.m.)

Absent: None

Public Meeting

Request for Extension (DEP File # 316-0653)

Applicant: Boston Properties Limited Partnership

Property Location: 470, 484 and 504 Totten Pond Road

Nick Skoly, VHB, is requesting an extension. They received an Order of Conditions in 2012. The project was permitted into two phases. The building of the first phase was constructed (Wolverine is in the building). They recently started construction of the second phase on the second building. The current order expires in June 2018 and they would like to request a three-year extension to finish the construction of the second phase.

Mr. Donovan asked if there will be any modifications to phase II, either to the building or the retention area in the back. Mr. Skoly replied that all of the stormwater improvements were installed as part of phase I. For the second building, it will be installed in the existing parking lot. There are two pipes that come out and the roof drain ties into the existing manhole. He noted that after the Order of Conditions was issued, the Engineering Dept. requested that during phase II the pipe from this property to The Naked Fish wetland be cleaned out.

Motion made by Mr. Dufromont to issue a three-year extension beginning June 24, 2018, seconded by Mr. Baker. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Informal Discussions

- Extension of Lexington Street, sewer project Order of Conditions (Steve Casazza)
- Discussion of Paine Estate sewer service replacement (Steve Casazza)

Mr. Casazza did not appear at the meeting. Mr. Dufromont noted that the sewer work is already taking place at Paine Estate.

Public Meeting (Continued from 1-25-2018)

Request for Certificate of Compliance (DEP File # 316-0689)

Applicant: Robert Farrington/Windsor Village at Waltham Co.

Property Location: 976 Lexington Street

Motion made by Mr. Moser to continue until the next meeting, seconded by Mr. Donovan. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Commission Business

- Motion made by Mr. Moser to approve the meeting minutes from 1-25-2018, seconded by Mr. Baker. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Correspondence

Approved 3-8-2018

Old Business

Mr. Doyle

- No updates

Mr. Baker

- **Paine Estate planting:** Mr. Baker gave a handout of the parking area at Paine Estate to each of the commission members. He stated that the native garden model has 24-30 native perennials growing. There is a leaf compost. There was a 275-gallon water tank – which has now been removed – which allowed the perennials to be watered. The water tank will not be put back to water those particular perennials because they have now rooted. He noted that the Meadowsclaping for Biodiversity group used the tarps to smother the poison ivy patch. He said that a snake was living underneath the tarps, therefore eliminating rodents and mice. Mr. Baker handed out laminated signs that the meadowsclaping group and he would like to put near the perennials that are now growing there to continue their educational program. Mr. Donovan asked if the signs would be put on stakes. Mr. Baker said he usually puts them on wire and into the ground. Mr. Doyle asked how to keep the deer, etc. away from eating the perennials. Mr. Baker said historically, they have would have used a fence, but he feels they should instead keep the area as natural as possible. Mr. Moser noted that the signs most likely won't hold up after a year. Once they take them down, the commission should decide if they want permanent signage or if the area is well-established, the perennials are recognizable. Mr. Baker is hoping that in another year, the native garden will be so full it will be self-evident. Mr. Doyle suggested putting Mr. Baker's signs on wooden landscape stakes and putting them around the perimeter. He will put them up in early spring and they will remain in place throughout the summer. He would also like a sign with a narration explaining what's going on there stating that the plantings were approved by the Waltham Conservation Commission. The signs are there to a) identify what they are; b) educate the public; c) make sure the plants don't get mowed down. Mr. Dufromont asked why Mr. Baker feels the plants won't need to be watered this year. Mr. Baker stated that after a year in the ground, their root system is established. Mr. Dufromont asked what Mr. Baker suggests growing to keep the poison ivy down. Mr. Baker feels a tree nursery should be put in there temporarily. At some point they would be removed to another spot. He wants the commission to decide what they want established in that space. Mr. Moser suggested seeding the area with wildflowers.

Mr. Dufromont

- No updates

Mr. Moser

- **Lazazzero Playground:** Mr. Moser noted this is on the agenda because they had an infestation of Japanese knotweed taking over the shore of Hardy Pond. He has been working with the new Rec. Dept. Director, Nick Abruzzi. Mr. Abruzzi is having the Japanese knotweed weed wacked down to the ground. Mr. Moser has noticed that in the absence of vegetation along that part of the shoreline, it is encouraging people to trample through there and there is some erosion. The commission should come up with a plan to address this. He suggested restoration plantings and pedestrian control to encourage people to stay on the path. Mr. Baker stated that they must make an all-effort to eliminate the Japanese knotweed. Once the knotweed is eliminated then the second phase can start. Mr. Baker will meet with Mr. Moser to look at the area so that at some point, he will approach the Rec. Dept. Mr. Baker would like the commission to be the leadership to try to get rid of the invasives. Mr. Doyle noted that the commission needs to determine the process of how to get the money and how to make it happen. Mr. Moser wants to speed up the process of getting rid of the knotweed and then move onto the restoration phase.
- Mr. Moser asked Julie to add "Multi-family residential properties" to his old business.

Mr. Donovan

- **Totten Pond Road Project:** Mr. Donovan was hoping to speak with Steve Casazza at tonight's meeting, but Mr. Casazza was unable to attend. Mr. Dufromont suggested asking Mr. Casazza to attend one of the commission's meetings next month.

Committee Reports

- **CPC:** Mr. Dufromont noted that Graverson Playground and Elsie Turner Park were both approved for \$3 million each earlier this week. Work should begin in the late spring. The MacArthur School was also approved for a new playground. The PTO raised \$80,000 on their own. Mr. Dufromont was very pleased with their presentation. They will be given \$608,000 of CPA funds. They are 100 ft. away from the wetlands. The mayor requested \$90,000 for a historical review of City Hall, which was built in the early 1900s. There is a need to fix the roof, the front stairs, and replace all of the windows. The request now goes to City Council who sends it to a committee. The committee sends it back for a full vote from City Council.
- **Trust Fund:** No updates

Site visit reports

- None

New Business

- **Approval of the Conservation Commission's Special Order of Conditions Revisions:** Mr. Moser noted that the commission received comments from the Cambridge Water Department. He stated that many of the items they propose are already in DEP's standard conditions. He has incorporated their other changes into the document that aren't covered elsewhere. Mr. Moser drafted an additional condition #27 to give to properties within the water shed. He suggested having the commission look over the changes and vote on it at the next meeting. Mr. Doyle asked Julie to edit section 4 of the filing instructions on the commission's website and add: "For projects located within the Cambridge surface water supply watershed, Cambridge Water Department staff are granted access to the site for inspection purposes, both during construction and in perpetuity".
- **Paine Estate Limited Research Initiative Experimental Plots Discussion:** Mr. Baker referred to his handout that he gave the commission members. He is hoping to head a research initiative this year.
 - 1) Baby hemlocks: Within the next week or two, he hopes to take pictures of each hemlock for the GIS tracking system. In the following week or two, he hopes to spray horticultural oil on the baby hemlocks to get them into better condition. The commission has approved this work. Mr. Baker spoke with the city's tree warden, Kevin Thompson, and he approves of this and he will help put together the horticultural spray and put it into the tanks. They need to spray the mites during the crawler stage. Mr. Thompson is unable to monitor when the crawler stage happens, but Mr. Baker and his volunteers are able to do so.
 - 2) Mr. Baker asked: Where the poison ivy was killed, what will we put in its place? He will ask the Meadowscaaping for Biodiversity group for spare seeds. Possibly, they will plant baby trees (i.e., hazelnut and chestnut). He suggested using leaf compost in the area.
 - 3) Wisteria at the old Storer house. The time to cut off the wisteria without ground erosion is when the ground is frozen without any snow. It's a colony system: You have to starve the entire plant. Mr. Thompson is able to get a bulldozer to the site. Mr. Doyle asked if Mr. Baker can delineate the area with flags prior to getting the machine. He replied that he can tape it off. Mr. Doyle suggested that Mr. Baker type up a proposal for removing the wisteria with pictures of the flagged area for the commission to vote on and approve at the next meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Moser to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Baker. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.