

Natick Conservation Commission
June 22, 2023

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Chairman, Matthew Gardner. Members present: Mike Downey, Jeff Richards, David Howe, Doug Shepard. Members absent: Chris Stillman, George Bain

Major Stormwater Permit (continuation) – 21 Park Avenue

Applicant has reworked the project and now falls under the minor permit threshold. They are refilling and a withdrawal request has been filed.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to accept the withdrawal, Jeff Richards moved, Mike Downey seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Certificate of Compliance – DEP File #233-651 – 228-230 Pond Street

Project approval was for a parking lot reconstruction. The applicant never moved forward with the work and is requesting a Certificate of Compliance for work never initiated.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to accept the withdrawal, Jeff Richards moved, Mike Downey seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Request for Determination of Applicability (continuation) – 8 Crest Road

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to continue to July 13th, David Howe moved, Mike Downey seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Request for Determination of Applicability – 21 Glen Street

The meeting for this request was opened at the prior meeting but the project representative was not able to attend. The request is for the clearing of vegetation for lawn and installation of riprap.

Dan Brown gave an overview of the proposed work. No regrading is proposed below the existing stone retaining structure, just clearing and adding lawn. The existing stone structure will be raised about 12-18 inches and fill will be added in behind the wall to level out the lawn around the deck.

Matt asked how the invasive species will be managed. Dan would move forward with the recommendations of the landscape company. Matt requested a condition be adding regarding the potential use of herbicides. Claire suggested a meeting with the landscaper prior to any work to discuss what is and is not allowed.

Claire showed some photos of the site.

Matt asked about how the limit of clearing will be marked? The surveyor added flags at the 25' no disturb zone line, and Dan feels those would be sufficient notice to future owners. Claire asked if Dan would comfortable installing the placards along the 25' line as a more permanent demarcation. Dan had no issue with this.

Claire showed some photos of the vegetated berm that was required to install as part of the house close out. The entire berm is growing vegetation, along with the planted shrubs.

Ben King, 19 Glen Street, voiced his concerns about water being directed onto his property with the additional fill. He was also concerned about herbicide use impacting the bees he keeps on his property. Based on what is proposed, there should be no impact but Claire encouraged Ben to reach out if after work occurs there are any issues.

Jessica Wallace, 23 Glen Street, voiced concerns about drainage issues. She still has issues with the vegetated berm causing erosion along her garden edge beds. She is not confident in the subs hired by the developer. She does not want any impacts to her property.

The Commission asked if irrigation is proposed for the new lawn area. Dan said if he is allowed he would like to do so. Claire has concerns about irrigation in this area resulting in more disturbance and potential runoff issues onto abutting properties. Matt agrees that for this small area it is not necessary.

Mike wanted to voice concerns about the stepwise approach to getting work approved on the lot. He wants to be sure that there is a lot of involvement with staff.

Claire ran through the conditions for the permit.

Matt Gardner asked for a motion to close, Mike Downey moved, Doug Shepard seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to issue a Negative 3 determination with conditions related to meeting with staff prior to herbicide application, erosion controls, and demarcation plaques, Chris Stillman moved, Mike Downey seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Request for Determination of Applicability – 13 Pamela Road

Mr. Gardner read public meeting notice. The applicant has requested a continuation while they determine with the Building Commission if the project can move forward as proposed.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to continue to 7/13, David Howe moved, Mike Downey seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Major Stormwater Permit – 3 Dean Road

Matt Gardner read public hearing notice. The request is the demo of the existing building and parking area and construction of a new lab building with reduced parking.

Joe Losanno, DGT Associates, is the project engineer gave an overview of the project. The proposed project will result in a reduction in impervious area and a substantial stormwater management system. He noted that they worked closely with the Town Engineer in designing the system.

Matt noted that this project is a clear improvement from prior conditions, and Claire stated the reduction numbers are very impressive.

Jeff noted this site was in the APD and asked if we needed to do a letter on this issue for the Planning Board. The Commission noted that they are fine with Claire drafting a letter on behalf of the Commission when that request comes in.

The project is currently in front of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for review.

Claire noted one potential issue on the planting plan with species that when planted together can result in fungal infections. The team noted they'd be happy to change that at the recommendation of staff.

In order to reduce the potential for needing to reopen the public hearing, Matt recommended continuing to the next meeting. The applicant was fine with this.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to continue to 7/13, Mike Downey moved, Jeff Richards seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Major Stormwater Permit – 0 Magnolia Road

Matt Gardner read public hearing notice. The proposal is for the construction of a new roadway, 3 single-family homes with associated site hardscaping, landscaping and drainage.

George Connors, the project engineer, was in attendance and gave an overview of the site history and the proposed project. There are individual systems to manage the roof runoff and a larger system to manage the runoff from the roadway. The comments from staff were received but the changes were not able to be made prior to the meeting.

There is an outstanding violation for the site from a previous owner that needs to be addressed. George thought a site meeting would be helpful to determine the scale of what the Commission is looking for in terms of mitigation plantings.

The Commission reviewed the overflow for the stormwater system proposed for the roadway. The system can manage fully the 25-year storm, and will have minor overflows during the 100-year storm. Engineering has requested an increase in the length of riprap at the outlet to further reduce erosion risks.

Mike recalled some concerns about buried materials on the site associated with the prior owner. Claire noted that we can include a condition about notification regarding unusual materials that may require additional review or permitting to dispose of. Mike recalls it would likely be on Lot 2 near the old house. Kerry Wu, owner, noted that the Planning Board recalled a potential oil tank buried on the lot. He is happy to notify the appropriate departments and dispose of properly.

The Commission scheduled a site visit for 6/28/23 at 6pm.

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to continue to 7/13, Mike Downey moved, Jeff Richards seconded, all in favor 5-0.

Minutes

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to approve the April 6th and April 20th minutes, Jeff Richards moved, David Howe seconded, 5-0.

General Business Discussion

Dog Park Policies for Enforcement

Kim Condor and Kelly McPherson were both in attendance. As there was a bite incident this summer with an unregistered and unvaccinated dog, should the Commission consider an enforcement policy? Kim stated that there is difficulty with enforcement because there isn't an every day presence at the park.

Claire will reach out the Animal Control Officer, Peter Cunningham, to find out more information about current procedures and if a policy would be helpful. An agenda item will be placed on a future agenda to review and discuss a draft policy.

August Meeting Date

Matt will be out of Town on 8/17 and requests that we shift the date. Everyone agreed to shift the meeting to 8/24/23.

Updates for C.E.D.

Revised job descriptions for the Transportation and Economic Development Planner and Associate Planner were approved by the Personnel Board and have been posted. We have received a number of applications for these positions. Claire's job was also retitled as the Conservation Agent and Environmental Planner (previously Conservation Agent and Open Space Planner).

Grants

Claire gave a quick update of grant close-outs for FY23.

CRFM – concept designs include large chambers under the athletic fields and a constructed wetland at the maintenance yard across the street.

Tiny Forest – irrigation consultant was on site earlier that day to review the transition to drip irrigation. May need to push planting to spring if plant material is not available. Soil testing results were much better than expected for nutrient loads and microbiome/fungal presence.

SuAsCo – deliverables have been received!

MS4 – tool developed for green infrastructure siting. Great in combination with the CRFM and the SuAsCo project concepts.

DCR UCF – have been awarded the Urban and Community Forestry Grant and waiting on contracts.

Windy Lo

Police report filed by 318 Eliot Street owner. Claire responded during storm and it did not appear any sediment leaving the site. Water in basin was cloudy but not overtopping.

Tiny Forest

Mike asked if the consultant would be able to give a presentation about the Tiny Forest method and high school project at a future meeting. Claire will get it on the schedule!

Meeting adjourned at 8:32pm.