

CITY OF NORWALK
CONSERVATION COMMISSION/INLAND WETLAND AGENCY MINUTES
FEBRUARY 11, 2025

PRESENT: Commissioner Steve Klocke, Chair; Cheryl Brown; Paul Vinett; Ed Holowinko; Kathryn Knight (after roll call)

STAFF: Alexis Cherichetti; Amelia Williams

OTHERS: Ed Lyons; Kate Throckmorton; Brian Carey

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Klocke called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. It should be noted that this meeting was held on Zoom.com with all participants calling in, separately.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Cherichetti called the roll.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public that spoke.

IV. RECEIPT & DISCUSSION

A. #S25-651 - Strathmore Lane Condominium - The Property Group - Removal of a paddle tennis court within a wetland

Alexis Cherichetti began the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. She also noted that this application could not be handled administratively due to the location of proposed work within the wetland. She also showed them a map of the Strathmore Lane Condo complex. She noted that getting to the paddle tennis court would be difficult, but she did show them how it would be accessed on the map of the complex. She also discussed proposed plantings.

Ed Lyons continued the presentation by noting that the court had been in disrepair for over 20 years. The condo complex wanted to remove it since no one played on it.

Ms. Cherichetti explained how the court would be removed. She said that no erosion controls were necessary. A decision on this application would be made at the commission's next meeting.

B. #S25-652 - 143-145 West Norwalk Road - Environmental Land Solutions, LLC - Corrective Action restoration of wetland and watercourse buffer area

Amelia Williams began the presentation by noting that there had been a presentation at a prior meeting when the commissioners had upheld an order. She then oriented the commissioners

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as to the location of both properties on an aerial map. She noted that the property owner had been cited for unauthorized site work. She also discussed the limit of lawn and showed them this on the aerial map.

Kate Throckmorton continued the presentation by orienting the commissioners as to the location of the properties on the west side of West Norwalk Road. She discussed the rear lot which had been developed in 2012. The current owner owns both lots and discussed the rear lots. She described the debris which can be removed. She then discussed a second area where debris would be removed. She also described an open lawn area between the two properties. She said that the conservation staff had okayed some activities on the property over recent years. She said that she would like approval for the vegetable garden as well as some other areas. She described the four mitigation action areas.

There was further discussion about the vegetable garden and the wood storage area. Ms. Cherichetti noted that the vegetable garden has been there for a long time. Mr. Klocke asked the staff to draft a resolution for the next meeting.

V. DISCUSSION &/OR DECISION

A. #S24-645 - 36 Range Road - Anderson - Corrective Action grading, filling and landscaping within and adjacent to a wetland and a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti began the presentation with an explanation of how the corrective action process would continue. She said that she had also provided them with a draft resolution.

Ms. Knight asked for modifications to the draft resolution as she did not want to set bad precedent. At this point, there was a review of the draft resolution. There was a discussion about the treehouse and when it had been added to the property. There was also a discussion about mowing of the meadow area. There was a discussion about the proposed plantings.

***** MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT RESOLUTION AS AMENDED.**

***** MR. VINETT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

***** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; PAUL VINETT; ED HOLOWINKO; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.**

***** NO ONE OPPOSED THE MOTION.**

***** NO ONE ABSTAINED.**

At this point, there was still time left before the public hearings were to be heard at 7 pm.

***** MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO AMEND THE AGENDA AND BEGIN WITH THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES.**

***** MS. BROWN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

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*** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; PAUL VINETT; ED HOLOWINKO; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.
*** NO ONE OPPOSED THE MOTION.
*** NO ONE ABSTAINED.

VI. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES.

A. January 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

*** MS. BROWN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING.
*** MR. VINETT SECONDED THE MOTION.
*** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; PAUL VINETT; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.
*** NO ONE OPPOSED THE MOTION.
*** ED HOLOWINKO ABSTAINED.

B. January 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes

*** MS. BROWN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 28, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING.
*** MR. VINETT SECONDED THE MOTION.
*** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; PAUL VINETT; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.
*** NO ONE OPPOSED THE MOTION.
*** ED HOLOWINKO ABSTAINED.

VII. CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

There was a discussion about a conference in March which Ms. Knight said she had attended in the past. However, she would not be able to attend this one. Ms. Cherichetti said that she would be attending with Ms. Williams.

VIII. REPORTS

A. Commission Chair

There was no report from Mr. Klocke.

B. Senior Environmental Officer

There was no report from Ms. Cherichetti.

At this point, it was decided to take a recess until the public hearings started at 7 pm.

IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS (BEGINS AT 7:00 P.M.)

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A. #S24-648 - 284 New Canaan Avenue - LandTech for Penna Construction - Corrective Action clearing in and adjacent to wetlands and a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said that they were returning to the public hearing opened during their January 28, 2025 meeting. She showed them photos of the site in the area where trees had been cut and confirmed the stumps were still there.

There was a discussion as to why the woodland was cleared. Brian Carey said that there had been some confusion as to what had been approved. Ms. Cherichetti showed them the site plan with the active yard area. She also said that there is a replanting plan. She noted that the second application would be for the establishment of the contractor's yard. There had been a request for more evergreens to be planted. Ms. Cherichetti explained how public comment would work. Mr. Klocke said that they would open the meeting up for public comment.

Peter Wilson made comments about the stumps and the acoustical wall. He also asked about a condition of the initial approval.

*** **MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR #S24-648.**

*** **MR. VINETT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

*** **STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; PAUL VINETT; ED HOLOWINKO; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.**

*** **NO ONE OPPOSED THE MOTION.**

*** **NO ONE ABSTAINED.**

B. #S16-499B - 284 New Canaan Avenue - LandTech for Penna Construction - Corrective Action permit modification to expand extent of previously approved contractor's yard

Ms. Cherichetti stated this was a re-opening the public hearing opened during the previous meeting. She provided a summary of the staff information that she had posted, including previously-approved permits and site plans from 2016 and 2018 and recent site photos of the area.

Brian Carey continued the presentation by noting that he would like to request a continuation of the hearing to the next meeting. He is waiting for comments from the city's engineer. They are working with the neighbors to mitigate the noise. He said that they were working to address violations of both the 2016 and 2018 permits. He said that he thinks that the date could be extended to April. He said that they would also have to go before the Planning & Zoning Commission. Ms. Cherichetti said that another reason for the delay was because the commission would like a third party to review the application. She also asked that the applicant remit the third-party fee as soon as possible.

There was a discussion about the third-party consultant and what would be helpful to have reviewed. There was also a discussion about what would happen if the application was denied.

There was a discussion about the next time the applicant appears before the commission. It was agreed that it would be at the February 25, 2025 meeting.

Mr. Klocke said that this public hearing would not be closed. Ms. Cherichetti noted that the public would be allowed to comment at the next meeting.

X. DISCUSSION &/OR DECISION II

A. #S24-648 - 284 New Canaan Avenue - LandTech for Penna Construction - Corrective Action clearing in and adjacent to wetlands and a watercourse

There was no vote as staff would be drafting a resolution.

B. #S16-499B - 284 New Canaan Avenue - LandTech for Penna Construction - Corrective Action permit modification to expand extent of previously approved contractor's yard

Since the public hearing was still open, there was no discussion.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

*** MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
*** MS. KNIGHT SECONDED THE MOTION.
*** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero