

CITY OF NORWALK
CONSERVATION COMMISSION/INLAND WETLAND AGENCY
August 9, 2022

PRESENT: Steven Klocke, Chair; Cheryl Brown; Matt Merluzzi; John Moeling; Matt Pentz; Jennifer Balliett; Kathryn Knight (arrived after roll call)

STAFF: Alexis Cherichetti; Amelia Williams

OTHERS: Vincent Hynes; Eric Rains; Vanessa Valadares;

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Klocke called the meeting to order at 6:00 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. MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Klocke said that he had not prepared a formal statement yet. However, he read from the Inlands Wetlands Commission Land Use Academy Guide from which he would start the draft.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public made comments.

V. RECEIPT & DISCUSSION

a) #S22-606 – 32 Knight Street – 32 Knight Street Property, LLC – Partial demolition of building and installation of new parking lot and associated stormwater management adjacent to a watercourse

Amelia Williams gave a brief introduction. She then instructed Vincent Hynes, the engineer on the project, to share his screen to begin the presentation. Mr. Hynes introduced the project team. He then gave a brief overview of the project and showed them the landscape plan. He then oriented the commissioners as to the location of the property on an aerial map. He then noted where the watercourse entered the property. He noted that they were increasing visibility of the watercourse by taking back the building. He showed them the existing conditions on the property. He discussed the current stormwater management. There is no

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water quality treatment. He then discussed the proposed project in detail. They will be reducing impervious conditions. He briefly discussed the proposed stormwater management plan which would include a rain garden. There was a discussion about the water coming from the roof of the building as well as where snow would be piled. Mr. Hynes said he would speak with the applicant about their snow removal protocols.

Eric Rains, the landscape architect, discussed the landscaping that is being proposed. He then discussed the rain garden as an amenity to employees or visitors to the site. He also discussed the plantings for the rain garden. There was a discussion about a similar rain garden in Bruck Park in Greenwich. There was a discussion about a part of the building being close to the brook.

Mr. Hynes said that there is a concurrent application with Planning and Zoning, as well as department approvals and referrals. Mr. Moeling noted that some of the commissioners would probably like to walk the property. He also said he was not sure of the benefits of the rain garden.

There was then a discussion about the next meeting. Ms. Cherichetti said it would be September 13. Mr. Klocke had some comments about the lighting, as well as on one of the reports submitted, along with the staff's memo. Mr. Rains said that he would coordinate with staff regarding the suggestions and comments.

b) #S22-607 – Cannon Street at Betts Pond Brook – Norwalk Department of Public Works – Construction of a retaining wall and reinforcement of bridge parapets in and adjacent to a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said that this was a recent application follow her determination of need for an Agency review. She noted that this application was upstream from the previous application on Betts Pond Brook.

Vanessa Valadares introduced the project team. She explained why they were before the Agency. She noted that the city was responsible for bridges that were less than 20 foot span. They would like to combine two bridge projects into one construction bid. The first bridge at Bonny Brook Road already had an approved Wetland Permit, but this construction would need a permit as well. She then explained the project to the Agency members.

Ms. Cherichetti oriented the Agency members as to the location of the bridge on an aerial map. Ms. Valadares shared site photos. Mr. Sotnik then continued the presentation with an explanation of the photos and what repairs were necessary on the bridge. There was a discussion about an uprooted tree.

Dennis Quinit, the city's consultant, continued the presentation. He noted that the tree had uprooted the embankment. He explained how they would prevent erosion. He said they would regrade the area.

There was a discussion about erosion control, ground cover and potential enhancement with a tree or two. They would add some trees to the top of the embankment. There was also a discussion of the riprap that was proposed.

VI. DISCUSSION &/OR DECISION

a) #S22-599 – 20 Lancaster Drive – Goldman – Dredge pond in and adjacent to a wetland and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said that there was no new information but the applicant had not withdrawn the application. If not, the agency would have to deny the application at their September meeting. She would call the applicant again to encourage him to withdraw the application.

b) #S22-605 - 8 Leslie Lane – Mead - Construction of a retaining wall adjacent to a wetland

Ms. Cherichetti said that she had drafted a resolution which she had provided to the commissioners prior to the meeting.

***** MR. MOELING MADE A MOTION THAT #S22-605 BE GRANTED ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OUTLINED IN STAFF'S MEMORANDUM DATED AUGUST 1, 2022, FOR 8 LESLIE LANE.**

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

***** MOTION PASSED 7-0.**

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Klocke suggested modifying the agenda since there was still approximately 10 minutes left before the public hearings would begin.

***** MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO MOVE THE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES TO BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

***** MR. MOELING SECONDED THE MOTION.**

***** MOTION PASSED 7-0.**

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) July 26, 2022 meeting minutes

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- *** MR. MOELING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES, AS AMENDED.**
- *** MR. PENTZ SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- *** MOTION PASSED, 5-0-2. MS. BALLIETT AND MR. KLOCKE ABSTAINED.**

VIII. DESIGNATION OF AGENT

Ms. Cherichetti explained the process of the administration of approving minor permits under the Inland/Wetlands regulations. She then noted that the Inlands Wetlands Agency could appoint a duly appointed agent. She also noted that there is training from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) that Amelia Williams had completed. She would then be allowed to also approve minor permits, along with Ms. Cherichetti.

***** MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE MS. WILLIAMS TO APPROVE MINOR PERMITS.**

***** MR. MOELING SECONDED THE MOTION.**

***** MOTION PASSED 7-0.**

IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Began at 7:00 p.m.)

Ms. Cherichetti called the roll and explained the notice and the rules of the public hearing.

a) #S22-596 – 75 Witch Lane – FC Engineering LLC – Dredging of existing pond in and adjacent to wetlands and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said that the applicant had sent notices to the abutting neighbors and that the public hearing had been noticed in the Norwalk Hour. She also noted that the commissioners had required an outside review but the review could not be completed prior to tonight's meeting. There was a discussion about how to move this forward. It was noted that they could continue the hearing until the next meeting in September. This item would be continued at the next meeting.

X. CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

There was a discussion about posting wetland permit outreach at news outlets like Nancy on Norwalk. Mr. Moeling said he would reach out to Nancy Chapman, the owner of Nancy on Norwalk. There was a discussion about the objective of the letter.

XI. COMMENTS OF STAFF

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a) Report of the Senior Environmental Officer

Ms. Cherichetti noted that there were no emergency allowances in the Inland Wetland regulations. She used an example of an oil spill in a wetlands area. She then said that there was a letter from a septic installer needs to replace a septic that is failing. She gave a brief description of the proposed application but also suggested serving them with a notice of violation. This would then initiate a notice that a new system had to be installed immediately and apply for a permit. It is on a steep slope in an upland review area. She would advise them to start fixing the failing system. The commissioners agreed to allow that so that the pollution would not continue.

Ms. Cherichetti said that the Planning and Zoning Department had hired one of three new employees at the beginning of the month, with two more hopefully starting on August 22.

XII. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

a) Report of the Commission Chair

Mr. Klocke said he had no report and thanked Ms. Brown for acting as chair at the previous meeting.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

*** **MS. BROWN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.**
*** **MS. BALLIETT SECONDED THE MOTION.**
*** **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero