

CITY OF NORWALK
CONSERVATION COMMISSION/INLAND WETLAND AGENCY
April 25, 2023

PRESENT: Steve Klocke, Chair; Cheryl Brown; Amy Richardson; Kathryn Knight

STAFF: Alexis Cherichetti

OTHERS: Mr. Suarez

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Klocke called the meeting to order at 6:05 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 skipped the mission statement.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public made any comments.

V. RECEIPT & DISCUSSION

Ms. Cherichetti said that this was the longest period of no new applications. She did say that there were new applications coming, but they were not on this evening's agenda.

VI. DISCUSSION &/OR DECISION

a) #S23-613 – 18 Eastwood Road – Suarez – Corrective Action landscaping in and adjacent to a wetland and a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said the applicant had given the Agency a 65-day extension since they were getting close to deadlines to render a decision. She said she had met with Mr. Suarez the previous day. He is still attempting to find a professional to work on a plan for the application. She gave a brief overview of what had been done up until this point in time. He would like to have an invasive management plan and a site plan to show the commissioners. Ms. Cherichetti

said that the May 23 meeting would be the last regular meeting before the deadline on the corrective action. The matter would be on the commission's agenda again on May 9.

b) #S23-616 – 761 Main Avenue – iPark Norwalk II, LLC – Corrective Action landscaping in a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti gave a brief recap of the status of this corrective action. She said she had spoken with the engineer who was working on this. He had said that the report was not ready and she reminded him of the statutory timeline. She said that the May 23 meeting would be the last regular meeting before the deadline on the corrective action.

c) #S19-546B – 10 Willard Road- 10 Willard Road LLC – Modification of Permit to include amendment to culvert inverts, fence location, buffer plantings and removal of vegetation in and adjacent to a wetland and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said that she had spoken with Jason Enters and would be meeting with him the following day. She said she would clarify the easement with him and remind him that he was still responsible for the work on the property. There was a discussion about the conservation easement which Ms. Cherichetti showed the extent of on the site plan. Ms. Knight said it would be helpful to know the state of the area. When this application had been approved, there had been discussions as to what would be allowed in the easement area. There was also a discussion about the shrubbery and invasives taking over. Ms. Cherichetti showed them where the bamboo was planted on the site plan, which is in the upland review area. She said she would bring their comments to Mr. Enters at their meeting.

d) #S23-617 – 16 Fireside Court – Giapoutzis – Corrective Action landscaping in and adjacent to a wetland and a watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti noted that the application had been received at the last commission meeting but that there was no other information beside the application form. She then showed them the proposed planting plan. The property is surrounded by wetlands and there is a watercourse on the east side of the property, as well as a pond on the west side, off the property.

Ms. Cherichetti had done an inspection and explained what she had found. She showed them aerial photos of what the property had looked like and how it looked currently. She also showed them photos on the grounds. She also explained what the applicant is requesting to keep. She said that some of the activity is on the property of 14 Fireside Court so the applicant will need a letter of consent from the owner. She had not received it yet. There was also a discussion about the carport and its use.

Mr. Klocke summarized the outstanding issues. Ms. Knight had concerns about the use of the structure being constructed on the property. She thought it might be a zoning issue.

There was a discussion about the gravel driveway extension on the property. There was also a discussion about how far the pond was from the shed.

VII. BOND RELEASE/REDUCTION REQUESTS

a) #S19-543 – 45 Devils Garden Road – Welte – Release of bond (\$2,345) held for the Corrective Action removal of fill in and adjacent to a wetland and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said she had done an inspection of the property. The plantings had survived so staff was recommending the release of the bond.

MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO RELEASE OF BOND (\$2,345) HELD FOR THE CORRECTIVE ACTION REMOVAL OF FILL IN AND ADJACENT TO A WETLAND AND WATERCOURSE.

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

***** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; AMY RICHARDSON; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.**

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

***** NO ONE ABSTAINED.**

b) #S17-513 – 25 Huckleberry Drive South – Tarala - Release of bond (\$5,985) held for the Corrective Action filling and grading in and adjacent to a wetland and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti said she had done an inspection of the property. The plantings and boulders that had been installed in the wetlands were still there so staff was recommending the release of the bond.

MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO RELEASE OF BOND (\$5,985) HELD FOR THE CORRECTIVE ACTION FILLING AND GRADING IN AND ADJACENT TO A WETLAND AND WATERCOURSE.

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

***** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; AMY RICHARDSON; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.**

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

***** NO ONE ABSTAINED.**

c) #S20-563 – 57 Noah's Lane Extension – Sijuwade – Release of bond (\$8,375) for the installation of on-site septic system, patio, shed, fill and retaining wall, and landscaping in and adjacent to a wetland and watercourse

Ms. Cherichetti showed them an aerial photo of the restored wetlands. She had done an inspection of the property so staff recommended release of the bond after 2 full growing seasons.

MR. KLOCKE MADE A MOTION TO RELEASE OF BOND (\$8,375) HELD FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ON-SITE SEPTIC SYSTEM, PATIO, SHED, FILL AND RETAINING WALL, AND LANDSCAPING IN AND ADJACENT TO A WETLAND AND WATERCOURSE.

***** MS. KNIGHT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

***** STEVE KLOCKE; CHERYL BROWN; AMY RICHARDSON; KATHRYN KNIGHT APPROVED.**

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

***** NO ONE ABSTAINED.**

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES March 28, 2023 meeting minutes

***** MS. BROWN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 28, 2023.**

***** MS. KNIGHT SECONDED THE MOTION.**

***** MOTION PASSED, 3-0.**

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

***** AMY RICHARDSON ABSTAINED.**

IX. CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Mr. Klocke said that Ms. Cherichetti had sent them the link for the proposed citywide zoning regulations. Ms. Cherichetti thought it was a good opportunity for the Conservation Commission to become involved in making comments on the rewrite of the city's zoning regulations. She noted that Mr. Kleppin and Mr. Baker of the Planning & Zoning Department would be hosting public meetings in each Council District to explain the new regulations to the city's residents. She also noted that the current regulations do not have items such as grading and tree removal.

She explained some of the changes in the proposed zoning regulations. She also said that the regulations would include sustainability measures with certain developments such as window glazing. She explained that there is a form on the website so that they could leave comments on the proposed regulations. All comments are anonymous. There was a discussion of the timeline for the approval of the regulations. She noted that there would be a formal public hearing in June. There was also a discussion about surrounding towns who had also incorporated conservation ideals into the regulations so they could review them. There was a discussion about flood zone areas and sea level rise. There was also a discussion about EV fleets and charging stations. There were concerns about the local tidal wetlands which have deteriorated in the last 10 years.

Ms. Cherichetti said that she could highlight the proposed regulations which address the concerns of the commissioners and deal with natural resources. She would also send them the chapters that cover items like impervious coverage, etc. Mr. Klocke suggested a way for them to work on submitting a memo from the Conservation Commission to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

There was a discussion about inland wetland versus tidal wetland regulation. Ms. Cherichetti explained what areas were regulated by the municipalities and what was regulated by the state. There was also a discussion about sea level rise.

There was a discussion about enacting a green building standard and which department it would go through, the Planning & Zoning Department or the Building Department. Ms. Cherichetti said it would probably be both departments. She explained how the two departments worked.

Ms. Cherichetti explained the next steps for the commissioners. Mr. Klocke said he would also send out a spreadsheet for the commissioners to add comments. He also thanked Ms. Knight for attending one of the zoning presentations.

X. COMMENTS OF STAFF

a) Report of the Senior Environmental Officer

There were no comments from Ms. Cherichetti.

XI. COMMENTS OF COMMISSIONERS

a) Report of the Commission Chair

There were no comments from Mr. Klocke.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero

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