

TOWN OF FARMINGTON
INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

September 7, 2022

Present for the online web conference was Chair Hannon, Commissioners Berlandy, Fox, Isner, Kelsey, Simpson, Statchen and Alternate Commissioner Canto (in at 7:29pm). Sr. Assistant Town Planner Cyr and Clerk Michaud were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Present in the Development Conference Room were Sr. Assistant Town Planner Cyr and Clerk Michaud. All others were present online.

PUBLIC HEARING

Bulwark, LLC – Lots 8120 & 8122 Colt Highway

Regulated activity within wetlands and upland review area to construct self-storage facility. Continued from July 20, 2022. Attorney Robin Pearson, Alter & Pearson, represented the applicant. She summarized the applicant's last presentation to the Commission, responses to staff comments and revisions to the plan submitted after the July 20th hearing. Attorney Pearson introduced Dave Ziaks, PE, F.A. Hesketh, to present changes made since the last meeting. Mr. Ziaks commented the plan set revised to August 19, 2022 reduces the easterly 3-story building footprint by 100sf to 19,800sf, and the total square footage by 300sf for a total of 59,400sf with a small change at the NW corner, relocated the hydrodynamic separators ahead of discharging into the proposed infiltrators, and removed hoods due to relocation of hydrodynamic separators. Staff suggests hoods be installed prior to hydrodynamic separators to assist with removal of any floatable's. The revised plans also removed the proposed 4ft x 8ft box culvert wetland crossing (bottom set 1ft below grade) from the previously revised plan and replaced it with a proposed three-sided 3ft x 8ft open bottom box culvert. Retaining walls have been pulled further back from the wetlands resulting in a larger buffer area: the NE corner of the 1-story buildings, between wetland flags #7 through #14 the retaining wall has been moved approximately an additional 2ft, the west side of the 3-story building, at wetland flags #39 and #41 the retaining walls have been moved approximately 5ft and 13ft respectively, and the north side of the 3-story building between wetland flags #48 through #58 the retaining wall has been moved approximately an additional 6ft by reducing the width of the driveway around the 3-story building from 23ft to 20ft and converted to one-way travel. Mr. Ziaks commented the proposed dumpster area will be minimal because the anticipated low volume of waste generated from the office on site. Proposed impervious coverage has been reduced from 39.1% to 37.5%. Statement was made indicating 20,000cy to 25,000cy of earth and rock material will be excavated and processed onsite and either used onsite or removed. Snow Storage locations have been added to the plan and Mr. Ziaks pointed out these locations. Pollinator plants have been added to the wetland mitigation areas on the south side of the driveway at the wetland crossing. Mr. Ziaks stated a written alternatives analysis was submitted for site design alternatives and that they reached out to the CT DOT office regarding an additional curb cut and were less than enthusiastic on the two proposed curb cuts. In addition, they contacted the DEEP regarding the NDDDB response letter comment and CTDEEP will review internally to provide additional guidance. Mr. Ziaks stated on the record the applicant is open to establishing a conservation easement for further protection of the wetland area. Tom Ryder, Sr. Environmental Scientist, LandTech, reviewed the design plan and his colleagues Wetland Evaluation and Impact Report

previously submitted and he does not see any impacts to wetlands if the plan is implemented as proposed.

The Commissioners expressed concern with the narrow width of the wetland crossing and asked applicant if they had considered a bridge crossing. Mr. Ziaks responded the culvert is oversized and a bridge would be beyond the cost magnitude of this project. Commissioners commented they were hoping for an overall greater reduction in the building footprints of the three-story building and potentially reducing the number of units along the northwesterly proposed buildings. The Commission commented the design of the dumpster area is required to accommodate both solid waste and recycling waste per state law 22a-241bc. Clarification was asked by the Commission regarding the assessment of one versus two access points to eliminate the wetland crossing and was it evaluated by a traffic engineer or was there any input from DOT design team that said it was a bad idea? Mr. Ziaks responded they have their own traffic engineers and given the sightlines they feel the one access drive as proposed is the best and safest alternative. The Commission acknowledge this is a difficult site to develop, and this Commission is solely focused on carrying out the statutory charge to protect wetlands and that's why they're exploring what options exist, so either dual access to the site or potentially the use of a bridge to eliminate the wetland crossing are things this Commission will have to consider and if those things are not feasible, then maybe the project, the type, and intensity of development isn't compatible with the natural features of the site. There was some discussion for clarification about the type of culvert and about the width of the culvert and Mr. Ziaks comment about being able to change the size. The Commission recommended adding silt socs to the proposed silt fence and asked for the company's policy on ground maintenance keeping the site clean of trash. Mr. Ziaks responded silt socs are proposed on the plan and they are installing a four-foot fence atop the proposed retaining wall and that every spring and fall they will do a walk of the property to ensure it is clean of trash. There was a brief discussion about snow storage and the storage of ice/snow products. Mr. Ziaks indicated snow storage areas were added to the plan and a note was added stating all site deicing chemicals shall be stored inside buildings. Regarding reducing the size of the building at the northwest corner, it was suggested the applicant consider reducing the size and/or number of units by removing or reducing the sizing of the three full and one partial unit, approximately up to the "w/f-6" area. After some further discussion about the culvert and drainage design Mr. Ziaks discussed they would strip the wetland soils from the area of the culvert and utilize it along the bottom of the culvert. The installation of the culvert would also include a sleeve for the sewer forcemain under the culvert, to facility future repair of this line if needed. The Commission commented they should not do the design work and that it is the responsibility of the applicant to make sure they provide the information the Commission needs to render a decision.

Attorney Pearson asked Mr. Ziaks about the potential culvert size change based on discussions tonight. Mr. Ziaks responded he will review and make sure they present the best possible plan. Attorney Pearson verbally granted an extension of time to continue the hearing to the September 21, 2022 meeting.

There was no public comment in favor or in opposition to the application.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Isner/Statchen) it was unanimously

VOTED: To continue the Bulwark, LLC public hearing to September 21, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS (8:10pm)

Arun Kumar – 30 Portage Crossing

Regulated activity within upland review area to clear trees along the eastern property line. Arun Kumar provided detailed photos of five trees the solar company recommended be removed. There was a brief discussion, but the Commission did not express concern with removing the five specific trees shown in the photographs. It is requested the homeowner work with staff to identify the trees in the field prior to removal. The Commission commented the request is an incidental use of residential property.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Statchen/Fox) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Arun Kumar application for regulated activity within upland review area to clear trees along the eastern property line at 30 Portage Crossing with the condition the homeowner work with staff in the field to locate the trees prior to removal.

Town of Farmington – 2 Vine Hill Road

Regulated activity within upland review area to install two catch basins, one on each side of Vine Hill Road. Dylan Reilly, Civil Engineer, presented the Town's proposed drainage project to install two catch basins on Vine Hill Road. Photographs provided show erosion taking place due to a prior paving project. That project left two leak off areas that have created erosion over time. The owner of the pond at 5 Vine Hill Road has expressed concern with the velocity of storm water entering his pond through one of the leak off areas. Mr. Reilly presented the detailed drainage structure installation proposal and said they would like to complete the project before leaf pickup begins.

Commissioners commented on the location of the proposed outlet pipe on the west side of Vine Hill Road, in relation to the existing pond outlet structure and pipe. Commissioners also requested clarification the leak off on the west side of the road would remain. Mr. Reilly confirmed the leak off would remain, due to the close proximity of the leak off and the pond outlet pipe to each other, and the difficulty of installing the new catch basin in this area without impacting the outlet pipe. The Commissioners also discussed the potential to mill and pave a portion of the existing roadway to relocate the low point and remove the leak off and to review redesigning the proposed riprap outlet to better align with the intended flow from the pipe.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Berlandy/Simpson) it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Town of Farmington application for regulated activity within upland review area to install two catch basins, one on each side of Vine Hill Road.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Statchen/Fox) it was

VOTED: 6 in favor, 1 opposed (Kelsey) to add Farmington River Watershed Association to the agenda.

Farmington River Watershed Association

Sr. Assistant Town Planner Cyr said the FRWA reached out and would like to remove bittersweet along the Farmington River, north of the garden plots to the trestle (trail bridge). This would be a continuation of the earlier project by Trout Unlimited along the north side of the garden plots, discussed at the March 2, 2022 meeting. The timeframe for completion of the work is the end of September. Sections of the bittersweet trunk will be cut and a foam applicator will be utilized to treat the cut section of the trunk with an herbicide. There will be no spraying of any herbicide, only direct application of herbicide as needed. A map showing the area proposed was displayed for clarification. The estimated time to complete the work is two weeks. The Commission supported proposed work and staff's coordination with the water company and FRWA.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Isner/Statchen) it was

VOTED: 6 in favor, 1 abstention (Kelsey) to make the determination the Farmington River Watershed Association to remove invasive plants within the upland review area along the south side of the Farmington River is a permitted nonregulated operation under Section 4.B.1 of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations with the following conditions:

1. The manufacturers recommendation for application is strictly followed; and
2. The herbicide is painted on the bittersweet stalks.

PLANNER'S REPORT

1179 Farmington Avenue

Waiting for an update and hope to have one to share at the next meeting.

1 Johnson Avenue

The applicant has submitted some revised site plans with some minor widening of the driveway, dumpster pad, and a nitrogen tank. Comments have been sent back to them.

Morea Road Appeal

The Town Attorney is working on a response to Court.

2023 Meeting Schedule

Next year's meeting schedule is being drafted and the Commission was asked if there was a conflict with scheduling the first meeting in April, April 5th which is the first night of Passover. No one expressed concern or asked that the meeting be moved to an alternate date.

MINUTES

Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion made and seconded (Statchen/Simpson) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the July 20, 2022 Inland Wetlands meeting minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

SJM