

Lincoln Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2018

Start – 7:00 pm

End – 9:30 pm

Commissioners present – Peter von Mertens, Larry Buell, Jim Henderson, Christine Dugan, Ron Chester

Staff present – Tom Gumbart, Jennifer Curtin

Memorial Benches

Peter von Mertens suggested that the Commission put together a policy on how memorial benches requests are handled, instead of it being a reactive process whenever a request is made. There could be a limit of 5-6 benches throughout Town, potentially only for Lincoln residents. The benches should be simple and probably made of stone to be low-maintenance. Jim Henderson said that there are certain responsibilities that must be considered with benches, such as maintenance and repair, which will be an extra cost to the Town. Mr. Henderson says that the Town’s responsibilities must be established clearly before any benches are considered. An attendee says that there is a policy in Wellesley where the family/person paying for the bench pays for maintenance and placement costs up front and they are responsible for any replacement. The Commission as well as Conservation staff will look at other Towns’ policies on memorial benches.

CONSERVATION DIRECTOR’S REPORT

New filing just came in for 14 Old Cambridge Turnpike for a new garage and replacement septic system.

Conservation staff members are learning to plow for snow removal in parking lots and are continuing with trail work. With the winter, staff has more time to work on projects. Stacy Carter wants to figure out an app through which people can view the trails in Town and Mr. von Mertens agrees, adding that it would be nice for the app to show mileage of trails and loops with average times to complete walks. Alltrails seems to be the one with the most features for free and it is easy to use. As part of the Complete Streets initiative there is also interest in wayfinding and may be able to help financially with the project. The Commission and staff will continue to work on this and it may dovetail with the conversation of bike/trail usage discussions.

WETLANDS

67 Winter Street – Notice of Intent (165-18-0) – Stephen Gladstone – Garage Addition, Deck Modifications, & Driveway Replacement

Attendees: Heather Broglio, Susan Capestro, Stephen Gladstone, Charles Katuska

Peter von Mertens opened the hearing at 7:30 p.m. There were three Commissioners present at the site visit today; Larry Buell, Mr. von Mertens, and Jim Henderson, as well as Conservation staff Jennifer Curtin and Tom Gumbart. Charles J. Katuska, P.W.S. represented the applicant for the garage addition, deck, and walkway reconstruction and invasive species control. The project is the continuation of work initially approved in May of 2011 under DEP File #203-836. All vegetation management was completed under the original Order of Conditions including removal of non-native, invasive plant species and planting of native species. However, the Order of Conditions expired prior to the commencement of work on the house.

The currently proposed work is slightly modified from what was previously approved and it includes the construction of a three-car garage, reconstruction of elevated decks, and modifications to at-grade walkways. Permeable pavers (or other porous surface material) will be replacing impervious driveway with a 40% reduction in impervious surface; 6335 sq.ft. of impervious surface will be reduced to 3812 sq.ft. Runoff will be reduced by 5% under all storm conditions. This, coupled with the already completed vegetation management plan, will provide appropriate mitigation for the work that will occur within upland buffer zone resource area.

Tom Gumbart confirmed that there will not be any more grading in the front. Mr. Gladstone confirmed that all excavated materials will be loaded and trucked off-site after concerns were raised by the Commissioners about the limited area for on-site storage. Ron Chester asked for more information to ensure that stormwater will not drain into pond as it is hydrologically connected to downstream wetlands. Mr. Gladstone assured the Commissioners that infiltration of stormwater is quick but is open to further monitoring of runoff. Mr. Katuska mentioned that a file number has not been issued by DEP, however the Commission is confident that it will be issued by the time the OOC is issued at the January 24th meeting.

Larry Buell made a motion to approve the project and Jim Henderson seconded. A unanimous 5-0 vote was taken to approve the project and issue the OOC at the January 24th public meeting.

CONSERVATION RESTRICTION

125-129 Winter Street – Conservation Restriction: Care Dimensions

Attendees: Phil Cibelli, Pat Ahern (CEO), Jason Talerman, Joel Freedman

Tom Gumbart, Peter von Mertens, and Jennifer Curtin visited the site this morning. Mr. von Mertens was pleased to see that the parking area and associated lighting is nicely integrated into the surroundings. Mr. von Mertens summarized the need for a CR; the special permit received by Care Dimensions from the ZBA requested that Care Dimensions get a CR on part of their property to protect the “Gateway” to Lincoln, provide a buffer for the neighbors, and protect Cambridge’s public drinking water supply.

Jason Talerman said a draft was submitted but he and Care Dimensions are open to changes the Commission would like to see. Mr. Talerman presented two plans for the land to be covered under the CR; one that includes septic areas and one that exempts them. Joel Freedman said this CR is a requirement of the special permit in order for Care Dimensions to get their occupancy permit as a CR protects areas in perpetuity. Mr. von Mertens says that there needs to be invasives management to avoid loss of the landscape plantings that have already been done. Care Dimensions needs to make a commitment to control these invasives, especially a large patch of Japanese knotweed.

Tom Gumbart said that ConCom has no formal role in the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy but the Conservation Staff will facilitate the CR from their end. Mr. Gumbart says that there is a commitment to do annual monitoring which will require permanent boundary markers to be placed. Mr. Gumbart says that there is a plan that potentially a 20,000 sq.ft. piece of the restricted land will be sold to a neighbor for conforming lot purposes. Mr. Freedman confirmed that there is a provision in the special permit decision for this sale. Mr. Talerman says that they have no obligation to sell the land but they want to work with the neighbor in good faith and the CR will still apply to the subject land. Mr. von Mertens said that the Commission would be comfortable with the CR if Care Dimensions can agree to robust land maintenance, invasives elimination, and native plantings. Mr. von Mertens would like to see Care Dimensions commit to a 5-year management plan to

create and enhance natural plantings and cover. Mr. Talerman and Care Dimensions will come back with a draft plan to meet these goals at a future meeting.

Larry Buell would like to know if drainage or stormwater runoff is an issue, however the lot is not within jurisdictional area. It was discussed that there will be no increase in site runoff. It should be shown in plan/CR the infrastructure that handles drainage to make sure that is protected and maintained. Care Dimensions will talk with their landscape architect about a landscape plan and management plan of invasives. Jim Henderson says that if there will be walking trails for patients/visitors, the plan should include an access way to the septic field to allow maintenance. Mr. Talerman will send the Commission a landscape plan. The Commission would like to set up site visit with the Care Dimensions team to take a look at the site as well as the proposed portion to be sold. Tom Gumbart says that Care Dimensions needs to have a conversation with the Cambridge Water Department about exact language regarding public water supply values, as this needs to be spelled out in the CR. The part about visual access also needs to be expanded.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

School Building Committee

Chris Dugan was at the last SBC meeting. They planned a community meeting for January 23rd during which architects will be there to talk about the latest plans. On January 9th there will be a multi-board meeting to provide financial context for the new school and community center. During this meeting they will look at what the Town can afford as it is estimated that the school alone may cost approximately \$95,000,000. An energy consultant is being consulted. However, many think it is too early to be talking about energy efficiency while others believe the school should have it integrated in to the early planning, nor retrofitted. Ms. Dugan discussed that some plans show construction getting closer to the intermittent stream/wetlands. This will clearly need wetlands permitting and the Commission will look at the plan at the next meeting.

Homeowner Packets

The Commissioners raised concerns about homeowners not being very receptive to strangers knocking on their doors with packets. A decision was made to just mail them in the future but to include an offer to meet with staff and give names of the Commissioners who live closest to them.

MBTA/Keolis

Tom Gumbart sent out an email on December 14th to contacts at the MBTA/Keolis. Clary Coutu called immediately after receiving this email, apologized for the issues, and told Mr. Gumbart that they have received complaints from other communities. Ms. Kotu requested a map of the clearing that occurred so Mr. Gumbart and Stacy Carter went out in the field to determine on whose land the trees were cut and most of the cutting was done on MBTA/Keolis land. There were locations where trees were cut on public conservation land. Tom Gumbart will set up a site visit this month with Ms. Coutu. The Commission also wants a commitment from them on repairing the Food Project access road that is used daily for track maintenance and inspections.

Trail Use Regulations

Commissioners and staff will meet with the LLCT to discuss bike access on our shared public trail system. It is anticipated that after initial discussions there will be a public meeting to discuss any potential changes.

SUBCOMMITTEES & LIAISONS

Agriculture

Pete Lowy is working on a write up about this past season and plans for next year. He met with Jim Henderson and Tom Gumbart and there was discussion about the Browning Fields. Upper Browning has limited agricultural value so it was discussed that this field could transition into a biodiversity field. Lower Browning could potentially be used for grazing livestock. Part of this plan could include daylighting the intermittent stream that flows underground from Conant Road to the SE end of the field. The Subcommittee will meet soon to work on revising farm reporting procedure and to consider renewing licenses.

Solar

The Commission hopes the Town will soon get a definitive proposal on the landfill solar project. Peter von Mertens wrote to Jim Hutchinson regarding the possibility of using the parking lot at deCordova Sculpture Park & Museum for a solar installation.

ACTION ITEMS

- Determination of Applicability for 21 Sunnyside Lane signed and issued
- Meeting minutes from December 13th approved
- Bills paid and payroll signed

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Curtin
Conservation Assistant