

Conservation Commission

Minutes

April 11, 2023

Attendance: David Miller, Chair, Reed Pugh, Steve Cohn, Martha Hoyt, Ann Storer, Zeke Nims, Elaine Vreeland, Administrator.

Zoom Recordings: David Miller noted that Zoom meetings need not be recorded. It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to discontinue the practice of saving the recordings.

314 Highland Ave.: Public Hearing, Notice of Intent

It is proposed to remove existing retaining walls along the property line, to restore grading, and to replace with 3:1 slopes treated with loam and seed. Continued to 4/25/23 by unanimous roll call vote.

316 Highland Ave. Con't. Public Hearing, Notice of Intent

It is proposed to remove existing retaining walls along the property line, to restore grading, and to replace with 3:1 slopes treated with loam and seed. Continued to 4/25/23 by unanimous roll call vote.

32 Everett Ave. Con't Public Hearing, Notice of Intent

It is proposed to construct a swimming pool, tennis court, and associated hardscaping and landscaping. This application was withdrawn, the hearing open only to close the file by unanimous roll call vote.

18 Sunset Road: Con't. Public Hearing, Notice of Intent

It is proposed to construct an addition on piers within a floodway. It was continued to 4/25/23 by unanimous roll call vote.

Minutes: The minutes of 3/28/23 were approved with changes by unanimous roll call vote.

Conservation Commission Branding: Continued to 4/25/23.

Lynch School: David Miller updated the Commission that a Notice of Intent will be filed in the near future. Steve Cohn is currently in discussion with the project engineer regarding the Riverfront Area calculations. This project will be an ongoing topic at every meeting so the entire Commission can be involved in pre-filing discussions.

Eversource at Cross Street and Aberjona River: Public Hearing, Request for Amended Order of Conditions. It is proposed to change the method for underground crossing of the Aberjona River on Cross St. from a jack and bore method to a horizontal directional drill methodology.

Representatives: Chris Newhall, Eversource, David Klinch, Epsilon Associates.

Information Submitted: Request to Amend Order of Conditions – Woburn to Wakefield Line Project, DEP File No. 346-503, WCC Bylaw No. 503.

Chris Newhall explained that Eversource is seeking to amend the existing Order of Conditions to change the crossing method at Cross Street, from a jack and bore method to horizontal directional drilling. This method has also been used at Washington Street. It will reduce the amount of water needed to excavate and will enter the ground farther from the resource and go under the river with more flexibility than the jack and bore method. The lay down area for equipment will continue to be on Washington Street to avoid disturbance in Davidson Park. Some work will take place on the bike path, and no trees are to be removed. Zeke Nims requested that a rotted construction fence be removed along the bank of the Aberjona River. Chris said that he would check if that is possible with the Select Board. An inadvertent return plan was submitted. Zeke asked whether the scope of the project was sufficiently different to warrant the filing of a new Notice of Intent, but it was determined that an Amended Order would be sufficient to cover the change. A native grass seed mix was recommended for restoration. Zeke wants to wait for the Select Board to decide regarding use of the bike path before the Commission proceeds. The hearing was continued to 4/25/23.

Eversource at Wedgemere Train Station: Discussion regarding landscape restoration.

Representatives: Chris Newhall, Eversource, Ruth Heyfeld and Sean Grant, DCR.

Information Presented: Modified Invasive Species Control Plan, dated April 2023. They are interested in restoring the DCR property and updating the landscaping plan. The goal is to restore disturbed areas and the remedial clean up area. Restoration, watering, invasive species monitoring, loaming, seeding and stabilization were all discussed. The following monitoring plan was discussed:

5.3 Post Construction Invasive Species Monitoring

Eversource will conduct monitoring of the Study Area for two (2) growing seasons after completion of construction and installation of restoration plantings to document the abundance of invasive species within Aberjona River crossing work area that were impacted due to construction activities. Restoration tree plantings will be warranted for two (2) years, including watering during the growing season. Monitoring will be conducted during the growing season, when plant species are most easily identifiable and

There will be a 2-year warranty on all landscape installations. The work plan calls for clearing invasives with hand tools or pulling younger plant material that can be hand pulled. Larger plants may be cut and a herbicide treatment used. DCR would like to see monitoring and management more than on an annual basis, plus the following requirements:

5. Removal of all dense grade/gravel construction surface material from within the workspace areas except from a 12ft wide area within the MWRA sewer easement from Bacon Street to the MWRA CSO vault.
6. Perform grading activities to restore pre-construction grades and contours to extent practicable.
7. Perform soil decompaction measures as necessary (see below specifications for soil decompaction measures).
8. Install geogrid fabric on top of 12ft wide dense grade material within MWRA easement.
9. Import and spread topsoil/loam over entire restoration area to a 6 inch (min.) depth (see below specifications for topsoil material).
10. Install temporary chain-link fencing during restoration efforts to prevent theft of plant stock.
11. Install plantings of native trees, shrubs and groundcover as depicted on Figure 3.
12. Seeding of the managed areas within the study area with appropriate native seed mixtures (Figure 3).
13. Remove the temporary chain-link fencing after installation of the plantings and replace with orange safety fencing to prevent damage of recently planted areas from pedestrians.

Gravel will be removed, except at the MWRA easement to keep a stable base for service trucks. A temporary fence will be installed to prevent plant theft, then an safety fence will be installed to keep pedestrians off the new landscaping. Plants will be installed in August to have September and October to get established. Plants will be watered with 20-gallon gator bags on trees, filled 2x a week, with hand watering for shrubs. A cover crop will be planted for quick germination while other seeding will germinate over the season.

Table 6: Restoration Species Planting Plan for Inadvertent Return Area

Species		Selection Criteria	Size (height)	Quantity	Total Height (lf)
Common Name	Scientific Name				
Common winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Native species. Common to northeast wetlands.	4'	5	20 lf
Cinnamon fern	<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	Native species in study area, provides groundcover.	2'	5	10 lf
Sweet pepperbush	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	Native species in study area.	4'	1	4 lf
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Native species. Common to northeast wetlands.	4'	3	12 lf
Red maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Native species. Common to northeast wetlands.	6'	2	12 lf
			TOTAL	16	58 lf

The Commission approved the Modified Invasive Species Control Plan and added the following requirements:

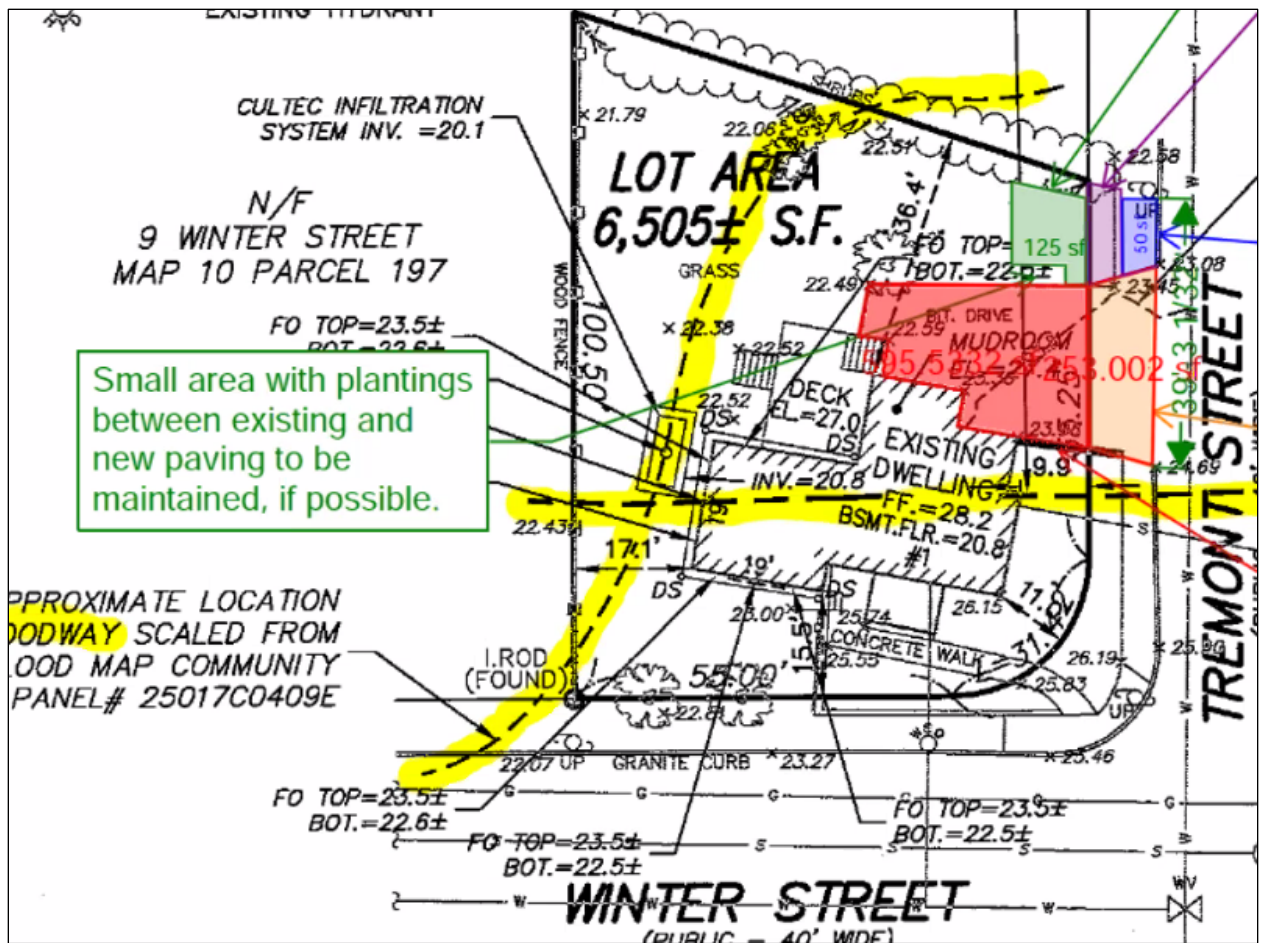
- A 6' chain link fence is to be installed and remain until the end of the growing season,
- followed by installation of a green safety fence to keep pedestrians off the new landscaping,
- the new landscaping is to be watered 2x per week during the growing season for two years,
- tree gators are to be installed around the new trees,

- Shrubs and other landscape materials are to be hand watered 2x per week during the growing seasons for two years,
- Eversource shall coordinate with DEC for an onsite pre-installation meeting,
- Eversource shall notify the Conservation Commission one week prior to the pre-installation meeting.

1 Winter Street: Discussion

Representative: Chris Downey, owner and representative.

Information submitted: Plan below.



Mr. Downey stated that he wants to pave the lawn area shown being 125 sq. ft., and wants to remove and replace the driveway. The paving will occur in the floodplain and within the 200' Riverfront Area. Steve Cohn noted that he would need to address Riverfront Area requirements and was uncertain that the proposed project is viable. Zeke Nims noted that it was a very small project. There followed some discussion regarding mitigation and overcoming the presumptions of significance of the eight interests under the Act. The need for a site visit was noted and the matter was continued to 4/25/23.

Aberjona River Day: Discussion.

Reed Pugh noted that he had met with contacts from Earth Day and the two artists who will be displaying their artwork on the corner of Mystic Valley Parkway and Main Street. Martha Hoyt said that she had distributed flyers, had posted about the event, and that she had received about 20 responses to her survey. A list of trash collection and invasive species removal spaces has been prepared, and members will be notified of their locations for supervision.

Town Meeting Presentation: David Miller stated he would prepare the Commission's speech and displayed a Power Point presentation. It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to approve David's presentation to Town Meeting.

Conservation Commission Chair and Vice Chair Vote: It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to re-elect David Miller as Chair and Ann Storer as Vice-Chair.

Executive Session: It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous roll call vote to go into Executive Session to discuss Converse Place, and to return to regular session when the Executive Session had finished.

(Upon returning from Executive Session):

Town Day Photo Contest: Members suggested categories for flora, fauna, and landscape. The Commission will advertise on its website that photos of the above in conservation or resource areas will be rewarded with prizes for first, second, third place and honorable mention. It was also suggested that the school art departments be notified to encourage student participation.

Winning Farm Conservation Restriction Update: Elaine explained that in response to the Commission's request for a baseline report, the applicant has hired Oxbow Associates to perform an updated study on the vernal pool, to be submitted to the state with the revised Conservation Restriction. It was moved seconded and approved by all members except Zeke Nims (who was no longer present) to accept this proposal.

Winchester Boat Club: Request to repaint a boat shed. Members noted that it is a very minor project and did not require a filing. Elaine will email the Boat Club, indicating the Commission's approval with a requirement that they remove all paint chips.

Parterre Proposal Mill Pond: The proposal is under \$10,000. Reed Pugh noted that they are doing two months of work under last year's contract, and the matter was continued to 4/25/23.

Zoning Board of Appeals and Conservation Commission Decisions: David Miller explained an understanding between the two boards in which information will be exchanged so that each will be aware of the issues of the other. This effort arises from ZBA bylaws requesting Commission input.

Submitted by

Elaine Vreeland