

Minutes of the Regular Meeting (via ZOOM) of the Inland Wetlands Agency on July 01, 2020.

A. Roll Call

Present: Brendan Magnan, Daniel Bedeker, Ranjit Bhawe, Jim Connors, Scott Marlow, Steve Munson and Jason Zammiello.

Absent: Matthew Connors, Ken Cowden and Dave DeFlumeri.

Also Present: Joe Griffith, MaryRose Palumbo and Lisa Streit

Magnan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and reviewed the guidelines in hosting remote meetings to ensure business runs efficiently and that all statutory and administrative rules are followed:

1. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and Governor Lamont's executive orders, this meeting is being recorded and will be made available on the City of Milford website.
2. During this meeting, if members of the Inland Wetlands Commission would like to speak, please utilize the "raise your hand" feature via Zoom. All participants will be muted during the meeting unless recognized by the Chair.
3. After being recognized to speak, please state your name and address prior to making a statement.

B. Pledge

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Public Comments

None.

D. New Business

1. **IW-A-20-03: 440 Wheelers Farm Road, SH Wheelers Farm Road, LLC** – proposed parking lot expansion with work in and within 150' of wetlands in the Wepawaug River Watershed.

MaryRose reported that this is a proposal from SH Wheelers Farm Road, LLC for a parking lot expansion that includes the filling of 1,364 sq. ft of the existing detention basin which is flagged as a wetlands and work in 69,208 sq. ft. of upland review area in the Wepawaug River Watershed. The proposed work is adjacent to the existing parking area at 440 Wheelers Farms Rd. This is the office building that is adjacent to the Wheelers Woods apartment complex that we reviewed a few years ago. Presenting this evening are Ted Hart & Matt Sanford of Milone & MacBroom.

MaryRose stated that at this time, this application is before us for the first time this evening and the Agency can:

- Ask questions
- Ask for further information
- Schedule a site walk
- Schedule a Public Hearing (no petition has been received as of 6/3/2020)
- Take no action

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Ted Hart, Professional Engineer, reviewed the existing site using a topography map on Google Earth. The applicant is in need of more parking and they are trying to comply more with Planning & Zoning requirements which is 677 parking spaces and there is 507 parking spaces now. 614 parking spaces is the plan. The site and its existing conditions were reviewed. They would like to move parking to the west and add another bay on the northerly side. They will also be adding storm water management. The underground storm drainage systems were reviewed. They will increase the size of the sediment basin by four times to provide more water quality enhancements. A photo of existing conditions was viewed. They will clean up the basin and plant with wetland vegetation. This is not a formal detention basin but a dug pond with sedimentation. The plan is to enhance this and provide for runoff. This was built in the 1980's with minimal storm water quality measures put in. The plan is to mitigate impacts with storm water detention and plantings. The Sedimentation and Erosion Control Plan was reviewed. This is a parking lot expansion project.

Matt Sanford, Soil Scientist, stated that the site was flagged by Bill Root in 2004 and the wetland line was re-verified and showed on the plan; which is still consistent. The wetland is a forested wetland with seasonal water in the spring and winter; red maple, button bush and skunk cabbage. The seasonal water depth is between 8" and 12 - 18". Some amphibian breeding was found; wood frog and spotted salamander. A low population since the site is so fragmented. The impact area is within the man made sediment basin. The phragmites at the northern limits will be removed. The expansion of the basin will re-grade the northern bank, treat the water, improve the water quality and create a vegetative basin. Eastern box turtle has been documented south of the site; best management practices for protection will be used. Some trees will be removed; the closest area is 20' from the wetlands. This area was reviewed. Generator pads are to be installed in the lawn area.

Hart stated that the wetlands line delineated in 2004 was part of a subdivision project and was approved back then and hasn't changed.

Magnan asked for clarity on the functions and values of the wetlands as well as the proposed time frame for the project. Hart stated that they would like to begin the project as soon as possible; this fall – September/October. Sanford stated that a table has been provided to show the functions and values of the wetlands; storm water quality, very low habitat diversity in the lower area, wildlife habitat and retention.

Marlow asked about past disturbances per reports and the presentation and if there were plans to clean up. Hart stated that there were not. Sanford stated that there are fill piles and debris from the 1980's and they have re-vegetated. It would be more damage to remove at this point. However, debris can be removed. Marlow stated that the last drawing calls for parking areas and deferred parking not to be constructed. Hart stated that that was the original survey map and proposed a long time ago. They are now coming to do the work and pulled the parking away from the vernal pool area. Marlow asked about the catch basins and if silt sacks would be used. Hart stated that it would be up to the contractor. Hay bales or silt fence around catch basins; silt sacks would work fine.

Magnan asked about alternates considered. Hart stated that they had an additional 5 spaces within 15' of the wetland and that has been removed. They looked at alternatives that had more parking and a parking deck which was costly and they did not want to move forward with that plan. Magnan asked if the south side was considered for parking. Hart stated that it was close to the wetlands and there was not room. The south parking area was reviewed on the plan and the adjacent property and an existing house was shown.

Munson asked about mitigation. Hart stated that they are improving the water quality of the basin. Munson asked about snow removal. Hart stated that it could be stockpiled at the lower end of the parking lot, the building is not currently 100% occupied. If need be it can be trucked off or the lower area can be used. They are hoping to bring in a lot more tenants and have more use. Hart stated that they will come up with a snow removal plan. Munson stated that the amphibian population is small and questioned if this project will have an effect on that. Sanford stated that based on his 20 years of experience, this is not a long sustaining population. It has declined since the 1980's and there is not enough habitat to support any increase in population.

Bhave stated that if the parking expansion is per Planning and Zoning he asked if there has been any study done for the need. Hart stated that there has not been; the applicant wants the parking for new tenants and that it be closer to the building. The formula is 1 space per 50 sq. ft. which is 677 spaces. They want to bring it up to 614 spaces. Bhave stated that it is not a requirement of Planning & Zoning then. If trees are removed this will have a negative impact on the habitat and he would like more justification of the need or requirements for more spaces. The front of the building has space available. Hart stated that they have not looked at the front of the building and he is not sure what the setbacks are there. Joseph Griffith addressed the Zoning question of parking and stated that the regulations require a front yard setback not less than 1/2 of applicable front yard setback so the parking set back is about 50' it appears they are right out on that. It appears that the existing parking is about 80' from the street. Without modifying the building or changing its use, there is no requirement to increase parking. Hart stated that the applicant will not be able to fill the occupancy without the parking.

Connors stated that there should be an extensive snow shelf area and that it is not practical to push snow to the upper parking area.

Magnan asked about the vernal pool and an impact assessment and where the eastern box turtle was found. Sanford stated that that was part of Wheeler's Woods south of this site; he has not seen any on this site. An impact assessment could be added.

The following motion was made by Connors and seconded by Marlow:

Mr. Chairman, I move that a site walk be scheduled for 7/15/202 at 5:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Minutes

A motion was made by Connors, seconded by Marlow to accept the minutes of 06/17/2020 as presented. The motion carried with Connors abstaining.

Magnan clarified in the minutes of 6/19/2020 after the area of closing the public hearing – Mr. Logan's was the only expert testimony found to be credible. A motion was made by Munson, seconded by Marlow to accept the minutes of 6/19/202 as amended. The motion carried with Connors abstaining.

F. Staff Report

- The office has been busy with pool, shed, deck and minor addition reviews. DPLU is implementing a new Permitting software package called Muncicity. The Inland Wetland module is not currently set up, but is promised to be up and running shortly.

- Please let the office know what each IWA member's preferred method of plan review is. If you would like paper sets of plans on all applications or just on larger applications.
- MaryRose has spoken to several people about proposed projects or modifications of old projects that will be coming in over the next several months.

Site Status:

- Flax Mill Lane Bridge is ongoing.
- 0 Tanglewood Circle –mitigation monitoring is ongoing we have received 3/10 reports (monitoring anticipated through 2023). Minor work to remove invasives was required from the December 19 monitoring report. Next report is due in Spring 2020.
- 24 Cooper Ave – ongoing. The rain garden is being installed and the asbuilt is expected in the next few weeks.
- Ford St / Bailey Ln –houses, landscaping and fencing are complete – waiting for last area of grass to grow for bond release.
- Terrace Rd is ongoing.
- Wheelers Woods – ongoing.
- Beaver Brook Boardwalk – complete, parking area prepped by DPW, remaining work to be done in phase 2.
- 63 Chester St is ongoing.
- Westmoor Rd is ongoing.
- Sailor's Lane pump station is waiting on inspection of the landscaping.
- Daniels St (Stonebridge patio) waiting on asbuilt.
- Florence Av is ongoing – stone swale and galleys are installed, waiting on asbuilt.
- Platt Lane is ongoing.

Please remember to call or email if you are unable to attend a meeting.

G. Chair Report

The next meeting will be July 15, 2020 via ZOOM. Please let the office know if you cannot attend. There will be a site walk on 7/15/2020 at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Connors, seconded by Munson to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Streit

These minutes have not been accepted or approved.