

A. Roll Call – Secretary

The following Commission Members were present:

Commissioner Ranjit Bhawe Commissioner Daniel Bedeker, Commissioner Matthew Connors, Vice Chairman David DeFlumeri, Chairman Brendan Magnan, Commissioner Scott Marlow, Commissioner Steve Munson and Commissioner Jason Zammiello

Others present: DPLU Director Joe Griffith, Compliance Officer MaryRose Palumbo, Acting Secretary Meg Greene, Jesse Harris, Michael Klucchman BSC, Rich Jagoe, Pat Bradbury, Building committee: Anthony Vitalli, Rick DiStefano, George Logan REMA, Phyllis Thorne, Natalie Forleo, Patricia Taylor

Absent: Commissioner Jim Connors and Commissioner Ken Cowden

Chairman Magnan called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm 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.

Chairman Magnan reviewed the rules for public comment.

C. Old Business

1. **IW-A-20-033: 0 French Dr.** Map 58 Block 713 Parcel 60; City of Milford; Proposed renovation, expansion and upgrades to the existing soccer field with construction and grading in and within 100' of a wetland and watercourse in the South Central Shoreline Watershed. (6/3/20||6/17/20||8/7/20)

Compliance Officer MaryRose Palumbo provided a brief summary of issues arising in the previous presentation.

Jesse Harris, BSC Group project designer referred to the site using sheet L3.0 wetlands. Harris said the goal was to convert natural grass playing fields to synthetic for soccer, lacrosse and, in the northeast corner, baseball. He noted that to create a regulation-size field, 4,700 sq. ft. of wetlands to the south and east of field would be impacted. He said erosion controls would be used based on the 2002 DEEP guidelines, as well as silt fencing with a straw waddle in front of that stockpiling if necessary, in the center of the site.

He discussed drainage of the field, noting that synthetic turf drains vertically and features underlying stone that catches and treats the storm water before it discharges from the project. He said they will be using the same pipe that discharges from the field today. Since the wetland impact comprises about 4,700 sq. ft., the project includes a proposal to offset this impact by removing invasive species within 50' of the project area to the extent of about 68,000 sq. ft., a 14 to 1 ratio. There will also be retaining walls and new native species plantings to reestablish the disturbed edge.

George Logan, REMA Ecological Services, principal environmental scientist soil scientist, reviewed his credentials. He said the site has a history as an open field in the 1970's when it was part of a swamp that goes further to the south. He said the remaining area is a deep organic swamp with a brook that goes through it.

The chairman called for those wishing to speak in favor.

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Rick DeStephano, 17 Briarwood Ln, identified himself as the Foran Boys Soccer head coach, and a board member of Milford's lacrosse league. He said he grew up playing on this field and now coaches there. He said the upgrade in drainage is needed because the field doesn't drain well and has been abandoned for use for the last 2 years. He said the upgrade will have a significant benefit to the programs.

Natalie Forleo, 5 Claremont Circle, said she lives directly across from the field and prefers what is proposed to what the field looks like now.

Anthony Vitali, 115 Melba Street, Foran Athletic Director, said the field has many drainage issues, is covered with invasives, and declined dramatically in the last 5 years.

The chairman called for those wishing to speak against.

Patricia Taylor, 54 Ocean Av, spoke as a citizen and the director of EHHI (*Plastics Project for Environment and Human Health, Inc., as group she described as a ten-member, science-based non-profit organization composed of physicians, public health professionals and policy experts dedicated to protecting human health from environmental harms through research, education, and the promotion of sound public policies.*) She described the composition of synthetic turf fields and said they may contain zinc and PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) that can be harmful to aquatic life and should not be near wetlands.

The chairman invited the applicants and consultants to rebut.

Mr. Harris said he does not dispute that zinc may be present but there are ways to treat it, such as a filter that can remove zinc and other heavy metals placed in the last manhole. He said if the commission feels strongly about the filter, it could be added.

Mr. Logan said the issue with zinc has been long standing with synthetic fields. He said zinc can be a problem because of the vulcanization process of this type of rubber but the species on site can be more or less sensitive to zinc. He discussed a number of aquatic species in the area and stating that they are either not particularly sensitive to zinc or accumulate it and are prohibited from being consumed by humans. He said if the zinc were to get to a brook that has a sensitive species, it would be an issue. He also discussed the dilution of zinc in a watercourse; that it becomes more soluble in an aquatic species when acidity goes up, and that the site had a high organic pattern. He said in his professional opinion in this particular case, he was not concerned.

The chairman invited those wishing to speak in favor (of those that have already spoken); none did.

The chairman invited those to speak against (of those that have already spoken):

Ms. Taylor commented that because of the creek, zinc could be accessing additional species.

The chairman invited agency member questions -

Mr. DeFlumeri asked how many fields BSC has installed in the CT area. Mr. Harris estimated upwards of 15-20 fields, saying the project will not adversely impact the flooding conditions that currently exist.

Mr. Marlow thanked the presenters for addressing commission concerns on silt fencing and additional wetland plantings. He asked how dewatering of the site will be handled and what will happen to water coming from the site during construction. Mr. Harris said that as part of normal construction activity, excavation will discharge water to a silt sack or a sedimentation basin with overland flow back into the wetlands.

Chairman Magnan asked for a review of the filter system to reduce chemical infiltration. Mr. Harris described a cartridge system to be deployed in the last manhole that leads into the existing discharge pipe. He said storm water would flow through the turf, through the cartridge, and be discharged. He compared it to a household Brita system where water is forced through a carbon filter. He said the filter would need to be replaced as necessary by the City or Board of Education.

Chairman Magnan asked about cartridge maintenance and possible adverse impacts of chemical removal. Mr. Logan said the filters can indicate anything higher than the ambient levels and the manufacturer recommends monitoring it for the

first year to assess how often they would need to be replaced. He said the filter will not denude wetlands of anything valuable.

Chairman Magnan asked if Mr. Logan felt there would be a net benefit or neutral benefit on the wetlands; Mr. Logan said the area consists of a very large swamp and the effect will likely be neutral.

Mr. Munson asked for more detail about additional water. Mr. Harris said the field is at the same elevation as the wetland system, so there was surface water flowing onto the field. He said bringing the field up will reduce the flooding of the field in the high-water events. He described a drainage reservoir layer under the field. Mr. Harris said there were no endangered or species of special concern.

Mr. Munson asked if there is dumping of leaves grass and bushes on site. Mr. Harris said he did not witness any, but Ms. Palumbo said unfortunately it is typical in neighborhoods with open space areas, but difficult to identify who is dumping.

Mr. Bedecker felt that a turf field with a filtered drainage system could be a net benefit because lawn chemicals would not be required. He asked whether a natural cleansing effect on any chemicals that flow into the wetlands to Long Island Sound might be realized. Mr. Logan said that was possible because the water is going through a densely vegetated swamp that includes phragmites, which do a good job on soaking up chemicals.

Ms. Palumbo relayed questions about future tree maintenance and plantings.

1. Future tree maintenance – the current plan provides no access for tree equipment like a bucket truck and backhoe that are often needed to remove hazard or fallen trees. While low-pressure machines could be used the City does not own such equipment and are not aware of any contractors that do. Is it possible to design the ten-foot safety buffer along the east, west and south perimeter to support the heavier loads?
 - a. If a 10' swing gate could be installed at the French Drive end of the safety zones – it would make truck access possible.
 - b. Another option – using truck mats on top of the safety zone – not sure of what that design would require vs. no mats.
 - c. The Milford Land Conservation Trust has a public trail from Pond Point towards Foran / French Drive. The trail crosses the drainage swale with some 2 x 6's – probably should be a better crossing established. However, once crossing the drainage swale, the expanded fields would eliminate any side trail currently being used.
2. Plantings for mitigation, review the proposed mitigation plantings.

Chairman Magnan discussed closing the hearing; Mssrs. Marlow, Munson, Bhavé, and DeFlumeri felt the hearing could be closed.

The chairman closed the hearing at 4:07 pm.

Mr. Marlow felt a decision could be made.

Ms. Palumbo said the commission can condition the installation of the filter; and if the project involves doing a bridge separate review will be required.

Chairman Magnan said he found Mr. Logan's expert testimony on wetlands to be credible.

Mr. Marlow put a motion forward to approve our portion of the project with a condition that the filter be added and direct the contractor or engineer to allow heavier traffic over the field.

Second by Mr. DeFlumeri

MOTION

4:21pm

Commissioner Munson said that after duly considering all relevant factors, he moved to approve application IW-A-20-033: 0 French Dr, based on the plans entitled "*Improvements at Kelley Martin Tighe Field, 0 French Drive,*

Milford, Connecticut” by BSC Group, cover and 16 sheets dated June 2, 2020, the information in the file and presented to this Agency, for the following reasons:

This action will not have an impact or effect on the physical characteristics of the adjacent wetlands and watercourses.

With conditions including:

- The Permittee must submit a construction plan *prior* to taking out the permit.
- Soil Erosion and Sedimentation controls as outlined on the plans and in the CT DEP “2002 Erosion and Sedimentation Control Guidelines” must be installed and maintained on the site until the property is stabilized.
- Stormwater treatment must be installed as approved on the plans unless any changes are approved in writing *prior to making that change*.
- Within six (6) months of substantial completion of construction, the Permittee shall do the mitigation work approved on the plan cited herein. The permittee shall only use plants that are native to Long Island Sound as identified in the “*Connecticut Coastal Planting Guide*” Connecticut Sea Grant College Program 2011.
- Mitigation work and maintenance shall be in accordance with the submitted mitigation maintenance plan.
- Provisions for access to perform maintenance on the property surrounding the field as presented.
- Filter to be added to last manhole per discussion for heavy metals.
- Accommodations for heavy trucks to be included for maintenance.
- Recommended that last catch basin have a 4’ sump
- Catch basins to be cleaned
- The Permittee must submit a certification by the Project Engineer that the completed project meets the design intent of the approval prior to bonds being released.
- The permit is issued 6/19/20 and expires 6/19/25 unless otherwise provided by Statute.

That is my motion.

Second: Commissioner Marlow

Commissioner Marlow moved to amend the motion to reflect that no bonds are required.

Second: Commissioner Munson

The amendment to the motion carried unanimously.

The main motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner DeFlumeri moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Munson seconded; the motion carried unanimously.