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Conservation Comm Minutes 07-12-2001

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

JULY 12, 2001

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:30pm in the main auditorium of Town Hall. Present were Corinna Beckwith, Nathaniel Stevens, Timothy Sullivan, David White, Geraldine Tremblay, Christine Wallace and Judith Hodges of the Commission. Dave Albrecht of Rizzo Associates, George Khouri of Finard + Co., and Robert C. Buckley of Reimer & Braunstein. represented the Mugar parcel project. Ingeborg Hegemann of BSC Group was the Commission's consultants for the Mugar project.

Other attendees included:

Jennifer Griffith	4 Edith St.
Aram Hollman	12 Whittemore St.
Grace Perez	Mystic River Watershed Assoc., 20 Academy St.
George Laite	25 Lafayette St.
P.J. Gardner	Spy Pond Condos
Tom Lisco	Spy Pond Condos
Susan Maltz	114 Thorndike St.
Alan Maltz	114 Thorndike St.
June Wendroff	79 Spy Pond Pkwy
David Lowe	42 High Haith Rd
Thelma Parker	53 Dorothy Rd
Gary Gryan	47 Burch St.
Diane Mahon	23 Howard St.
Jack Hurd	28 Colonial Dr.

7:30pm – MISCELLANEOUS

The next meeting of the Commission will be next Thursday, July 19 in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex.

The final draft of the Great Meadows report has been received and will be reviewed by the working group and the Commission. The Commission agreed to hold a public meeting to present this after Town Day in September.

There will be a site walk at the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on Friday 7/13 to discuss placement of erosion controls along the bank of the Mill Brook

Grace Perez presented an outline of the Mystic River Watershed Association's Open Space Plan for the 21 towns and 76 square miles within the watershed. She will forward a copy of the plan for review and comment from the Commission.

The hotel project at 19 Mass Ave has started demolition and construction of the foundation.

A site walk at the Arlington Reservoir, will be held on 7/13 regarding the mechanical harvesting of water chestnuts. This should commence in the last two weeks of July.

An 18 Parker Rd site walk will be held 7/16 for the Certificate of Compliance for the reconstruction of a wall along Mystic Lake.

The Commission will have a picnic on 7/28 at 3pm at Mr. White's residence.

Fiscal – the Commission voted to approved payment to Brother's Place for pizza for the Meadowbrook project, MACC dues, administrative expenses to Ms. Beckwith.

8:00pm – MUGAR PARCEL, ABBREVIATED NOTICE OF RESOURCE AREA DELINEATION, continued

Mr. Stevens opened the continued hearing and noted the latest information received by the Commission on this project: review letters from BSC dated 6/21/01, 7/2/01 and 7/5/01, a review memo from Ms. Beckwith dated 7/11/01, a letter from Steve Kaiser dated 7/2/01, Jennifer Griffith's letter from 6/21/01, and a letter from the Northeast Regional Climate Center (NRCC) dated 7/12/01.

Mr. Buckley began by saying that the consultant for the applicant has given an extensive presentation of the information on the floodplain determination. He suggested that the proceeding move forward with questions from the audience and the Commission.

Ms. Beckwith read the letter from the NRCC. It stated that the latest rainfall data (the most recent 30 years) has been included in updated tables of rainfall frequencies. The new frequencies are much larger than those in TP-40, the 100 year storm is much higher than that previously used in the 1982 FEMA analysis. The letter was written by Keith Eggleston, Regional Climatologist.

Mr. Stevens asked Mr. Buckley if the standards under our local bylaw are also being met. Mr. Buckley stated that we should be internally consistent with the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) in using the default information.

Mr. Stevens asked if Mr. Albrecht received any previous permit information from the Cambridge Conservation Commission. Mr. Albrecht stated that he tried to phone them, but did not receive a timely response to his inquiry. Mr. Albrecht was also not able to get any information from the MBTA. Mr. Stevens asked if Mr. Albrecht had looked for permit information at the Registry of Deeds. Mr. Albrecht replied that he did not.

Ms. Griffith is concerned that groundwater is not being discussed enough in these hearings or the reports. Ms. Hegemann explained that while groundwater quality is a protected interest in the WPA, and it doesn't protect homes from rising groundwater elevations. A new flood study should consider the interaction of groundwater and surface water flows.

Ms. Hegemann presented the 7/2/01 review letter from BSC in response to the Cambridge CSO project's Notice of Project Change (NPC) document. BSC agrees that there is creditable information on file that calls into question the 1982 FEMA flood study. A new flood study is needed if the Commission wanted to set a specific flood elevation; none of the information on file does that. If the Commission chooses to accept the 1982 flood study information, then 8.1 NGVD elevation is the correct elevation to use from an engineering perspective.

Mr. Buckley asked that the Commission make the decision set before them. The applicant has asserted that the default information that has been submitted is the correct one to use and requests that the Commission close the hearing and vote on the permit.

Mr. Hollman presented new comments. He read his comment letter into the record and distributed copies. His questions the information presented by Rizzo. He contends that elevation 8.2 should be used at the Mugar parcel since the Little River is closer and has open access (over Rte. 2) to the parcel as opposed to using the 8.1 elevation from the Alewife River below Rt.2.

Mr. Albrecht discussed the justification for the 8.1 NGVD is that flood does pile up from waterbodies, even though water is flowing downhill. Water escapes from the Mugar parcel to Thorndike field to the Alewife below Rte. 2.

Ms. Wallace asked if any water elevations in photographs had been surveyed. Mr. Albrecht stated that video of the March, 2001 storm which showed flooding of Rte 2 that the Lake St. ramp area flooding was at elevation 5.5 NGVD. Mr. Albrecht showed the enlargement of Ms. Griffith's photo of the October 21, 1996 flooding on Margaret St. and Edith St. The curb elevation at this location is 6.8 NGVD. An estimate of the 100-year elevation at this location would be half way up the fence at the house on Margaret St. in the photo.

Ms. Griffith asserted that the 1996 storm was only a 55 or 60 year storm. The March, 2001 storm was less than a 10 year storm.

Ms. Wallace asked for a clarification on possible funding of the new study. Ms. Perez responded that Bob Durand, the Secretary of Environmental Affairs has agreed to put up \$150,000 to pay for a Hydrology and Hydraulics study for the Alewife Area for the MDC Master Plan of the Alewife Reservation.

Ms. Mahon added that the March, 2001 storm was a 2 year storm in Boston and a 12 year storm in Bedford.

Mr. Hollman stated in the WPA Regulations regarding the requirement of using engineering calculations. He feels that the

statements from the applicants were speculations and assumptions. Engineering calculations were not submitted to the Commission.

Mr. Buckley stated that his understanding is that the engineering calculations are required when the applicant asserts something different from the FEMA information. He respectfully requested that the Commission close the hearing and make its decision.

Mr. Sullivan made a motion to close the hearing/ Ms. Hodges seconded the motion. Ms. Wallace abstained from a vote on the motion since she did not attend the first hearing. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous.

Mr. Stevens scheduled the deliberation and decision for this project on July 19, 2001 at 7:30pm in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex.

The Commission voted to convene at approximately 9:15pm.
Respectfully submitted,
Cori Beckwith, Administrator