

Arlington Conservation Commission
Minutes
July 14, 2016

Acting-Chair Mr. Connors called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room, of the Town Hall Annex. Present were David White, Mike Nonni, Charles Tirone, Susan Chapnick, Curt Connors, Janine White and Catherine Garnett. Chair Nathaniel Stevens and Associate member Eileen Coleman were not present. Also present were Bruce Whettle, Bob Sprague, Mary Morgan, Sharon Green, Denis Blais, Timothy Ellix, Kathy Aruda, Zack Lissard, Harry Boucher, Tim Shannon, Brad Barber, Mary Trudeau, Karen Grossman, Ben Ferber, Michael Ruderman, Ian Bernardin, Catherine Chiu, Arthur Prokosch, Jessica Smolau, Andy Draudt, Aida Khan, Dora Horvath, David Bean, Thea Parieth, David Loh, Leslie Mayer, Jim Feeney, Bill Doyle, Peter Hedlund, Rosita Koleva, Margaret Moody, Vihren Kolev, and Jen Rothenberg.

Commission Business:

Chapnick/DWhite motioned to approve the 6/16/16 **minutes** with edits; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Chapnick noted the story in the Advocate regarding **goats** clearing vegetation at Symmes Woods, and gave the clipping to Ms. Beckwith for the scrapbook.

Ms. Beckwith presented a request to issue an Invalid Certificate of Compliance to permit No. 91-173 at **19R Park Ave**, as the project was never done. DWhite/Tirone motioned to approve the issuance of an invalid Certificate of Compliance; motion passed unanimously.

Discussion – Mt. Gilboa steps project

Mr. Bernardin presented his completed project at Mt. Gilboa Conservation Land. The curved stairs were installed over approximately 10 days of work. The neighbors shared the goal to preserve the natural state of the area. Mr. Bernardin had material costs of over \$415 and requested approval for reimbursement of \$250 from the Land Steward Funds for this project. DWhite/Chapnick motioned to approve the payment of \$250 from the Land Stewards Fund; motion passed unanimously.

Notice of Intent – 12 Clyde Terrace

Ms. Trudeau presented revised drawings. The existing house is 52 feet from the wetland, the proposed house would be 43 feet from the wetland. The existing house and pool have 3825 sf. of impervious surface, while the new development would have only 2171 sf of impervious surface, with the removal of the pool.

The proposed rear extension does extend into the 50 foot buffer zone, but the developer says that this extension cannot be changed.

Mr. Tirone asked if the driveway could be removed with a variance, or the 25 foot setback lessened. There is the requirement to park two cars.

Ms. White commented that the proposed infiltration systems are “upstream” of the proposed retaining walls and asked whether the walls will have weeping holes, and whether flow will go horizontally and damage the walls. She also asked about the exfiltration rate from the units.

Mr. Tirone asked about the planting beds and distances between them.

Mr. Connors would like more review of these newer items.

With the Commission, Ms. Trudeau composed a list of additional items to provide for the application:

- 1) Landscaping plan showing all the vegetation (existing and proposed) along with lawn
- 2) Habitat mitigation strip
- 3) Location of downspouts
- 4) Infiltration units shown on plan
- 5) Test pit locations
- 6) Spot grades
- 7) Catch basin protection – add note to plans to install silt sack
- 8) Provide narrative to support proposal to build house in the 50ft buffer zone and what mitigation is provided for this impact
- 9) Provide justification from developer on why the house cannot be reduced in size to stay out of the 50 ft buffer zone.

DWhite/JWhite motioned to continue this hearing to allow for more information to be provided and continued review of what has been submitted, to July 21 at 8:15pm; motion passed unanimously.

Notice of Intent – 47 Spy Pond Lane, Lots A and B

Ms. Trudeau presented the request from the developer to continue the hearings to 7/21 at 8:30 and 8:45pm. DWhite/JWhite motioned to continue the hearing; motion passed unanimously.

Amendment – Magnolia Park

Ms. Rothenberg and Ms. Mayer presented the proposal to amend the permit to include the area of the proposed expanded community garden, removing the two maples and two of the three redwood trees. They explained that the design was achieved over a nine month review period and will provide a few naturalized areas in the design. The long range planning of the site, when it grows in will be shady and provide lots of habitat.

Mr. Hedlund gave more details and noted that a 1985 plan in the town files, showed the redwoods in the design (making them approximately 31 years old). The specification called for 7-8 foot tall plants. The 12" diameter redwood is proposed to be removed as it is in direct competition with the 24" diameter redwood and will allow for the continuation of the proposed path loop.

Mr. Hedlund provided narrative (page 5) regarding habitat value of the new replacement vegetation, with structured and layered plantings, along with a new redwood tree. The meadow planting is included in the proposal, with Swamp White Oaks.

Mr. Tirone asked if the garden beds were raised. Mr. Hedlund explained that the beds are edged but not raised.

Ms. Garnett commented that community gardens seem to get neglected over time. Ms. Mayer responded that the plots are distributed by a lottery system and that there is a long waiting list, with some disuse, due to the poor quality of the existing gardens. Schools have started to add these to their properties.

Ms. Chapnick referred to the local wetland regulations, section 24d, which contain 5 requirements to cut down vegetation. She asked if the community garden plots could be constructed to the west of the trees.

Mr. Hedlund and Mr. Doyle responded that the soccer field and a large drain are on the west side of the park, which complicate moving the garden plots in that direction.

Mr. Nonni asked if the 30" diameter redwood were left in place, would it eventually shade the garden even more. Mr. Hedlund responded that yes, the redwood will continue to grow, they can get to 100 feet tall and get very wide.

Mr. Tirone asked to see a plan showing an alternative split design. Ms. Rothenberg responded that this was the final design. Mr. Doyle responded with discussion of high quality garden plots, light, drainage, water, access, soil quality.

Mr. White asked if the remaining 24" diameter redwood near the gardens will also eventually shade the gardens. Mr. Hedlund responded that this is possible.

Mr. Doyle explained that the entire drain system for the park is being rehabilitated to connect to the existing pump station.

Mr. Loh asked if the canopy of the 30" diameter redwood could be trimmed. Keith Bernard, an arborist, has described this redwood tree as a good one for this location, in the floodplain.

Mr. Hedlund responded that even if they trimmed up the redwood branches, that the root system is still entering the garden plots.

Mr. Loh read the statement that he sent in to the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Whelple commented that he thought the area was unsuitable for a garden and was good for redwoods. The removal of a large healthy tree is worrying. Robbins Farm has a community garden that is run by a group of people together to share the work. Maintenance of the park later is deeply concerning. Alternative layout of the park should be reviewed.

Mr. White commented that habitat values should be the consideration in this discussion of the tree replacement policy. Mr. Hedlund reviewed that habitat information in his proposal.

Another resident commented that there are not a lot of large trees in Arlington, while he hasn't seen the garden used much at all.

Ms. Horvath commented that the caliper measurement of the replacement proposal may be equal but this is not only a mathematical calculation. The canopy area should also be considered. She also read a statement that she had sent in to the Commission, concluding with the proposal to cut down a large healthy tree is sad.

Mr. Connors asked again if the trees could be trimmed, but Mr. Hedlund responded that trimming doesn't prevent the shading again after it grows some more, and the impact of the roots would continue and worsen.

Mr. Bean commented that he was a gardener and a fan of dawn redwoods, that he planted one in his own yard. He said they are essentially acting like a weed, just being in the wrong place. He doesn't think any of the existing redwoods should remain so close to the gardens. The habitat value of these redwoods is not as high as native plants will provide. There was a nest in the apple tree once. Passersby to the garden ask how to apply for the plots.

Mr. Prokosch commented that he was also a gardener and if the community garden plots are not put in this park, where will they be placed. This is the only one in town. He said that gardens provide educational value to children. He is also concerned over future maintenance of the park.

Ms. Mayer responded that maintenance upkeep on all Town properties is a constant pressing topic in the budget process, and the system for this needs to be improved dramatically. The Park and Recreation Commission did not take lightly the decision to cut the tree, but it was a balance of all the needs for this park.

Tirone/DWhite motioned to close the hearing; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Connors tabled deliberation and the vote on this for later this evening or to the next meeting on 7/21 at 9pm, as another hearing was waiting for review.

Notice of Intent – Algonquin gas line repair in Alewife Reservation behind 127 Sunnyside Ave

Mr. Blais presented the project to inspect and repair an anomaly to the large gas line in the Alewife Reservation. They are working to extend the work permit from DCR from last year and will replant the willow tree if it is in the way of the work area.

Ms. Garnet suggested working with Nancy Putnam or Stella Lessing at DCR on the restoration of the area.

Mr. Tirone asked that the Commission review a draft Order of Conditions on this work before voting approval, to include:

- 1) Tree protection of the willow, with 2x4s and burlap, if necessary
- 2) Replacement of the tree to follow local regulations with six 2-3" trees, if the willow is removed
- 3) Cyclone fence used the perimeter of the work area
- 4) Limbing of the willow, not to exceed 20%
- 5) Vehicle storage overnight beyond the 50 ft Buffer zone, in the northwest corner of the proposed staging area
- 6) Include the standard condition for dewatering

Chapnick/Tirone motioned to close the hearing; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Beckwith will draft the Order for the next meeting on 7/21.

Meeting adjourned at 11:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Corinna Beckwith