

Brookline Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 11, 2020, 7:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Conference

Commissioners Present: Marcus Quigley (Chair), Roberta Schnoor (Vice Chair), Pamela Harvey, Pallavi Kalia Mande, Marian Lazar (Associate)

Commissioners Absent: Benjamin Wish, Werner Lohe

Staff Present: Tom Brady (Conservation Administrator), Katie Weatherseed (Conservation Assistant)

Guests: See attached.

AGENDA REVIEW/MINUTES

M. Quigley opened the meeting. The Commissioners reviewed the minutes from July 28, 2020.

R. Schnoor made a motion to approve the minutes from July 28, 2020 with a minor amendment. P. Harvey seconded. All in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE NOTICE OF INTENT FOR THE EDITH C. BAKER SCHOOL TENNIS COURTS (BEVERLY ROAD), FOR THE RENOVATION OF THE TENNIS COURTS, SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOR THE TOWN OF BROOKLINE

Scott Landgren, Senior Landscape Architect for the Town of Brookline's Parks and Open Space Division, introduced the proposed project to resurface the existing Edith C. Baker School Tennis Courts, remove and replace existing paving and fencing, and conduct associated grading work. He shared an aerial picture of the Edith C. Baker School Tennis Courts and nearby resource area. He noted that the residents of Hancock Village often use the route to access the school. He noted that the nearby Bordering Vegetated Wetland was flagged by EcoTech and includes a wooded swamp and marshland area. He added that the stream depicted on the submitted site plan is part of the southern branch of the Sawmill Brook.

S. Landgren described the site's history, including historic design plans from 1938, at which time the courts had a different orientation than present day. He explained that in 1949, the courts were expanded to include 5 courts and encroached into the neighboring wetlands. S. Landgren described the site preparation plan, noting a coir log, silt fencing, construction fencing, and tree protection fencing.

S. Landgren stated that the current configuration of the tennis courts is smaller than standard court size (8 or 9 feet spacing between courts, as opposed to the standard 12 feet spacing). He showed the proposed design, noting that the corners are designed to minimize impervious paving. Grading of the site will be consistent with current grades. He stated that the proposed work involves removing the existing paving, confirming that the gravel base is adequate and then repaving the area with a 3-inch layer of bituminous paving. He added that the 10-foot fence around the court will be replaced in kind with a standard chain link fence detail with footings over 10 feet. He asked if the Commission had any questions.

R. Schnoor asked S. Landgren to clarify why an alternatives analysis was not conducted. S. Landgren stated that the courts were constructed and have been maintained in this configuration for over 50 years, and noted that the scope of the work is for the most part a replacement in kind. M. Quigley inquired about the total increase of imperviousness. S. Landgren stated that the existing courts are approximately 28,320 square feet, and the new courts would amount to approximately 30,054 square feet. M. Quigley asked S. Landgren to describe the stormwater controls proposed. S. Landgren responded that the proposed grading of the court is in the same direction as current conditions. He added that a coir log will be installed and the drainage pattern should not alter from existing conditions. He added that the walkway is 1,100 square feet and will be replaced in kind. M. Quigley noted that the project seems like a good opportunity to improve discharges to the wetland, and suggested a trench drain that empties into a stone bed. S. Landgren agreed that a trench drain is a great idea and would be appropriate for the site. P. K. Mande asked if S. Landgren could develop a cross section showing the edge condition (including the trench drain, if S. Landgren proceeds with that design). S. Landgren replied that he can certainly develop cross sections of the existing edge of the court and the proposed edge conditions (including the trench drain). M. Quigley commented that the design should minimize point discharge to whatever extent possible. S. Landgren stated that the whole court currently sheetflows towards the wetland and has done so since the 1930s. T. Brady noted that his first thought for this project was to slope the court away from the wetland, but this would direct the stormwater directly towards ledge. He added that he likes the idea of recharge along the river-side of the project, but has some concerns about the possibility of point source discharge. He suggested against additional excavation to install a manufactured structure, noting that it may have unintended consequences on the nearby trees and consequently, the stream itself. T. Brady suggested that S. Landgren consider a hybrid approach, and discussed the possibility of a trench drain cover with no bottom. M. Quigley agreed that S. Landgren will have to get creative with his solution. R. Schnoor stated that from her recollection, the runoff from the tennis courts has not adversely impacted the resource area to date. However, she added that the applicant will need to be attentive to runoff, particularly in regards to the proposed increase in impervious surface. She inquired about the renovation of the pathways, and whether S. Landgren might consider using a porous material. S. Landgren clarified that the "access road" pathway is a temporary pathway, however noted that the permanent northwest pathway could be constructed of porous pavement. M. Quigley asked whether the tennis court itself could be constructed of porous pavement. S. Landgren responded that unfortunately that is not possible, since the surface needs to be suitable for play. P. K. Mande asked S. Landgren to expand on what porous paving material he would use on the pathways. S. Landgren stated that he would use porous asphalt. P. K. Mande inquired whether the porous pavers would be infiltrating a larger drainage area. S. Landgren replied that most of the runoff pools on the court, however the pathway is at a lower elevation and would see a small amount of runoff. P. K. Mande continued that she assumes S. Landgren would be providing some stone base for storage, and inquired what the proposed subbase dimensions would be and whether there would be any impact to the resource area during construction. S. Landgren responded that standard depth for porous asphalt in New England is supposed to be two-thirds of the frost-depth. He discussed the fact that the porous asphalt would not have a lot of external

sources draining onto it. R. Schnoor inquired whether there are any issues with getting large equipment through to the work area. S. Landgren responded that it will not be easy and will require additional discussions with Chestnut Hill Realty. He noted that they have been incredibly supportive of the needs of the Sanctuary, and that the proposed access route is unfortunately the only means of accessing the site. R. Schnoor inquired whether the applicant has any concern regarding potential damage to the area. S. Landgren responded that in the final plan set, he will clearly delineate the construction entrance and temporary soil protections and subsequent restoration efforts. T. Brady added that when the Commission drafts the Order of Conditions, there will be a condition concerning weight limits over the culvert. S. Landgren noted that another challenge will be providing an access point to the sanctuary during construction. M. Quigley suggested continuing the hearing so that the applicant can address the proposed changes discussed in this hearing.

P. Harvey made a motion to continue the hearing to September 22, 2020. R. Schnoor seconded. All in favor.

DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL MATERIALS RELATING TO THE CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE FOR 150 WOODLAND ROAD (DEP FILE NUMBERS 120-65 & 120-73)

T. Brady stated several Commissioners had a site visit and identified several items that needed to be addressed by the applicant: an as-built plan naming the body of water in question as a “pond”, and a specific list of planting materials to be installed in the wetland mitigation area and their associated cost so that the Commission can calculate a bond amount. T. Brady stated that he has received the list of planting materials and believes it is appropriate in regards to species, varieties and quantities. He described the estimated cost to install the proposed plantings and suggested that the Commission proceed and issue the Certificates of Compliance. He added that the letter accompanying the Certificate of Compliance for DEP File No. 120-65 will recommend that plantings should be completed prior to September 30th.

P. Harvey made a motion to issue the Certificates of Compliance for DEP File No. 120-65 and 120-73. R. Schnoor seconded. All in favor.

MUDDY RIVER UPDATE

T. Brady stated that signage has been erected and additional signage will be added shortly. He added that everything appears to be on track and moving forward.

STAFF UPDATE

T. Brady stated that schools in Brookline will be putting up a large number of outdoor tents to use as classroom facilities. He stated that he’s had a busy week since the recent storm, as there were winds over 60 mph. He also noted that there have been a significant number of algal blooms across Town due to the lack of rain and stagnant waters. T. Brady also noted that volunteers have been doing great work at Lost Pond and the D. Blakely Hoar Sanctuary. He then noted that the Larz Anderson project that the Commission recently permitted has been postponed, and he is not sure when the project will move forward.

ADJOURN

P. Harvey made a motion to adjourn. R. Schnoor seconded. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by K. Weatherseed