

TOWN OF FARMINGTON
INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

October 16, 2024

Present for the online web conference were Acting Chair Isner, Commissioners Berlandy, Fox, Kelsey (at 7:13pm), Simons, Simpson, and Alternate Commissioner Tulin. Senior Assistant Town Planner Cyr and Clerk Michaud were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in the Development Conference Room was Senior Assistant Town Planner Cyr, Clerk Michaud and Commissioner Kelsey. All others were present online.

Commissioner Statchen and Alternate Commissioner Santos were absent.

Alternate Commissioner Tulin was appointed to participate in place of absent Commissioner Statchen.

NEW BUSINESS

Richard Jones – Lot 8556 New Britain Avenue

Modification of prior approval for regulated activity within upland review area for improvements associated with development of site to construct warehouses. Dave Whitney, PE, represented the applicant and stated since the approval granted by the Commission last year, the owner is proposing to make some modifications. Mr. Whitney submitted a site plan outlining the limits of the upland review area from Hyde Brook, the new area of disturbance associated with the construction of proposed building “B”. The revisions include additional impervious surface for a parking and drive area and the adjusted location of the rear building moved further to the south. Mr. Whitney also provided a site plan showing the proposed modifications superimposed over the approved site plan to clarify the changes. The additional area of impervious parking and drive area is 3,820 sq. ft. and the additional area of disturbance is approximately 1,600 sq. ft. No mature trees are in the location in this area of additional disturbance. Commissioner Simpson expressed a concern with additional clearing closer to Hyde Brook. Mr. Whitney indicated they are working on a landscape plan to include additional landscaping for the area. All stormwater runoff from the additional area of impervious will flow to the catch basin in the driveway and then be directed to the new proposed stormwater underground infiltration system. Any excess flow from the infiltration system will then flow to the proposed stormwater detention basin. There are no other proposed changes in the upland review area. After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Commissioners these proposed modifications will not require a site walk.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Fox/Tulin) it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the Richard Jones application for modification of prior approval for regulated activity within upland review area for improvements associated with development of site to construct warehouses on Lot 8556 New Britain Avenue.

City of Hartford – 95 Batterson Park Road

Regulated activity within wetlands and upland review area to disturb 0.11 acres of wetlands for grading and construction of roadways, trails, parking areas, boardwalks, dock supports, and other improvements associated with redevelopment of the area around Batterson Park Pond. Paul Drummey, Director of Capital Projects & Operations for the City of Hartford, provided the background of the approximately 266-acre park with 155-acre pond. Eighty-eight percent of the park is within the Town of Farmington with the remainder in the City of New Britain. The park was closed to public use in 2015 and in 2023 existing buildings were demolished after a permit approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission. Jesse Harris, Landscape Architect with BSC Group, spoke to photos of the existing condition of the park, existing trails system through portions of the park, and reviewed the proposed new development of the site including improvements to the multi-use trail system, parking area, structure locations and new park entrance. Ethan Sneesby, Soil Scientist, BSC Group, presented the environmental resources site plan to show the areas of wetlands, streams, FEMA floodplain Zone A and potential vernal pool in a wooded area to the west of the site within the area of wetland #11. Mr. Harris stated the park will be a year-round park and include a multi-use trail system, dock for fishing, a kayak/canoe dock/launch area, splash pad, playground, picnic areas, boardwalk, bird watching platform, a park maintenance building, and an amenity building. Mr. Harris added the pond has been determined by DEEP to not be swimmable and the former beach area will be allowed to naturalize and the area around the pond will be posted with signs prohibiting swimming.

Alternate Commissioner Tulin left the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Rob Newton, PE Senior Civil Engineer with BSC Group, reviewed the engineering and stormwater design for the project. The stormwater will be treated through a combination of stone check dams, dry water quality swales, and bioretention basins with sediment forebays.

The presentation team reviewed the proposed landscape plan and the wetland mitigation/restoration plan, stating construction and restoration will be under the direct supervision of a qualified wetland or soil scientist.

Commissioners asked for clarification on the location of the new access road and if there are any proposed direct wetland impacts. Mr. Harris responded with no direct wetland impacts. Regarding the new access road, Mr. Drummey responded they had met with Town staff and it was suggested as an improved location. The existing location is not wide enough and is lined on one side with mature trees and with utility poles on the opposite side making it difficult to widen the roadway. Commissioners also asked questions regarding the construction of the boardwalk, trail and proposed tree intrusion, bridges, along with a long-term commitment and maintenance plan for the park. After further discussion it was the consensus of the Commission to conduct a site walk and due to the proposed wetland disturbance they felt the application would likely require a public hearing but the final determination will not be made until after a site walk. It was suggested additional protection and enhancement for the vernal pool be considered.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Simons/Fox) it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the City of Hartford application for regulated activity within wetlands and upland review area to disturb 0.11 acres of wetlands for grading and construction of roadways,

trails, parking areas, boardwalks and dock supports and other improvements associated with redevelopment of the area around Batterson Park Pond located at 95 Batterson Park Road.

A site walk will take place on October 27, 2024 at 9:00am.

Cease & Desist – 1509 Farmington Avenue

Update regarding conduct of regulated activity without a permit for property located at 1509 Farmington Avenue. Senior Assistant Town Planner Cyr stated there is nothing new to report at this time. Updates will be provided as they become available.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Upon a motion made and seconded (Kelsey/Simpson) it was unanimously

VOTED: To elect Commissioner Statchen as Chair, Commissioner Isner as Vice-Chair and Commissioner Fox as Secretary through October 2025.

PLANNER'S REPORT

New Horizons

Senior Assistant Town Planner Cyr met onsite with New Horizons to look at approximately ten to twelve trees within the water quality basin to the north of the site. These trees are of concern regarding their condition and quality, and the New Horizons Staff had an arborist flag the trees of immediate concern. Photos of the trees were provided for clarification. The Commission stated if they are just cutting the trees and not removing the stumps then they can proceed under the direction of Town Staff.

MINUTES

Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion made and seconded (Simons/Simpson) it was

VOTED: 5 in favor, 1 abstention (Kelsey) to approve the September 18, 2024 Inland Wetlands meeting minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

SJM