

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JANUARY 6, 2014**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Eric Prause, Chair
Andy Kidd, Vice Chair
Horace Brown, Secretary

Alternates: Susan Shanbaum

Absent: Michael Stebe
Chirag Thaker
Julian Stoppelman
Donald Palmer

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
Ginger MacHattie, Recording Secretary

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – for repair of an existing retaining wall at 192 Charter Oak Street. Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2013-074); Inland Wetlands Permit (2013-074); Flood Plain Permit (2013-080)

Mr. Glenn Jarvis of Milone & MacBroom, project manager for the project, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He said the project was to drive steel sheet piling as close as possible to the front face of the existing wall, which is made of a combination of different materials and is in poor condition with large holes. The project would cause some fill within the flood plain, which would be compensated for by cutting the slope on the opposite bank and replanting it. The net increase in excavation would be 314 cubic feet. Construction of sheeting would take about one month and backfilling and putting on a concrete cap would take another couple of weeks, Mr. Jarvis said. The well would be taken care of by a generator for the short term, he said.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Jarvis said the cause of the current damage to the retaining wall was old age, and the new wall will be solid galvanized steel so it will last a long time. Mr. Prause asked what kind of soil quality the soil to be removed on south side was, and Mr. Jarvis said mostly sand and gravel. He said the work would be done in the summer, May or June. Mr. Prause requested an explanation of the impact on the flood plain. Mr. Jarvis responded that the existing wall was partially in the flood way and entirely in the flood plain; since there was a fill, they wanted to compensate for that so the water surface elevation would not be raised. For that reason, the applicant proposed to cut more area to open up the stream channel to retain or even have more area for flood storage.

In response to a question from Mr. Kidd, Mr. Jarvis said the wall would be made of corrugated steel. The back-and-forth “Z” shape of the corrugated steel gives it strength. The steel would be about three quarters of an inch thick, he said.

In response to questions from Mr. Kidd about trails in the area, Mr. Pellegrini said the Charter Oak Greenway runs along the brook but trails visible on the plan were maintenance vehicle access ways, for the utility staff to get in and out if needed; the bikeway was not shown on the plan, he said.

Mr. Kidd asked if the applicant had considered a more aesthetic treatment for the proposed wall. Mr. Jarvis responded that the proposed wall would have a nice concrete cap and new chain link fence along the top of it. Mr. Kidd asked if other options were looked at. Mr. Jarvis said other wall types had been considered but those options would have been more costly. Mr. Kidd asked how obvious the wall would be and Mr. Jarvis said there would be planting on the other side of the brook and he thought most people wouldn’t see the wall except possibly one corner, where a few plantings could easily be added if the Commission wanted. Mr. Kidd said he would like to soften or buffer the wall to the extent possible.

In response to questions from Mr. Brown, Mr. Jarvis confirmed that the area is largely screened at this point.

Ms. Shanbaum asked how far away from the existing wall the new wall would be. Mr. Jarvis said the back side of the sheeting would be roughly a foot away from the face of the existing wall. He confirmed it would not be possible to see the existing wall and there will not be water between the new sheeting and existing wall. He said the wall should last at least 50 years.

In response to questions from Mr. Prause, Mr. Jarvis said the existing stone walls in the area will not be removed.

Matt Bordeaux, Environmental Planner, said there were outstanding staff comments from Derrick Gregor, Assistant Town Engineer, and Bernard Kalansuriya, Design Engineer, most of which were minor. He said the only technical comment was a request to show how the sheet piling would affect the water main in the area. Mr. Bordeaux reported that Mr. Gregor and Mr. Kalansuriya would recommend approval of the plans provided the modifications were made when the final mylars were submitted. Mr. Bordeaux added that the area is highly vegetated and the wall is not very visible at all, but the northwest corner of the northern wall would probably be the best place for providing a visual screen.

Mr. Prause asked whether it would be advisable to add a condition about what time of year the work would be done, and Mr. Bordeaux said most of the work can be done in the wet and the excavation on the opposite bank should be adequate to prevent any impacts. Mr. Jarvis said they would probably set the wall first and then excavate afterward.

Mr. Kidd asked whether the changes to the wetlands regulation were in effect yet. Ms. Bertotti said the application was admitted before the regulation became effective, so the regulation change would not apply here.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2013-074)

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to find the proposed activity would not cause a significant impact to the wetlands and watercourses and will not require a public hearing. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2013-074)

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to approve the inland wetlands permit with modifications as outlined in the staff memorandum from Derrick Gregor, Assistant Town Engineer, dated December 24, 2013 to Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner, and from Bernard Kalansuriya, Design Engineer, dated December 26, 2013 to Renata Bertotti, and that additional vegetative screening is added on the west side of the north bank. This permit is valid for five years with work in the upland review area to be completed one year from the beginning of construction. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is the proposed activity will stabilize a degrading retaining wall and prevent its collapse that may lead to significant streambank erosion and sedimentation to the brook.

Flood Plain Permit (2013-080)

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to approve the flood plain permit with modifications as outlined in the staff memorandum from Derrick Gregor, Assistant Town Engineer, dated December 24, 2013 to Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner, and from Bernard Kalansuriya, Design Engineer, dated December 26, 2013 to Renata Bertotti. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Mr. Kidd nominated Mr. Prause as Chair. Mr. Brown seconded the nomination and all members voted in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Prause nominated Mr. Kidd as Vice Chair. Ms. Shanbaum seconded the nomination and all members voted in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Prause nominated Mr. Brown as Secretary. Ms. Shanbaum seconded the nomination and all members voted in favor.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

1. **DAVID BERTRAND – Special Exception (2013-090)** – special exception under Article II Section 18.03.01 (b) to allow personal service in existing building at 148 Forest Street, Historic zone.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.