



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

78 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749
(978) 562-2948

David Mercer, Chair

Emilie Wilder, Vice Chair

Brandon Parker

Heidi Graf

James Martin

Debbi Edelstein

Paul Osborne

Meeting Minutes July 2, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Hudson Conservation Commission was conducted via remote participation.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by vice chair Emilie Wilder

Roll Call: Emilie Wilder, Brandon Parker, Heidi Graf, James Martin, Debbi Edelstein, Paul Osborne, Joseph Mullin (Assoc), Brooke Warrington (Assoc)

Staff: Pam Helinek (Conservation Agent)

Public Hearings

2 Chestnut Street, continued NOI, 190-0649

Emilie Wilder moved to continue the hearing to July 16, 2020 at 7:00 PM, second by Debbie Edelstein, vote 6-0-0

49 Houghton Street, continued NOI, 190-0648

Emilie Wilder moved to continue the hearing to August 6, 2020 at 7:00 PM, second by Debbie Edelstein, vote 6-0-0

South Street Riverwalk, NOI, 190-0650

Present: Ingeborg Hegemann, Ale Echandi, Casey-Lee Bastien (BSC Group), Steven Santos (Hudson Recreation), Tom Green (Riverwalk Steering Committee)

Documents:

- Hudson Riverwalk Project, Hudson, MA: Notice of Intent Application; prepared by BSC Group; June 2020
- Plan of Hudson River Walk Improvements in the Town of Hudson; prepared by BSC Group; dated 5/20/20; signed and stamped by Casey-Lee Bastien, RLA 1554; scale 1"=20'

Heidi Graf recused herself because she works for BSC Group. BSC Group presented the project which includes the extension and enhancement of a walkway along the Assabet River behind South Street, from the South Street municipal parking lot to the municipal parking lot next to the

Cellucci Splash Park on Houghton Street. The project will meet ADA requirements, improve storm water management and climate resiliency with nature based solutions, remove a large area of invasive vegetation and replace with a native plant mix, formalize bootleg trails to the river's edge which are currently causing erosion, and provide overlook areas for the public. The project is a Town project and will be phased due to funding constraints.

The project will impact bank, Riverfront Area, Bordering Vegetated Wetland, Bordering Land Subject to Flooding, and Buffer Zone. Mitigation includes invasive removal, native planting, compensatory flood storage, replacement of some impervious surface with pervious pavers and storm water improvements. Erosion controls will include coir logs at the top of bank, aquatic silt barrier, and erosion control blankets as well as straw wattles and silt fence.

DEP file number and comments were recently received and BSC Group is in the process of addressing them.

Brandon Parker asked about maintenance of the knotweed growth after the project is over. Ingeborg Hegemann said that the Commission could require repeat treatment and for the contractor to be retained for maintenance. She suggested the Commission could speak with a qualified contractor for an estimate of costs. Options could include a 5 year OOC and/or Conditions in Perpetuity. Typically there would be two separate bids, one for restoration and one for perpetual maintenance. She also mentioned that at the public engagement session there had been interest in forming a citizen's stewardship group to maintain the area.

James Martin asked for a description of herbicide usage. Debbi Edelstein asked how much of the canopy would be removed, and referred to the observation during the site visit that much of the canopy consisted of invasive Norway Maples and Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven). Ale Echandi said that a total of 20 trees would need to be removed or converted to snags. One is Ailanthus, one an unhealthy Silver Maple, 13 are Norway maples. One is an ash, another is an elm that the contractor will try to save. Casey-Lee Bastien mentioned that Ailanthus can be host to invasive pests. Emilie Wilder said that it could be problematic to remove all of the trees at the same time, causing a sudden change in lighting. She asked if there was a plan for replanting. Ale Echandi said there were no plans currently to plant trees. Debbi Edelstein suggested a long term plan for managing the canopy so that invasive trees were replaced. Ingeborg Hegemann suggested getting a professional quote. James Martin asked for a recommendation of native trees that should be planted. Casey-Lee Bastien suggested black walnut, black cherry, and tupelo. Pam Helinek reminded the Commission that there was mitigation money from the solar facility specifically for planting trees in Riverfront Area. Emilie Wilder asked if saplings could be planted before cutting existing trees. Casey-Lee Bastien said it is good for the trees to establish in the shade, but Ailanthus and Norway Maple are allelopathic, emitting chemicals that make it difficult for other plants to grow nearby. Brooke Warrington asked if the tree removal would impact the shade on the river. Casey-Lee Bastien said there would be a temporary impact but that the canopy would quickly fill in. Paul Osborne expressed concern about knotweed in nearby areas causing a re-invasion.

Steven Santos said that the Park Commission had not discussed the project yet but that as Recreation Director he fully supported it.

Emilie Wilder moved to continue the hearing to July 16, 2020 at 7:00 PM. Second by James Martin, vote 5-0-1 by roll call:

Yes – Emilie Wilder, Brandon Parker, James Martin, Debbi Edelstein, Paul Osborne

Abstention: Heidi Graf

Administrative Business

Minutes – Emilie Wilder moved to approve the minutes from June 17, 2020 and June 18, 2020. Second by Heidi Graf, vote 7-0-0 by roll call.

Adjournment

Emilie Wilder moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Brandon Parker, vote 6-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.