

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS

January 26, 2022

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For further detail, video recordings are available at the Pollard Library, second floor reference desk or online at www.LTC.org.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held both in person and virtually using Zoom.

Members Present: Chairwoman Varnum (Zoom), Brad Buitenhuys (Zoom), Kevin Dillon (Zoom), Weston Standish (Zoom), Stephen Laput, William Lovely (Zoom)

Members Absent: Perry Downs

Others Present: Peter Cutrumbes, Assistant Planner

CALL TO ORDER

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CONTINUED BUSINESS

Request for Certificate of Compliance

Massachusetts Electric Company

170 Medford Street

Malden, MA 02148

DEP #206-0783

Project Location: 53 Perry Street 01852

Request for Certificate of Compliance for the demolition project at 53 Perry Street.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion: A motion was made by B. Buitenhuys, and seconded by W. Standish, to continue this project to the April 13th meeting. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

Request for Determination of Applicability

Suelene Caetano
509 Wentworth Ave
Lowell MA 01852

Project Location: 509 Wentworth Ave 01852

A Request for Determination of Applicability has been filed by Suelene Caetano to construct a three-season porch within the 100-year flood plain.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion: B. Buitenhuys, seconded by W. Standish, motioned to continue this project to the April 13 meeting. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

Request for Determination of Applicability

Sovann Kong
1535 Middlesex Street
Lowell, MA 01851

Project Location: 51-57 Shirley Avenue, 01854

A Request for Determination of Applicability has been filed by Sovann Kong to remove brush. The proposed work will take place in the 100-year floodplain.

On Behalf: L. Varnum discussed using a Positive Determination (Number 5) for a determination on this project. The applicants came to the original meeting, but they have not responded to City staff or attended any later meetings. The other board members agreed.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion: B. Buitenhuys motioned to issue a positive number 5 determination, citing the Lowell Wetlands Ordinance, and was seconded by W. Standish. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Notice of Intent

Aravind Srinivasan
Anka Homes, LLC
34 Arcola Street
Lexington, MA 02420

DEP #: 206-0809

Project Location: 87 Lafayette Street, 01854

A Notice of Intent has been filed by Anka Homes, LLC to construct a single-family home and driveway within the 100-year floodplain.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition: Lynn Carlos (106 Lafayette Street) is an abutter and expressed concerns about this home exacerbating flooding issues in the neighborhood.

Discussion: L. Varnum said the project should be continued to the February 23 meeting, as the Engineer is out of the country. W. Lovely explained to abutters that the project doesn't meet the performance standards laid out by Mass. DEP.

Motion: B. Buitenhuys motioned to continue this project to the February 23 meeting, and was seconded by K. Dillon. The vote was unanimous (6-0).

Request for Determination of Applicability

Chantho Mo
138 Martin Street
Lowell, MA 01854

Project Location: 138 Martin Street, 01854

A Request for Determination of Applicability has been filed by Chantho Mo seeking approval to repave and expand their driveway which was previously expanded in the 100-year floodplain without Conservation Commission approval. The applicant is also seeking approval to reconstruct and expand a deck which has fallen into disrepair in the 100-year floodplain.

On Behalf:

The applicant, Chantho Mo, was in attendance but did not speak. He agreed to the Conservation Commission's concerns.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion: K. Dillon summarized the project, which is a repave and reconstruction of a deck. B. Buitenhuys spoke to the technical aspects of the project, including an irrigation trench that was proposed on the back half of the property to mitigate the loss of flood storage. B. Buitenhuys said that there are no calculations here for volume of flood storage that will be lost in the documentation provided by the applicant. W. Standish said the main goal should be to at least prevent stormwater flooding the abutting properties. B. Buitenhuys agreed, and suggested the applicant hire an engineer for the project, as it is too technical for a layperson.

Motion: A motion was made by B. Buitenhuys to continue this project to the February 23 meeting, seconded by W. Standish. The motion was unanimous (6-0).

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Determination of Applicability

Lowell Regional Water Utility
815 Pawtucket Boulevard
Lowell, MA 01854

Project Location: Pawtucket Boulevard and Varnum Avenue, 01854

A Request for Determination of Applicability has been filed by the Lowell Regional Water Utility to connect an existing water main under Brookside Street to a new water main which will extend and connect to an existing water main at the intersection of Varnum Avenue and Mammoth Road.

On Behalf: P. Pyres spoke on behalf of the Lowell Regional Water Utility. Mr. Pyres summarized the project, which is the replacement of a water main within 100 feet of Marbles Brook.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion: L. Varnum asked if the timeline will be before or after the Pawtucket Blvd main will be replaced. P. Pyres answered this spring, before the Pawtucket Blvd main. He also explained that the old pipe is wearing thin, so replacement is necessary. The LRWU estimates it will take 2 months to complete the project. L. Varnum asked if there will be direct runoff into the brook. P. Pyres said no. B. Buitenhuys encouraged the DPW to keep an eye on the catch basins and ensure that if they reach more than 50% capacity that they are cleaned. L. Varnum asked if the damage to the pavement is enough that it warrants a complete repaving. P. Pyres said the repaving after installation will cover the whole street. B. Buitenhuys said that is not on the plan so he believes it should be conditioned.

Motion: Motion by B. Buitenhuys to issue a negative 3 determination, with the conditions that any catchbasins that exceed 50% full are emptied and that the street is repaved curb to curb. The motion was seconded by W. Standish. It passed unanimously (5-0).

OTHER BUSINESS

Minutes

January 12, 2022 meeting minutes

Discussion: L. Varnum asked the minutes to correct the word “wetlands” to “flood plains” in the conditions for 19 Clifton Street. A motion to approve the minutes by W. Standish, seconded by K. Dillon. The motion passed unanimously.

There was a motion to accept amended plans for 27 Jackson Street by B. Buitenhuys, and seconded by W. Standish. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by W. Standish, seconded by K. Dillon. The vote was unanimous (6-0). Meeting adjourned.