

Minutes of a Conservation Commission Meeting - 22 January 2020

Members present: Peter Vincent – Chairman, Geoffrey Kontje, Lil Province, Stuart Lollis, Jeffrey Carlson, Bob Avakian, Christina Brown

Staff: Jane Varkonda & Lisa Morrison

Public Hearings:

Oyster-Watcha Trust (Reiter) NOI to renovate, reconfigure parking and walkway, install swimming pool, and related site activities. Doug Hoehn & Caleb Nicholson were present for the applicants. Carlson recused himself from voting, but will listen in his capacity as Executive Director of Oyster-Watcha. The project involves expanding the parking area to accommodate two additional parking spots, adding a walking path, and native shrubs and grasses around the house. Application is under the local bylaw only. Also proposed is a new small deck and outdoor shower on the north side of the house and the expansion of the rear deck. The pool will have a salt water filtration system and an adjacent dry well, as shown on the site plan. The view from the pond will not change. Pool will be located in an existing meadow, no new lawn is proposed. A free-standing, dry laid stone wall will be built along the edge of the disturbed area and will act as required pool fencing.

All plant materials will be of native stock; Nicholson will return with a plant list for the agent's approval.

There is currently an open restoration order because of excessive cutting in a view channel from the guest house. Nicholson is set to begin the project April 15 - and includes the planting of 20 trees with a dbh of 4 inches or more. There is a two-year maintenance contract in effect. The agent said she is satisfied enough with progress on the restoration order to allow this project to proceed. The Commission could stipulate that this permit would be null and void if the restoration plan is not implemented. After some further discussion Brown made a motion to continue the hearing to the next meeting, 12 February, and to schedule a site visit. Province seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by all those voting.

Continuations:

KJC Realty (Abbrecht) NOI to replace wood bulkhead with stone wall - Golf Club Road. Doug Hoehn & Jim Glavin were present for the applicant. Portions of the bank are sloughing off because of overwash behind the wooden bulkhead. Hoehn noted that DEP had concerns that certain information was missing from the plan. Hoehn said that most of what they are looking for is actually on the plan. The current house replaced one that was pre-1978. Glavin said that the area has eroded since band-aid work was done in 2006. The existing bulkhead is so low that water overwashes and erodes the bank behind it. He said that this is the same kind of structure they are building on the nearby Kernochan property. Avakian asked if it was necessary for the stones to go to the top of the bank. Galvin explained that with 6-foot seas the distance between the crest and trough of a wave is 12-feet.

Varkonda asked if removing one of the groins and then relocating the stones under the boathouse would lessen the erosion. Galvin said that the sand seems to drift around. Varkonda reiterated that stone revetments are only allowed to protect houses built prior to 1978 - and that protection does not apply to pools.

Galvin replied that the bank will eventually and inevitably erode. Kontje said that he was not in favor of armoring the entire bank and suggested that the stones stop 4-feet below the top of the bank. Kontje said he would rather not see a monolithic wall.

After some further discussion, Province made a motion to continue the hearing to the next meeting for a second site visit. Applicant's agents are to propose a new elevation for the wall and stake it in the field. Varkonda suggested increasing the vegetative buffer as well. Kontje seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Catalina Realty Trust (former Wrigley property) Kristine Makwinski and Wanda Willmore from Seldorf Architects were present for the applicant. In response to comments made by the Commission, revised plans were submitted that minimize amount of glass on the waterside by bringing down the header by a foot and changing from a solid glass wall to individual windows on the second floor.

Avakian noted that in the summer all the houses on the harbor are lit up; he said that light is not as impactful in the harbor as it would be on the Great Pond.

Brown asked about what kind of lighting is proposed on the inside of the house. She said she didn't think that recessed lighting projected as much as lamps.

The architects noted that no exterior lighting is proposed on the harbor side of the structure.

Carlson asked if the applicants were planning to reapply for new beach stairs. The architects said that the stairs will be the subject of a separate application in the future.

Avakian made a motion to approve the project with the revised elevations and standard conditions regarding a landscape and lighting plan. Province seconded the motion and voted to approve the project with the same conditions, as did Kontje, Brown, and Carlson. Vincent and Lollis opposed the project, saying they thought it would emit too much light. Motion carried 5 to 2.

Other Business:

Herring Creek Farm Slough Farm would like to take over management of the large barn. They are hoping to renovate the barn and use it for programming and possibly housing. The agent suggested that attorneys for Slough Farm read through the CR and make sure that their proposals conform to what is allowed.

Farm Institute Meeting on January 24th has been rescheduled for 3:00 p.m. [Brown abstaining.]

Beach Road Bike Path – an emergency certificate for repairs was ratified by the Commission.

MV Museum - [Lil Province abstained and left the meeting] Phil Wallis and Steve Ewing were present for the museum. Wallis reported that after an extensive survey no Native American artifacts were found on the property and a new landscape plan was submitted.

The proposed CR has been returned by town counsel with several changes.

Wallis explained that museum would be open to the public from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, but public access to the grounds would be allowed year round during the daylight hours. The gate would be locked at night to prevent vandalism but additional access points would be left open.

Ewing urged the Commission to go forward, noting that it is not the sort of property that the Land Bank is interested in protecting, yet it would be great for the town.

Wallis said that all of the drainage and most of the grading has been done. Wallis said that they had put \$250,000 into the house. \$75,000 was raised by neighbors and the Museum received another \$90,000 from CPC.

Avakian said that he was not comfortable proceeding without the support of the Selectmen.

Kontje agreed and noted that it was a lot of money and would leave the Land Acquisition Fund depleted.

Ewing commented that the commitment from the town has helped with fund-raising efforts. He urged the board to help move the project forward and said he believed it was a fair deal for the town.

Avakian said he was not willing to proceed without the Selectmen reviewing the proposal at a public meeting.

After some further discussion it was agreed that the revised CR should go to the Museum for their approval. If the Museum approved the revised CR, the Commission could then vote whether or not to recommend the project to the Selectmen. Carlson made the motion. Avakian seconded. Unanimously approved by all those voting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Approved: _____