

TOWN OF NEWINGTON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

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August 15, 2023


Town Clerk

This meeting was presented as a Zoom Webinar/Hybrid Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sadil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Ben Ancona III *(via Zoom)*

John Bachand

Bernadette Conway *(via Zoom)*

Kelly Dehaas

Alan Paskewich *(via Zoom)*

Andreas Sadil

Jeff Wagner

David Wemett *(arrived late) (via Zoom)*

Also present:

Erik Hinckley, Inland Wetland Agent

Paul Dickson, Town Planner

Susan Gibbon, Recording Secretary *(via Zoom)*

Chairman Sadil: No substitutes tonight so we have a full seated commissioner. Thank you.
Ok, Item III – Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items, each speaker limited to 2 minutes.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

(each speaker limited to 2 minutes)

Chairman Sadil: Mr. Hinckley do we have anyone online who wishes to speak?

Mr. Hinckley: There is no one Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Sadil: Thank you. Moving on to Acceptance of Minutes – Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 17, 2023.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting January 17, 2023

Chairman Sadil: Do I have any additions or corrections from the Commission? Seeing none, may I have a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written from the regular meeting of January 17, 2023.

Commissioner Bachand: I make a motion to accept the minutes.

Chairman Sadil: Motion by Commissioner Bachand. May I have a second?

Vice Chairman Wagner: Second.

Chairman Sadil: Second by Vice Chairman Wagner. All in favor?

Commissioners: Aye

Chairman Sadil: Opposed? Against? Abstentions? The minutes pass. Ok, moving on to Item V – New Business. Application 2023-08: For a building addition and rain garden within the Upland Review Area (URA) at the Maple Motel, 2151 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT, Applicant/Owner/Contact, excuse me, Ghanshyam Patel, if I chose the right pronunciation on the first name.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Application 2023-08: For a building addition and rain garden within the Upland Review Area (URA) at the Maple Motel, 2151 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT, Applicant/Owner/Contact: Ghanshyam Patel.

Chairman Sadil: Is the applicant present?

Mr. Hinckley: I believe the representative is.

Kevin Johnson: Good evening, for the record Kevin Johnson, I'm a landscape architect with the engineering firm of Close, Jensen & Miller, P.C. With me this evening is Mr. Ed Diamond, project architect, as well as the owner and applicant Mr. Ghana Patel. Ok, so, if you can bring up the site plan. Just a quick orientation with the site plan. It's located at...the subject property is located at 2151 Berlin Turnpike.

Chairman Sadil: Can we zoom in on that area. Thank you. We do have the paper copy, but, um....

Mr. Hinckley: Better? Everyone?

Commissioner Bachand: Barely. That was my complaint to Erik earlier, that the plan seems to be much smaller than I'm used to, is this? Or is it just me?

Commissioner Dehaas: I'm all right.

Commissioner: Yeah.

Mr. Johnson: Well, the site survey encompasses the entire property. This is just a portion of the property, the actual site plan.

Chairman Sadil: Please continue sir.

Mr. Johnson: Ok. So, again, this is located at 2151 Berlin Turnpike on the west side, direction north is to the top of the sheet as well as Bowlarama, is the abutting property owner to the north, southbound lanes of the Berlin Turnpike would be to the right. The heavy dark blue line represents the wetland limits from town mapping. It looks black on this plan, but the other heavy dark line represents the 100-foot upland review area. The light brown, again, it looks like it's a little washed out, but there's an, there's several buildings on the property, um, part of where it says existing two-story frame, that's actually the owner's residence. What he's proposing to do is add a dining room on the south side of that wing, the residence wing, as well as a one-car garage just to the left of the existing frame garage. He's also proposing to construct a covered roof structure over an existing patio that connects the garage to the residential quarters. Ah, there you go...

Mr. Dickson: I wanted to make it a little easier to see the difference.

Mr. Johnson: Right. On this plan the light brown represents the existing structure, the dark brown are the proposed additions, and I was just mentioning the small square between the garage and the residential quarters represents the covered patio and then there's two small, proposed canopy overhangs, they project off the north face of the building about 30 inches; one over each doorway and

those doorways lead to the existing driveway. So, the proposed garage and the proposed dining room addition, equals a little over 600 additional square feet of impervious surface. Again, the covering over the patio, that patio area, is already impervious. Our office ran hydraulic computations on that impervious area and for 100-year design storm we determined that we needed to mitigate for that additional runoff from that new impervious surface we needed to create some detention for about 13 cubic feet not 13 cubic yards 13 cubic feet so about half a yard. So, what we decided to do was to create a drain just to the southwest

Chairman Sadil: What about the wetland itself, that's a very heavily wooded area. What would you say is the condition of that wetland. Can you describe it to me or is there water standing there, is there can you describe the state of that wetland on a typical day.

Mr. Johnson: To be honest with you I have not gone into that wetland, I have not walked that wetland. I'm not a soil scientist, so my...

Mr. Hinckley: Mr. Chairman, if I may just quickly. As he pointed out it is fenced and this...and the lines that are used there are consistent with past site plans and wetland applications that this property has come in for, so I don't know if there was a prior evaluation, I don't believe so...

Commissioner Dehaas: This picture kind of shows that.

Chairman Sadil: Yeah so I was sort of like a full picture but if you take aerial shots that is a fairly wooded area, I'm just trying to, I'm interested in the state of that wetland you know what's this condition there. There is left a fairly steep drop off, I see some drafting lines to the left of that blue line there, it's fairly, does that imply a very steep embankment?

Mr. Johnson: The topography drains from both directions towards that wetland.

Chairman Sadil: Is that the current state right now? How was the surface runoff done before and after. Can you explain that or is that?

Mr. Johnson: Basically, it just sheet flows or infiltrates you know but the contours, it gently slopes from east to west or right to left to the wetlands.

Chairman Sadil: Ok.

Mr. Johnson: We're maintaining those existing drainage patterns.

Chairman Sadil: I'm concerned, you mentioned about the perimeter erosion control, I'd like to go through that because given the steep embankment there I don't know how long this project's going to take but can you go over it again? Is that going to be a filter sock, will that be a robust enough erosion control method, because once the area is clear and there are some inclement weather and what not, it happens, is that going to be robust enough? We won't have anything going downslope.

Mr. Johnson: Yeah, I mean again, it's very gentle slopes, we don't envision any regrading per se drastically, we are pulling that one contour around the garage obviously to create level floor there but I think the idea would be to build the dining area first so we come in the side drive around the existing garage and then stabilize that area before they built the garage and again we will be disturbing quote unquote an area, an existing area of grass for the topsoil and to create the rain garden but we are not envisioning ripping up that entire existing lawn area, so in light of that grass is going to remain there it's basically an arbitrary line where we put the filter socks so I don't think we need anything heavy duty like a silt fence backed up with a hay bale damn or you know. In our opinion I think the filter sack is going to be adequate.

Chairman Sadil: Relative to the rain garden, that's going to be a sheet flow situation, there's nothing planned or anything going underground, it's strictly sheet flow going into the rain garden.

Mr. Johnson: Basically, yeah it's just a depression and it's 3 to one slopes graded into that so, and then it's going to be planted with native grasses...

Chairman Sadil: No invasives.

Mr. Johnson: No and as part of the maintenance I did add a line that any invasive plantings which may migrate into the garden you know should not be sprayed with herbicides just hand pulled. You know bittersweet is a big problem and that's something you can just pull out leave it on the ground and it's going to die.

Chairman Sadil: As far as the maintenance itself is it going to be self-maintained. Is it going to be mowed every so often or going forward...

Mr. Johnson: It's going to basically be mowed, the perennials, for the perennials, you know, as part of the mix be cut once a year remove the cuttings and so forth just so they don't build up overtime and then you lose any of the capacity of the rain garden for the storage as well, I mean that's the general idea.

Mr. Dickson: Mr. Chairman, I put, again it's a little hard to read, you can see your dog woods, common spice bush, maple leaf viburnum, pretty common plants that are used in wetland plantings and again they do have the rain garden maintenance plan on the plan itself.

Mr. Johnson: I tried to pick some species, you know, that were...that could provide forage and cover birds and so forth.

Chairman Sadil: I'm going to open it up to other commissioners at this time. Commissioner Wagner.

Commissioner Wagner: Commissioner Wagner here, I've got a couple questions. Can we go back to the parking lot driveway, zoom in on that a little. How close is that...my first question is, how close is that to the wetland line there? The wetland limits. Right there, the blue line?

Mr. Johnson: The extension right there?

Commissioner Wagner: Yeah.

Mr. Johnson: Well, basically it goes right up to the edge to the fence.

Commissioner Wagner: And then how is the grade of that driveway. Is it going towards the stone on the side, or is it, is that the only stone on the left side, the west side? Is there any on the north and the northwest side?

Mr. Johnson: Yeah, I mean, you can see the finished floor of the garage there is 284.35 so the idea is that would sheet towards the stone trench. You got the 283.4 which would maintain those grades and then the 282.9 so it would generally go towards the northwest a little bit. As well as clip the radius part of that.

Commissioner Wagner: So, what I'm saying, I can see you have your trench there in stone on the left, on the west side. Is there any stone up on the northwest side, the north side? Right up there.

Mr. Johnson: No, because you have the fence right there, there really is...

Commissioner Wagner: Ok, there's no room?

Mr. Johnson: No.

Commissioner Bachand: There's no curbing there.

Mr. Johnson: No curbing. It's just flush.

Commissioner Wagner: Those were my two questions. Thank you sir.

Chairman Sadil: Commissioner Bachand.

Commissioner Bachand: Um...just out of curiosity is the dining room addition on a slab?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

Commissioner Bachand: And then I have from your own notes it refers to the, and you reiterated, the 13 cubic feet of storage for the rain garden, but then it goes on to say that 19.2 cubic yards of material has to construct the rain garden.

Mr. Johnson: We just made it a little bigger.

Commissioner Bachand: Made what bigger?

Mr. Johnson: The rain garden. It's not even a cubic yard.

Commissioner Bachand: No, but I'm saying your going from a half a cubic yard to 19 cubic yards of material to be removed in the last paragraph of this wetland's application.

Mr. Johnson: Ohhh...

Commissioner Bachand: Is that a typo?

Mr. Johnson: Yeah.

Commissioner Bachand: I was gonna say, I didn't know if that was all the excavation on the site or if that was a dug foundation for the addition.

Mr. Johnson: No, it should be 19.2 cubic feet.

Commissioner Bachand: Oh, ok.

Mr. Hinckley: Which is says on this plan if you look were the leader goes in, it says 19.2 cubic feet and 13 cubic feet.

Commissioner Bachand: Ok.

Mr. Johnson: If I said cubic yards that's a mistake. Uh...that's a mistake. Cubic feet.

Commissioner Bachand: Ok.

Mr. Johnson: I'm sorry.

Commissioner Bachand: Just curious.

Mr. Johnson: Good catch.

Commissioner Bachand: Yeah, I mean...

Mr. Johnson: That was a test.

Commissioner Bachand: I'm relatively impressed with the efforts taken. So, I don't have any other questions.

Chairman Sadil: Any other commissioners have questions? Commissioner Dehaas?

Commissioner Dehaas: You covered that. No.

Chairman Sadil: Ok. Let's go to folks on the phone. Commissioner Paskewich you have any questions about the application?

Commissioner Paskewich: No, I do not, thank you Chairman Sadil.

Chairman Sadil: Thank you. Commissioner Conway.

Commissioner Conway: No, I have no further questions. Thank you

Chairman Sadil: You're welcome. Commissioner Ancona?

Commissioner Ancona: Nope I'm all set thanks.

Chairman Sadil: All right.

Mr. Hinckley: I also see Mr. Wemett is now online.

Chairman Sadil: Ok.

Mr. Hinckley: I don't know when he came in.

Chairman Sadil: All right. Noted. Commissioner Wemett do you have any comments for the applicant, questions.

Commissioner Wemett: No, I'm all set.

Chairman Sadil: All right, thank you. All right uh, there's no further questions. I guess the first order though Mr. Hinckley, the need for a public hearing. Right? We have to come to a consensus if there's a need for a public hearing. I want to waive that if there...if other commissioners feel that way for a public hearing.

Commissioner Bachand: I agree. I mean the entire project is out of view of the public and plus it's, most of that upland review area is already developed anyway.

Commissioner Wagner: Commissioner Wagner. I agree with both of you, there is no need for a public hearing.

Chairman Sadil: All right. Anyone on the phone wish to comment on a public hearing?

Commissioner Paskewich: No, I believe that we could go forward with what I've heard so far. This is Commissioner Paskewich. Thank you.

Chairman Sadil: I think we have a majority then on that. So may I have a motion on Application 2023-08: For A Building Addition And Rain Garden Within The Upland Review Area (URA) At The Maple motel, 2151 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT, Applicant/Owner/Contact: Ghanshyam Patel for the need not to have a public hearing. Commissioner Dehaas do you want to...

Commissioner Dehaas: I make a motion.

Chairman Sadil: So, uh, this activity will have no significant impact to the regulated area and will not require a public hearing. May I have a second?

Commissioner Wagner: I second that.

Chairman Sadil: All in favor?

Commissioners: Aye.

Chairman Sadil: Anyone opposed? Abstentions? Motion passes unanimously for no public hearing.

Mr. Hinckley: So now you will see then next month.

Chairman Sadil: Yep under old business.

Mr. Hinkley: Under old business correct.

Chairman Sadil: All right we have...do I have to announce item 6 again for old business?

Mr. Hinckley: No, you do not.

Chairman Sadil: All right, we'll waive that.

Mr. Johnson: Thank you very much.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- *None*

Chairman Sadil: we'll move on to item 7 Public Participation On Non-Agenda Items (each speaker limited to two minutes)

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (each speaker limited to 2 minutes)

Chairman Sadil: Mr. Hinckley do we have anyone online?

Mr. Hinckley: Mr. Chairman there is no one online.

Chairman Sadil: Moving on to item 8 Communications and Reports.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

A. Agent Communications

Chairman Sadil: Mr. Hinckley do you have any agent communications?

Mr. Hinckley: I do. So, in the intervening months that we haven't met I've approved a few agent approval wetland applications. One was at 25 Paine Rd. for the car wash where they extended and few of their mechanicals on two of their tunnels there, it just came out like 4 feet with new mechanicals, it was all in the upland review area which is basically already paved and concrete. Another application for a deck at the new house at 765 Willard Ave. which you guys had approved a couple of years ago, that was for the house, they didn't have the deck on the original approval. Another approval was at 120 Northwood Rd. for a shed in the URA; and lastly, there was an approval for a deck around a pool in the URA at 25 Stonewall Court and also for the replacement of an existing shed that was priorly approved. So those four applications have been approved in the interim. That's really all I have. There is the potential of the MDC coming forth with some kind of large-scale maintenance project in the town which they did something similar six or seven years ago. So, they will probably be coming before you and presenting some type of plan and asking for declaratory ruling on what portions they can do as of right and what may require permits etc. So, we do expect something within the next couple of months on that.

Commissioner Bachand: Do they get like a General Permit 1 too like the town has?

Mr. Hinckley: No, they get...MDC always gets a permit...

Commissioner Bachand: Individual.

Chairman Sadil: In the case, in the past...

Commissioner Bachand: Is it for a period?

Mr. Hinkley: They'll get the permit and it's good for the statutory time that's allowed and they kind of designate for...

Commissioner Bachand: For individual projects?

Mr. Hinckley: I mean, this will be, it'll be a permit for this project in Newington.

Commissioner Bachand: Ok.

Mr. Hinkley: And they're going to have some...

Commissioner Bachand: Different sites, it's not all in one site.

Mr. Hinckley: Correct and they'll have some timelines, you know, we might be working the southwest part of town these two months and yadda yadda, and this is in preparation of potential clearing of easements for future maintenance to their sanitary lines. Other than that, that is all I have.

Mr. Dickson: I would like to introduce myself to those I have not met yet and those online. I am Paul Dickson, I'm the new town planner for Newington. I'm glad to meet you all and those I haven't met and look forward to continuing working with you all.

Commissioner Bachand: You're doing all that now right?

Mr. Dickson: Yeah.

Commissioner Bachand: It's been a few months now.

Mr. Dickson: I already have a few months under my belt, still new to you. But yes. Yeah, and I previously I served, I worked on wetlands when I was in Groton and then for a little under seven years I was the wetland agent for the city of Meriden.

Commissioner Bachand: How is our former...your coworker, from Meriden? She's teaching now right?

Mr. Dickson: Yeah, she's got her passion which is great.

Chairman Sadil: Alright moving on to section B Town, Council Liaisons Communications.

B. Town Council Liaisons Communications

Chairman Sadil: I think Councilor's Radda and Budrejko are occupied

Mr. Hinckley: They are. They are in executive session next door.

Chairman Sadil: OK, yeah, so we'll move on to section C. Pond Life Research and Education.

C. Pond Life Research and Education

Chairman Sadil: Commissioner Paskewich do you have an update for us?

Commissioner Paskewich: Well, in a way, yes. How many of you, I'm gonna ask this question, have walked around Mill Pond in the last few years during any hours of the day and noticed our resident Blue Heron.

Commissioners: I have, yeah.

Commissioner Paskewich: And it's been parking itself in the Mill falls area, A kind of a hidden area, and also to the outflow of the bridge where the brook is. So being curious about Ornithology and birds and such I happened upon the eating habits of Heron. I had never seen this Heron eat or look for food in the water since I've been living here and observed this blue Heron. Nonetheless looking into the research of the eating habits of the blue Heron they are of a bird of species that binge, they engorge themselves, their eating habits are not to satisfy their nutritional need, they just go at it as if somebody gave you a pizza on a Friday night and said eat one slice you think you could do that I don't know it's kind of difficult. nonetheless there was a video on this which pertain to a heron which was a heron trying to eat an animal at once and its throat was actually expanded out. It

was interesting that you know animals also will also binge and not just eat for nutritional value as some humans do when they go out. Nonetheless that's all I have to speak on tonight

Chairman Sadil: Anyone else?

Commissioner Bachand: I'll just give my one anecdote on the blue Heron, that same one. I was laying on my hammock the night of the Extravaganza and right when they did the first firework you know when they signal they're gonna start and I saw him take off, he was heading out, he was flying right over my house heading out of there and like looking back and I was thinking to myself yeah he's not coming back tonight.

Mr. Dickson: Yeah, I've seen him walking around the pond, that area would be south of actually the walking bridge, kind of when you get to the pond proper but actually the wetland that's feeding it behind and in that area I've seen a lot of different things especially turtles, they're spawning within that area, there's a whole bunch of them, of just families which is great so I've seen some good life in that pond which is fantastic.

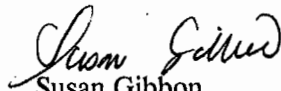
Commissioner Bachand: I always just see him singular, not in in pairs, I don't know if they...I don't know much about them and the rest of their habits but it's interesting to see them taking off, how much space they need, how much open area they need to get airborne.

Chairman Sadil: Ok. Item 9, Adjournment. Can I have a motion to adjourn?

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Wagner. Seconded by Commissioner Dehaas. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Susan Gibbon
Recording Secretary