



TOWN OF NEWINGTON

200 Garfield Street Newington, Connecticut 06111

Jonathan Altshul
Town Manager

Conservation Commission

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Town Engineer

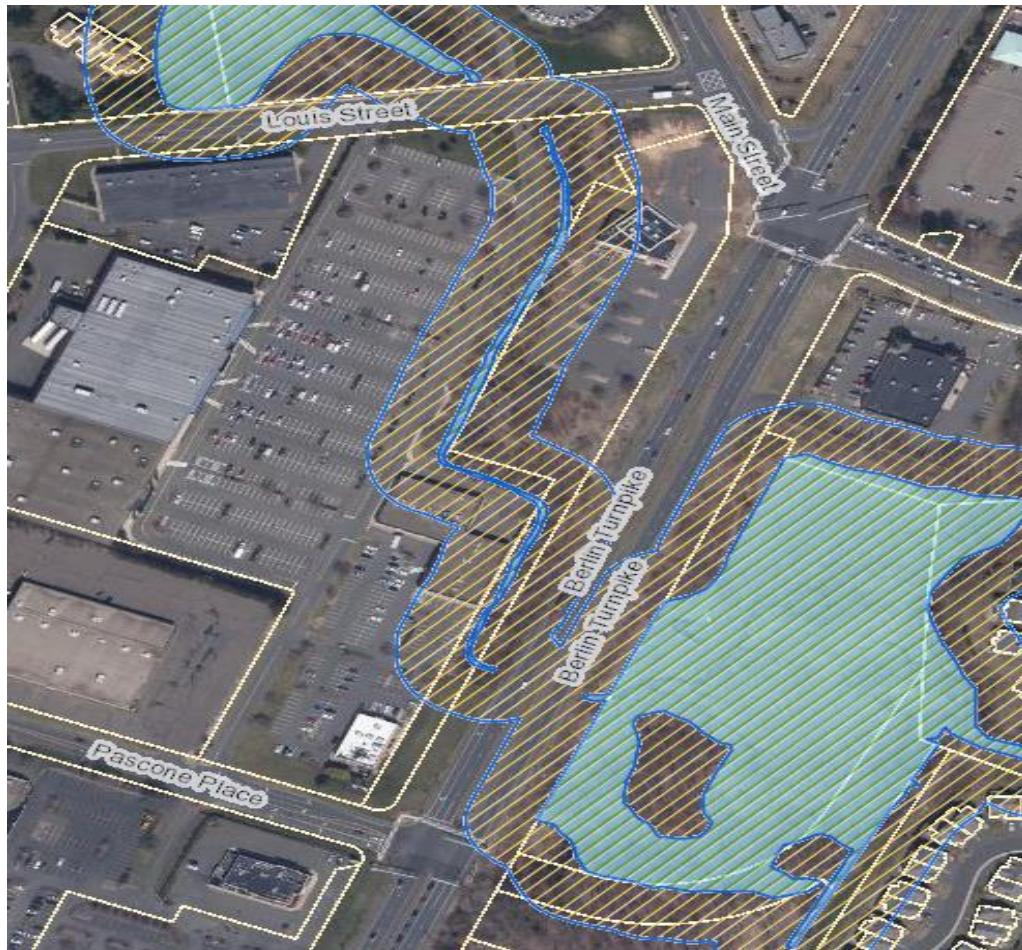
Memorandum

To: Conservation Commission

From: Chris Zibbideo, PE, LS – Town Engineer, Wetlands Agent

Date: February 20, 2026, Revised from December 8, 2025, and August 6, 2025

Re: **Application IW-26-2:** To extend parking lot approximately 180 feet and add a retaining wall at the southern portion of the existing parking lot into the historical "pad site" at 2929 Berlin Turnpike in the PD (Planned Development) Zone. Applicant: Berlin Turnpike 2929 LLC, Contact: Andrew R. Morin, Esq., Owner: Berlin Turnpike 2929 LLC.



Application Summary:

Please note: *This application is a resubmission of application IW-25-11 and IW-25-18.*

Applicant is seeking to construct an expansion of an existing parking area for the Casa Doro restaurant, the former Bertucci's Restaurant on the west side of the Berlin turnpike. To achieve the maximum number of parking spaces for this site, this application includes a substantial retaining wall along the west and south sides of the property. This proposal also includes a novel storm water treatment and detention system utilizing the landscape islands as a bioswale then containing the higher level run off in a sub-surface drainage detention pond before excess runoff exits the system on the south.

Staff Review:

The applicant intends to construct an expansion of an existing parking area for the Casa Doro restaurant, as just stated. The restaurant has sustained a very high parking demand since opening in the spring, exceeding the required parking from the Zoning Regulations. The Bertucci's approval called for 109 spaces, applicant proposes 211 spaces in total, ref. supplied narrative.

This proposal includes a novel storm water treatment and detention system utilizing the landscape islands as a bioswale then containing the higher level run off in a sub-surface drainage detention pond before excess runoff exits the system on the south. The outlet will utilize a vertical distribution method that is preferable to a traditional flared end on a pipe. This will control outlet velocities and potential erosion on the hillside. This is an interesting system that I believe could serve as a model for this type of storm water treatment BMP.

This water course is an urban drainage channel connecting a wetland habitat on the east side of the Berlin Turnpike to another wetland habitat at the Clem Lemire/Transfer station complex. The channel is confined by the surrounding commercial development in this area and is very narrow. This property and its neighbors are highly disturbed soils from typical Berlin Turnpike development especially after the DOT relinquished the I-291 corridor parcels. The channel at some point was armored with stone, ref. the report from All Points Technology Corp. (APT). One note regarding the direction of the water flow as stated in several of the application documents, the water flow westerly is from the east side of the Berlin Turnpike then north along the site's western boundary under Louis Street to the Clem Lemire complex, etc.

As previously discussed, the major impact to the URA is the wall construction. As proposed, it will require almost all of the buffer trees on the property to be cleared along the south and west boundaries, all within the URA. It will also require substantial soil disturbance on the hill side and very little room for additional E&S measures should a major storm develop prior to completion. The owner and his team will need to be diligent in adhering to the recommendations in the APT report as will Town Staff in monitoring construction. Due to the size of the wall, prior to a building permit being issued, staff will review the wall design and any additional engineering information required to construct it at that time. TPZ regs require trees greater than

6" be identified and shown on the plan, this was done for the previous application and is included in this application.

A turbidity curtain should be installed across the brook as we did for the Town's work on Greenlawn last fall and this will require the neighbor's written permission, as it will straddle the property line.

Recommendations:

Staff recommends approval of this application with the ten standard conditions plus any additional conditions the Commission may require. Additionally, the developer must abide by the recommendations of the soil scientist as outlined in the Wetland Assessment Report prepared by APT and within the Stormwater Report prepared by the BSC Group. The reporting requirements within APT's report should also be sent to the Town. This should be a condition of approval.

Additionally, a detail for the "live stakes" plantings should be added to the plan set and in review of these plans the planting known commonly as "burgundy bunny" may be a non-native, consider an alternate planting. Special attention to the E&S controls during weather events is critical to maintaining the water course as specified in the APT report, this must be monitored during construction.

A point of interest, the commission has asked a number of questions regarding a potential future structure in the area of the expanded lot. A future use would still require an application to the commission for proximity to the wetland within the URA. This should not have a bearing on the application as submitted.