



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR**

FEBRUARY 28, 2017

MINUTES

MEETING AT SOMERVILLE CITY HALL
93 HIGHLAND AVENUE
3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
7:00 PM

Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili, based on a recording of the meeting.

Commission Members in attendance: Mathias Neuber, Owen Wartella, Rachel Borgatti, David Turin

Commission Members absent: Jamie Lefkowitz, Michael Fager

Others in Attendance: Gene Crouch (VHB), Ivana Pejatovic (Algonquin), Ben Thomas (Algonquin), Tammy McGill Hoyt (Algonquin), Marisa Zellmer, Kate Butcher, Phillip Baraona, Sagal Alislad, Megan Bateman, Avira Kardener, Danielle Alexander, Tom Mahoney, Meghan Burns, Stephanie Galaitsi, Tara Mitchell, Lauren Louks, Clare Blackwell, Madeline Lee, Brita Dawson, Sarah Oliver, Eline Bakker, Cheryl Greenwald, Anne Zielinski

Staff: Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

Mathias Neuber brought the meeting to order at 7:03 followed by introductions.

New Business:

1) Algonquin J-1 System Mystic River Crossing Replacement NOI hearing (7:05)

- a) Project presented by Gene Crouch (Project Representative), with comments from Ivana Pejatovic (Applicant), Tammy McGill Hoyt (right-of-way department, permitting on land), and Ben Thomas.
- b) Project is a continuation of the Algonquin project that started last fall aimed at gathering geotechnical information about the site.
- c) Anomaly has been found in the residential gas pipeline going under the Mystic River. Repairs are needed to maintain integrity of pipe. The pipe will be replaced via horizontal directional drilling (HDD), in which drilling occurs on one side of the river (Somerville side) and the pipe is pulled through the hole and then tied in to the other end. Going under the river and under banks will completely avoid impacts to the waterway (bank and bottom or river) and dealing with potentially contaminated sediments. Although it's not the least expensive method, it is the best environmental choice.
- d) Resource areas affected: Bordering Land Subject to Flooding, Floodway.



- e) At the end of the project, there will not be any aboveground facilities (pipes, equipment, etc). Everything will be restored to existing grade and reseeded. Work location has been selected to avoid removing any trees.
- f) It will be a temporary construction site. Equipment: drill rig, pipe handling equipment, drilling mud (bentonite mud fluid pumped through hole to help facilitate drilling and lubricate the drill), equipment to move pipe around and do welding.
- g) Pipe is 24 inch diameter. Approximately 1300 feet of pipe will be installed, around 900 feet of it will be installed via HDD.
- h) Drilling contractor will constantly monitor pressure during the drilling, and will make any necessary adjustments. Equipment will also on site to do any necessary clean up in the case of mud fracking out.
- i) Discussed why the pipe will be installed so deeply, quantity and specs of the mud that will be used, qualifications of contractors on site, lifespan of current pipe (permitted in 1951) and estimated lifespan of new pipe, how location of pipe (in bedrock) should improve lifespan of new pipe, potential damage from leaving existing pipe in ground (steel pipe, will be filled with grout and maintained after abandoned), other permits required for project (communication process with FERC, Ch.91 License, Water Quality Certification, dredging (removal of material from directional drill), permission from each of 3 towns (Somerville, Arlington, Medford), Corps of Engineers (contingency permit)), alternative methodology for pipe replacement, work with DCR and Mystic River Watershed Association on landscape management and vegetation plans, work with DCR on restoration plan, intermediate steps erosion control, what will be done with excess soil (stockpiling in covered tanks and excess soil removal), construction timeline (goal to start work in July; pipe must be back in service by November 1st), need for site-specific erosion and sedimentation control plan and other control measures, impact of project on trees and the need to protect the critical root zone, the size of the construction zone, environmental impacts of bentonite.
- j) Hearing continued until the next regular meeting of the Conservation Commission on March 28th, 2017. Conservation Commission requested the following documents prior to the meeting: (a) revised site plan showing location and specifications of erosion and sedimentation controls, construction entrance, tree protections, and all staging areas, (b) copy of Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan BMPS, (c) Bentonite specs.
- k) To include in OOC special conditions: check-in and monitoring plan, copies of SWPPP inspections, notification of progress and problems, require that any issues identified are corrected within 24 hours.

2) Discussion with Citywide Garden Coordinator Applicants (8:05)

- a) Two applicants for position: Tara Mitchell and Anne Zielinski.
- b) Commission reviewed statements of community gardening philosophy that applicants provided.
- c) Applicants introduced themselves and answered questions from Con Com members and agent.

Unfinished Business and Updates (8:27)

1) Commissioner vacancy update

- Received 22 applications for the open position.
- Currently in the process of narrowing down the selection.
- Will gather information about experience and skills of current Con Com members to determine what types of skills and experience would be most useful for new Con Com member.
- Progress

2) Review and update Order of Conditions special conditions template

- Tabled until next meeting

3) Website updates

- Many updates have been made. A few more are needed. Keep checking to identify other changes.

4) Ongoing projects

- Updates on Baxter Park and Assembly Square Block 2A projects.



5) Action Items from January meeting

- ~~Jake McManus, Assembly Block 5A—complete corrective action and send information and photos to Vanessa~~ **DONE**
- ~~Gene, Algonquin J-1 System Site—spread more straw and then contact Vanessa~~ **DONE**
- ~~Vanessa—inform MACC of Commission sign on for gas pipeline letter~~ **DONE**
- ~~Vanessa—register commissioners for MACC conference~~ **DONE**
- ~~Michael—ask David about CPC proposal. Otherwise, Commission can provide letter~~ **NOT done, but no longer applicable**
- All Commissioners – review special conditions template and identify necessary revisions
- ~~Vanessa—email garden coordinator list to solicit applications for city coordinator position and invite applicants to next Con Com meeting~~ **DONE**
- ~~Vanessa—contact Lisa Brukilacchio to find out more about bylaws~~ **DONE** (but no response)
- Rachel and Michael – read through bylaws and report back at next meeting
- Everyone – look at new website and propose changes at next meeting
- Mathias – contact Matthew about resignation letter **Mathias did contact, but Matthew did not send to Vanessa**

Other Business: (8:38)

1. Conflict of Interest education and training program
 - All Commissioners need to complete ASAP
2. Access to MACC environmental handbook online
 - <https://owl.oit.umass.edu/owl-c/user/loginpage.cgi?UserType=Student&Server=owl-macc>
3. MBTA Bus Depot Project Public Notice of Chapter 91 and 401 Water Quality Certification Combined Application
4. Community Garden updates: Walnut Street garden vandalism and theft, waitlist issue
5. Commission selected Tara Mitchell for citywide garden coordinator position (3 votes for Tara, 1 vote for Anne)

Adjourn

1. Motion to adjourn- Owen
2. Second- David
3. All in favor: 8:46

List of Meeting Documents:

- 1) Agenda
- 2) Minutes Jan 24th meeting
- 3) Ongoing projects spreadsheet
- 4) Algonquin project NOI (Somerville Con Com file 2017_1; DEP file 287-0057)
- 5) Community garden philosophy statements from two citywide garden coordinator applicants (“Anne_Zielinski Re Community Garden Coordinator Position” and “Tara Mitchell_Re Community Garden Coordinator Position”)
- 6) Email from Jake McManus (“RE Urgent Assembly Square Block 5A not in compliance with Conservation Commission Order of Conditions”)
- 7) Email from Gene Crouch about spreading straw at Algonquin J-1 System Site (“RE Somerville Conservation Commission documents required for various projects”)
- 8) Email from Eugene Benson about MACC gas pipeline letter (“letter to Governor Baker re interstate gas pipelines”)
- 9) Email to Garden Coordinators about citywide garden coordinator position (“Community Garden Coordinator Position”)
- 10) Email to Lisa Brukilacchio about bylaws (“Question about Conservation Commission bylaws”)
- 11) MBTA Bus Depot Project Public Notice of Chapter 91 and 401 Water Quality Certification Combined Application
- 12) Email from Bob Segal about Walnut Street vandalism (“Vandalism and theft at the Walnut Street garden”)
- 13) Email exchange with Peter Heller about waitlist position (“RE community garden plot”)

