



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

MAY 09, 2017

**MINUTES**

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

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

**Commission Members in attendance:** Michael Fager (acting Chair), Rachel Borgatti, Owen Wartella, David Turin, Jamie Lefkowitz

**Commission Members absent:** Mathias Neuber

**Others in Attendance:** Holly Palmgren (MBTA), Les Smith (Epsilon Associates), Duke Bitsko (Chester Engineers), Russell Adams (C&C Consulting Engineers), Paul Schuman (SGH), Minka VanBeuzekom (Mystic River Watershed Association), Michael Ripple (Mystic River Watershed Association), Aladdine Joroff

**Staff:** Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

Michael Fager brought the meeting to order at 7:06 followed by introductions.

**Unfinished Business (7:08 pm):**

**1) Public Hearing continuation: Notice of Intent for Charlestown Bus Facility – Shoreline Stabilization and Yard Improvements Project.**

Applicant: Holly Palmgren (MBTA Environmental)

Representative: Maria Hartnett (Epsilon Associates)

Project Location: MBTA Charlestown Bus Yard, 80 Alford St., Boston

DEP file #287-0058

- Request: Stabilize shoreline and improve coastal resiliency at MTBA Charlestown Bus Facility to ensure that this important facility is protected.
- Jurisdiction: Coastal Beaches, Coastal Banks, Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, Fish Run.
- Documents Presented: (1) Emails and documents between MBTA, (2) Comment letter from Mystic River Watershed Association.



- Update from MBTA (Holly Palmgren):
  - Since last Conservation Commission meeting, MBTA submitted information to MyWRA, and had a meeting with them on Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Discussions continued through present day.
  - Also, MBTA reached out to DMF who manages In-Lieu Fee program, and asked how they managed the budget and prioritized projects. Response from Tay Evans forwarded to Conservation Commission on 5/9/17 by Les Smith.
- Update from MyWRA (Minka Van Beuzekom):
  - Learned that because land along the Mystic is expensive, it is unlikely that In-Lieu Fee program will result in local mitigation.
  - MyWRA presented a comment letter to the Commission and to MBTA. The letter states the concerns they have had, and points out which of their concerns have been sufficiently addressed. Letter is signed by MyWRA and 13 Somerville residents.
  - Encourage Conservation Commission to include two conditions to the order of conditions, including: (1) monitoring plan to ensure mitigation and stormwater structures are performing as expected, (2) evaluation of whether the reclaimed beach habitat is performing as expected, and if it is not then make a new plan.
- Discussion:
  - MBTA is continuing to explore other options for mitigation with MyWRA, including additional local mitigation. Tay Evans from DMF stated that eel grass wouldn't be an appropriate local mitigation, but there are other options, such as diadromous fish habitat. The In-Lieu fee for this project is over \$900k. DMF does rate highly restoration projects in regions that have been impacted.
  - Stormwater monitoring plan to ensure systems are working properly? If system is built the way it is supposed to be built, it should function properly. Difficult to measure values just for this site. Because of the raingarden, this site will only add to the stormwater discharge during large storm events; rest of discharge is flowing through site from upstream. Will do annual inspection of amount of sediment present in system to determine TSS removal. Three outfalls in Somerville. Provide Commission with maintenance records.
  - How to determine success of reclaimed beach habitat? Take baseline survey of what is there now and use that for comparison purposes. Look at type of organisms that are present pre- and post-construction.
- Vote: to close the hearing and issue an order of conditions with the following special conditions added to the Commission's standard conditions (motion – Borgatti, second – Turin, vote: 5:0:0 @ 7:48 pm):
  - Special Conditions
    - Prior to beginning work, Applicant will continue discussions with the Mystic River Watershed Association to determine if alternative mitigation strategies would be more appropriate. The Conservation Commission will be informed, in writing, of the outcomes of these discussions.
    - Prior to beginning work, City of Somerville Engineering Department must approve project and stormwater management plan, and submit approval letter to Conservation Commission.
    - Any future drainage area development on this site that involves a connection to the new outfall in Somerville must come before the Commission prior to beginning work.
    - Time of Year restriction: no in-water work shall be performed between February 15 and July 15.

- Prior to construction, Applicant must submit to the Conservation Commission a vegetation plan of the reclaimed beach area and a baseline (pre-construction) survey of the types of organisms that currently inhabit the area.
- Applicant must develop a five-year monitoring and maintenance plan for coastal beach and vegetation. Submit, in writing, annual monitoring and maintenance reports to the Conservation Commission. Annual reports must be received by January 20<sup>th</sup> for five consecutive years post-construction. If the coastal beach and/or vegetation habitats are not performing properly, the report will contain a revised mitigation plan. The Applicant will present the report and the revised plan to the Conservation Commission at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Applicant will submit maintenance records of all the stormwater structures located on site in Somerville, on an annual basis. Maintenance records must be received by the Conservation Commission by January 20<sup>th</sup> each year for five consecutive years post-construction.

**Other Business (7:50 pm):**

- 1) Commissioners signed the amended OOC for In-Water Control of Non-Native and Nuisance Vegetation in the Mystic River (DEP File #287-0054), which was approved at April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 2) MACC News: Proposed New Priority Habitat Map Released.
  - a. No priority habitat in Somerville.

**Adjourn**

1. Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 7:58 pm [motion – Wartella, second – Borgatti]

**List of Meeting Documents:**

- Agenda
- Emails from: Paul Schuman (3 emails on 5/1/17, 1 email on 5/2/17), Patrick Herron (5/8/17), Les Smith (5/9/17).
- Comment letter from Mystic River Watershed Association (2017-04-09\_MyRWA\_MBTA\_SomervilleNOI\_FINAL.pdf)

