



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

OCTOBER 24, 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 in part on a recording of the meeting.*

**Commission Members in attendance:** Owen Wartella, Michael Fager, Aladdine Joroff, Mathias Neuber, David Turin, Rachel Borgatti

**Commission Members absent:** none

**Others in Attendance:** Cristina Kennedy, Dale Horsman (VHB), Gene Crouch (VHB), Hugh Hahn (VHB), David Webster (Federal Realty), Charles Kelsh

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

Mathias Neuber brought the meeting to order at 7:02 followed by introductions.

**Unfinished Business (7:03 pm)**

1) Public Hearing continuation, *OOA Amendment Request* for Assembly Square Block 5A.

Applicant: David Webster (Street Retail Inc.)

Representative: Gene Crouch (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.)

Project Location: 401-499 Assembly Row (Somerville, MA)

Massachusetts DEP file #287-0051

- Request: Amendment to Assembly Square Block 5A OOA to reconfigure the western portion of the interim surface parking lot at Block 5B, reducing the parking lot size from 0.96 acres to 0.60 acres, and resize the rain garden area accordingly.
- Jurisdiction: In accordance with conditions for Assembly on the Mystic 72-inch Storm Drain and Outfall Plans Permit issued by the Somerville Conservation Commission, DEP file #287-0028.
- Documents Presented: (1) Assembly Square Water Quality Monitoring Report (2017-05-05\_WQ\_Monitoring\_Report.pdf).
- Presentation (Dale Horsman, Gene Crouch, Hugh Hahn, David Webster) and Discussion:



- Contractor to restore site and raingarden. Replant raingarden for 1" treatment with two sediment forebays.
- Discussed results of Assembly Square water quality monitoring report (sampling May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, report date October 3, 2017).
  - Two teams, each sampled three stations. One station (Station 3) shows increase in TSS from influent to effluent, likely because sediment at bottom was stirred up. Apart from this station, TSS change ranged from a ~4% to about ~49% decrease. Three of units were bypassing (Stations 1, 3, 6) by the time of sampling. Station 1 (which couldn't be sampled) is receiving a very large area. Units designed to treat roadways. Unit rating is based on specific type of stormwater flow with different particle sizes, but this sampling protocol encompasses the smaller spectrum of suspended solids, and units are removing significant part of the load. Larger solids have already been removed (via street sweeping and deep sumps in the hoods). Based on how much of the smaller sized TSS that the units are removing, the system is working. Commissioner Wartella noted that the sampling results are in range of where need to be based on New Jersey CAT protocol.
  - Discussed possibility of updating the sampling protocol to account for more of the treatment train to give a better sense of the total TSS that is being removed.
  - **Action: Boukili to report City's street sweeping schedule in ASQ.**
  - Important to keep sampling water quality units, and provide Commission with the three water quality monitoring reports per year, as required. Currently only have 4 data points for 3 years, instead of the promised 9 data points. Sampling results are quite variable, more data is needed.
- For Block 5A, water flows through raingarden and then into Vortech sampling unit. Raingarden will capture first flush.
- Current raingarden is fenced off but has likely been degraded due to proximity to construction. Parking lot next to it which was used for construction staging. Plan to restore whole area, including repaving parking lot area and restoring raingarden while reducing to appropriate size.
- Vote: to close hearing and issue an OOC with the following special condition added to the Commission's standard conditions [motion – Turin, second – Fager, vote: 5:0:1 @ 7:46 pm]
  - Snow shall be not be plowed into or stored inside of the raingarden. Snow shall be piled in the parking lot or removed from site.

2) Assembly Square water quality monitoring report from May 2017 sampling (**presented concurrently with unfinished business item #1, above**).

*[tape recording stopped here; remaining minutes are from Agent Boukili's notes]*

**New Business (7:47 pm)**

- 1) Public Hearing: *Notice of Intent* for Assembly Row Block 7  
Applicant: David Webster (SRI Assembly Row B7, LLC.)  
Representative: Gene Crouch (Vanassee Hangen Brustlin, Inc.)  
Project Location: 100 Foley Street (Somerville, MA)  
Massachusetts DEP file #287-0060

- Request: Current interim condition of Assembly Square Block 7 (DEP file # 287-0049, COC issued October 27, 2015) includes two raingardens. Request is to convert the eastern rain garden from a surface water quality feature to a subsurface sand and organic filter, which will provide the same



water quality treatment as the existing rain garden and will allow reuse of the surface area for events. The subsurface water quality feature will include a new storage and distribution system of arch chambers installed above the bioretention soil mix to distribute stormwater to the bioretention filter media and provide the required stormwater management volume.

- **Jurisdiction:** In accordance with conditions for Assembly on the Mystic 72-inch Storm Drain and Outfall Plans Permit issued by the Somerville Conservation Commission, DEP file #287-0028.
- **Documents Presented:** (1) Block 7 NOI (Block7-Amendment\_NOI-LR.pdf).
- **Presentation** (Dale Horsman, Gene Crouch, Hugh Hahn, David Webster) and Discussion:
  - The interim condition of Block 7 is a parking lot; final built condition will be a building with internal parking, but there is no current schedule for the development of this building.
  - The parking lot also includes two rain gardens. Propose to replace one raingarden with StormTech units that will be sitting on 6 inches of stone, wrapped in stone, and filled to grade. Will also include a stone forebay. There will be area drains, and the catch basin will be raised. The surface will then be used as a people park and a dog park.
  - The units are perforated, so that water can flow into them as well as around and between them. Water is then filtered out through stone into the outlet.
  - The units are sized to capture a 10-year storm event.
  - The lifespan of the units is consistent with a sand filter bed – around 10 years or more.
  - The area is temporary and will not count towards Somerville's Open Space goals.
  - Federal Realty will maintain the grass. Commission suggests the use of a hand mower because the 6 inches of stone will get crushed and compacted if a ride-on mower is used.
  - The units will be monitored regularly for overflow/ bypass.
- **Vote:** to close hearing and issue an OOC with the following special condition added to the Commission's standard conditions [motion – Wartella, second – Turin, vote: 6:0:0 @ 8:08 pm]
  - The installed units shall be monitored and inspected regularly, and the Commission shall be notified immediately if the installed units not working property, such as if they are being bypassed or if there is overflow.

2) Public Hearing: *Notice of Intent* for Mystic River Dock Removal (**8:09 pm**)

Applicant: David Webster (Street Retail Inc.)

Property Owner: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Representative: Gene Crouch (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.)

Project Location: Draw 7 Park, Noonan Place (Somerville, MA)

Massachusetts DEP file #287-00XX

- **Request:** Demolish and remove derelict dock within Draw 7 Park on the Mystic River in Somerville, MA. The dock was formerly used as an offloading facility for oil barges, but has not been used for many years and is in a very deteriorated condition. Access for the demolition and removal of all dock components will temporarily alter several coastal and inland regulated resource areas.
- **Jurisdiction:** Riverfront Area, Land Under the Ocean, Coastal Beaches, Coastal Banks, Land Containing Shellfish, Fish Runs, Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage.
- **Documents Presented:** (1) Mystic Dock Removal NOI (Mystic Dock Removal\_NOI-LR.pdf).
- **Presentation** (Dale Horsman, Gene Crouch, Hugh Hahn, David Webster) and Discussion:
  - The demolition and removal of dock will temporarily impact many coastal resources and some inland resources. Intend to pull all of the material out and get rid of it. Propose to use a crane to remove the materials. Will install crane mats on the beach, and will try to keep work above mid-

tide line. Also need access to path (about 500 feet) for equipment which will be placed at Draw 7 Park parking lot.

- Dock removal project is part of Federal Realty Ch.91 mitigation project. Originally intended to do the mitigation on Block 6, but cannot do that so they are doing this instead.
- Commissioners asked whether the pipes might possibly still contain oil, and whether there is a spill plan. Presenters stated that it is unlikely that there is still oil in the pipes, and that they are almost completely occluded with rust. If there does happen to be oil in the pipes, they will be able to deal with it. FRIT has LSPs all over Assembly Square, so they can take care of it right away.
- Commissioners asked about silt/muck protection. Presenters stated that a turbidity curtain will be installed, which will float in the water and has a weighted bottom.
- Commissioners required a number of modifications to the proposed plan:
  - The equipment path should be moved out of the buffer zone as much as possible.
  - The crane mats should be moved out of the tidal zone and a larger crane should be used if necessary to keep it out of the resource area.
  - The construction entrance should have fencing on both sides.
  - A path for pedestrians needs to be maintained.
  - A silt fence needs to be placed around the buffer zone.
  - The staging area needs to be moved outside of the buffer zone.
  - Overall, a better plan needs to be established for the removal of the dock, or at least the alternatives considered need to be presented.
  - The plan should include an oil spill plan, and an oil absorbing boom should be on site.
  - The plan needs to include details about the restoration of the area back to the current conditions or better.
  - Is there an option to do this project from a barge?
  - Where is the 72" outfall pipe in relation to this project, and how will it be protected? Presenters stated that mats and an air bridge will be used, but this needs to be shown on the plans.
  - Drains near the parking lot need inlet protection.
  - Presenters stated that this will be 3 weeks of work, but the NOI states that it will be 1 week of work. That needs to be corrected in the plans.
  - Time of year restrictions for herring is from March 15<sup>th</sup> – June 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - DMF recommends that the work be done at low tide.
- Applicant requested to continue the hearing until the next Conservation Commission meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup> to address the comments and questions raised by the Commission.

### 3) Review City of Somerville Erosion Control Specifications (8:36 pm)

- All specifications should reference the 2017 EPA Construction General Permit instead of the 2008 permit. Commissioner Wartella provided additional suggestions on various specifications.
- **Action:** Add notes #1 from pg.80 (Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Notes) as a special condition for OOCs.

### Updates and Discussion (8:48 pm)

#### 1) Ongoing projects: Reviewed ongoing projects spreadsheet



2) Outstanding Action Items:

- Update from Conservation Commission policy revision committee
  - Chaz (Charles) Kelsh has been recruited.
  - **Action: circulate comments on policy document prior to next meeting.**
- Public education brochure (get examples from other communities) & blurb for Resistat newsletter, etc.
  - Chaz Kelsh, Harvard student and Somerville resident, presented examples of educational materials from four cities, including Lexington, Wayland, Newton, and Cambridge. Websites contains some of the following topics: forms and procedures, laws and requirements, plant materials guide, FAQs or basic Q&A, general information fact sheets, Abutter's guide, Conservation Commission brochure (2-page guide), links to permits and DEP.
- Boukili – request water quality monitoring report for Assembly Square (May 9 sampling event)
  - Report received (2017-05-05\_WQ\_Monitoring\_Report.pdf).
- Boukili – prepare spreadsheet of Assembly Square water quality sampling data, and share spreadsheet and reports with Engineering Department
  - **Action: complete before next meeting.**

**Other Business: (9:01)**

- 1) Commissioner Fager reported that CPA purchased house at Glen Park. House will be moved or torn down. Discussions ongoing about what to do with land. Consider lobbying to make the space into more community gardens. Unsure if the road next to the house is public or private.
- 2) Commissioner Neuber stepping down as chair, effective at the end of the year.

**Approval of minutes:**

- 1) N/A

**Adjourn:**

- 1) Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 9:08 [motion – Wartella, second – Borgatti].

**List of Meeting Documents** (located here: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017\_10\_24\_Meeting\_Documents):

- Agenda
- Ongoing Project Data Spreadsheet
- Assembly Square Block 5A Amendment request documents (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017\_10\_24\_Meeting\_Documents\ 2017\_5 Amendment ASQ Block 5A)
- Assembly Square Water Quality Monitoring Report from May 9, 2017 Sampling (2017-05-05\_WQ\_Monitoring\_Report.pdf)
- Assembly Square Block 7 NOI (Block7-Amendment\_NOI-LR.pdf) and related documents (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017\_10\_24\_Meeting\_Documents\ 2017\_6 Amendment ASQ Block 7)
- Mystic River Dock Removal NOI (Mystic Dock Removal\_NOI-LR.pdf) and related documents (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017\_10\_24\_Meeting\_Documents\ 2017\_7 Dock Removal Mystic River NOI)
- City of Somerville Draft Erosion Control Specifications (K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2017\2017\_10\_24\_Meeting\_Documents\City of Somerville DRAFT erosion control specifications).
- Educational materials examples (Other towns educational materials v1.0.ppt)

