



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

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2018, 7:00 PM
MINUTES**

**MEETING AT SOMERVILLE CITY HALL
93 HIGHLAND AVENUE
3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

DRAFT Meeting notes prepared by Vanessa Boukili

Commission Members in attendance: Michael Fager (acting Chair), David Turin, Owen Wartella, Cristina Kennedy, Aladdine Joroff

Commission Members absent: Rachel Borgatti, Mathias Neuber

Others in Attendance: Sean Donlon (SGH), Cory Cormier (SGH), Alyssa Jacobs (Epsilon Associates), Ruth Helfeld (DCR), Dan Driscoll (DCR)

Staff: Vanessa Boukili (Conservation Agent)

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

New Business:

1) Public Hearing: *Notice of Intent* for Draw Seven Pathway Extension (7:07 pm)

Applicant: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Property Owner: Holly Palmgren (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority)

Representative: Alyssa Jacobs (Epsilon Associates, Inc.)

Project Location: 80 Alford Street, Boston/ Somerville

Massachusetts DEP file #287-0066

- Request: Shared multi-use pathway, 1900 linear feet, providing critical linkage between Assembly Square and Sullivan Square. Includes 10 foot wide porous pathway and additional landscaping.
- Jurisdiction: Land Subject to Coast Storm Flowage, Riverfront Area, Buffer Zone to Coastal Bank.
- Documents Presented: (1) Notice of Intent – DCR Draw Seven Pathway Extension (DCR Draw Seven Pathway NOI Application 11-15-18.pdf)
- Presentation (Alyssa Jacobs, Sean Donlon, Cory Cormier, Dan Driscoll, Ruth Helfeld) and Discussion:



- This is an addition to MBTA Charlestown bus facility shoreline stabilization and yard improvements project (DEP file #287-0058). Includes materials change and additional native plantings as well as guard rails, bike racks, seating, and signage. No new grade changes.
- Pathway will have 2 inches of porous pavement on top of 12 inches of crushed stone. There will be a guide rail along Mystic river side for safety. Pathway will have centerline striping and shoulder striping. Porous pavement will help with stormwater management. Runoff conditions are improved and additional voids will be created.
- Construction will take place in parallel with completion of current project, which is underway. Estimated 6 months of construction, expecting to begin in Spring 2019.
- Improvements for pedestrian safety include traffic signage, pedestrian automated warning signs (audio and visual).
- Longitudinal slope of S-turn is 4-5%. Pathway is higher in Boston than in Somerville.
- DCR to perform routine maintenance of pathway by blowing off debris. They will not vacuum the path. Hydrologic benefits may be negligible, but the material allows for more flexibility during settling. Material will have longer lifespan. Winter maintenance: expect that pathway will be plowed at a 6 foot width. It will be open for pedestrians. No salt or sand will be used. Demonstration section of porous pave on DCR property on Memorial Drive has been there for ~8 years. Has held up well, runners like it better.
 - Commission requested DCR operations and maintenance plan or letter from DCR affirming that winter maintenance will not include sand or salt on pathway.
- Presenting project to Boston Conservation Commission on December 19th.
- Erosion and Sedimentation controls from MBTA shoreline stabilization project will be upheld and maintained during the pathway construction, including silt curtain.
- DCR has over \$1.2 million for this project, will be transferred to MBTA for efficiency. There will be an MOU between the agencies.
- Path below flood wall because of settlement considerations. It is expected with climate change that there will be regular inundation of these areas.
- Native species were chosen because they were salt and urban tolerant. Not salt marsh species, but tolerant of occasional flooding. DCR is aware of restoration needs, and will replant plants that die as needed.
- Administrative clarifications: Pricilla Geigis signed for applicant. Use Dan Driscoll as Applicant name. Recording information is incorrect. Various locations in the document refer to Boston Conservation Commission instead of Somerville Conservation Commission. Riverfront Area listed is for the entire length of the path (50,000 sq ft). We need a Somerville-specific number as well. The proposed alteration for LSCSF listed in the WPA form does not match the number in the project narrative. Overall resource areas impacts do not reflect the entire extent of the project. Numbers shown reflect new work, but should instead include all work for this project.
- Alyssa Jacobs, on behalf of Applicant, asked to continue the hearing until the Conservation Commission meeting at 7:30 pm on December 11th to compile the requested documents. Commissioners agreed with this continuation.

Updates and Discussion:

- 1) Ongoing Projects updates (8:05 pm)
 - a) Assembly Square Block 5B and Block 8



- Agent Boukili did site visit last Friday (11/23/18), starting pre-construction set up. Checked all silt sacks. Waiting for follow-up on signage and other details from Construction manager.
- Discussed whether gravel construction entrance is needed on the paved area (Block 7). Gravel is not needed as long as they are not tracking off dirt. If they will be tracking off dirt they will need a wash down area.
- b) Other projects
 - Charlestown Bus facility project: arranging site visit for winterization.
 - DCR outfall maintenance project: arranging site visit.
 - Algonquin casing removal project: the work has been done, the erosion controls are still up and site has been hydroseeded. A section of fence needs to be replaced (per DCR). Some areas have settled and need to be fixed, possibly this fall.
 - Still have not received COCs from two previous DCR projects.
- 2) Education and Outreach (8:18 pm)
 - a) Educational brochure(s)
 - Working on putting brochure into InDesign for easier reformatting.
- 3) Letters/ notifications (8:19 pm)
 - a) Letter to DCR regarding Draw 7 Park
 - Would be useful to provide input on design and field. Although past comment period, DCR can consider it if they want to.
 - **Action: Commissioner Fager to draft letter, Commissioner Turin and Kennedy to assist.**
 - b) Send a letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction
 - Commissioner Joroff provided a draft of the letter. Some minor edits were made.
 - Include a copy of the educational brochure with the letter.

Other Business:

- 1) Amelia Earhart Dam pump (8:30 pm)
 - Dam was built to have four pumps, but only has three. There is concern about flooding, and funding for the 4th pump is being discussed.
- 2) Somerville Climate Forward: Somerville's Community Climate Change Plan (8:34 pm)
 - November 28th release date and celebration, 6-8pm at Greentown Labs.
- 3) West Somerville Play Yard: public meeting December 10th, 6-7:30 pm
- 4) Other notices:
 - Allen Street final community meeting in mid-December
 - Foss Park meeting in mid-December
 - Environmental Monitor Notice – MBTA Five Year Vegetation Management Plan
 - Action item review
 - DCR permit forms – research application form has checkbox about local Conservation Commission permits. Waiting to hear back about other permit forms.
 - Erica from Shape-up Somerville has been gathering information and will provide a report by the end of December. Commissioner Kennedy attended Bikeway garden cleanup.
 - Draw 7 park cleanup was a success. Counted items collected and produced report.

Approval of minutes:

- 1) Vote to approved October 23rd, 2018 minutes with three amendments at 8:47 pm [motion – Wartella, second – Joroff; vote: 5:0:0].



Adjourn:

- 1) Motion to adjourn meeting unanimously approved at 8:55 pm [motion – Wartella, second – Kennedy, vote: 5:0:0].

Outstanding Action Items:

November:

- **Action:** Commissioner Fager to draft letter to DCR re: Draw 7 Park, Commissioner Turin and Kennedy to assist.

October:

- **Action:** Arn Franzen to let Tara and the garden coordinators know about the new construction timeline for Allen Street, and to make sure Erica and Lisa (Shape-Up Somerville) are involved.
- **Action:** Agent Boukili to arrange site visit for Charlestown Bus Facility project between Thanksgiving and end of year to discuss winterization. Commissioner Wartella to attend.
- **Action:** Agent Boukili to work with T&I staff on educational brochure formatting.
- **Action:** After reformat this brochure to be able to easily print it, put this on website.
- **Action:** Agent Boukili to ask Thomas Dalton about Checkbox for Conservation Commission permits on DCR forms and get sample DCR form(s).

September:

- **Action:** Boukili to put more information on the website, such as the community gardener agreement, coordinator responsibilities, etc.
- **Action:** Boukili to update Garden Map to include more street names (remove walkshed circles or put on interactive map so that people can zoom in and out).
- **Action:** Erica and Lisa to provide report on research and ideas to the Commission by the end December. Invite them to January ConCom meeting to discuss report and next steps.
- **Action:** Invite garden coordinators to March ConCom meeting.

April:

- **Action:** Talk to DCR about including a check box for Conservation Commission permits on their permit forms (ex. is this project within 25 feet of a wetland? If so, contact local Conservation Commission).
- **Action:** Send letter to Carli Fence about Conservation Commission jurisdiction.
- **Action:** Send email to DPW, Planning, Engineering, Capital Projects, and any other departments who might review construction or development projects. Remind them of Conservation Commission jurisdiction and requirements that must be following when working near the river.
- **Action:** Talk to Garden Coordinators about accounting of garden fees.
- **Action:** Commission to start a list of suggestions for Garden Coordinators about how to be more open/ inclusive, especially to folks on the waitlist (ex. "garden-sitting" when gardeners are on vacation).
- **Action:** Commissioner Joroff to revise ConCom Policies document, then Commissioners to read though it again to make sure everyone is willing to follow it.

List of Meeting Documents (located here: K:\OHCD\Shared\Conservation Commission\Agenda + Minutes + Legal Notices 2018\2018_11_27 Meeting Documents):

- Agenda (2018_11_27_Agenda.pdf)
- Ongoing Project Data Spreadsheet (Ongoing Project Data.xlsx)
- October Meeting Minutes (2018_10_23_Minutes_Draft.docx)
- DCR Draw Seven Pathway Extension NOI (DCR Draw Seven Pathway NOI Application 11-15-18.pdf)
- Draft letter for Carli Fencing (Draft Letter for Carli Fencing.docx)
- Incoming correspondence: Environ Monitor Notice 5 year Veg Mgmt Plan MBTA.pdf
- Somerville special conditions documents (Somerville Special Conditions - generic_new Nov 2017.docx, Somerville - Additional Special Conditions.docx)