

Regular Meeting Minutes January 7, 2021

**CITY OF NORWICH INLAND WETLANDS, WATERCOURSES AND CONSERVATION
COMMISSION**

VIRTUAL/REMOTE MEETING

A. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Richard Morell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

B. ROLL CALL and SEATING of ALTERNATES:

Present: Chairman Richard Morell, Vice Chairman Douglas Lee, Peter Chalecki, Michael Lahan, Robert McCoy and Brandon Hyde.

Absent: Swarnjit Singh Bhatia and David Poore.

Also Present: Dan Daniska, Assistant City Planner and Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary.

C. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Douglas Lee put forth a motion to APPROVE the December 3, 2020 regular meeting minutes with the revision that Michael Lahan was absent. Peter Chalecki seconded. All voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: Dan Daniska stated he had the Sound Outlook newsletter from DEEP and the Fall 2020 Connecticut Landscape Architect available for those that are interested.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

F. OLD BUSINESS: None.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. SHOW CAUSE HEARING: Unauthorized Tree Cutting Adjacent to the Yantic River & FEMA Floodway - 20 New London Turnpike Norwich, CT 06360

Dan Daniska reported that unauthorized tree cutting had occurred at 20 New London Turnpike and that Mark Massey, the owner of the Domino's Pizza located at that address, was on the call. Mr. Daniska showcased photos of the affected area and stated he had received a call from building department personnel who saw noticeable tree cutting that occurred close to the building. Mr. Daniska asked that the Committee remove the submittal of application requirement and fee as it was not necessary in this situation, as the work had already occurred. Mark Massey stated he was unaware that clearing was an issue as the previous owner had done the same many items and that the foliage affected was smooth sumac which would grow back as the root system was still alive. Mr. Massey continued that the previous owner had trimmed the area down to prevent the sumac from encroaching on and damaging the building on site and again was unaware those acts

were incorrect. Brandon Hyde asked what the largest caliper of removal was to which Mark Massey responded six or eight inches. Mr. Hyde stated the permissible maintenance of an upland review area was four inches or less of an invasive species which Dan Daniska agreed that he believed that was correct and that the main concern was the proximity of the disturbance to the river. Richard Morrell noted the area was a steep bank and asked if the ground was destabilized and if so to what degree. Dan Daniska stated that the area did not seem to be destabilized at all as he had walked the grounds and nothing felt loose. Peter Chalecki asked if the area was considered an upland area and Dan Daniska responded it is, as well as a floodway. Douglas Lee noted it would depend in part on the soil composition. Brandon Hyde stated his understanding throughout the years with the neighboring properties was that maintenance was allowed so a goal should be to educate the applicant at what level the work is considered removal versus maintenance. Brandon Hyde made a motion to withdraw the cease and desist order, that staff work with the property owner to develop an annual maintenance plan to control or possibly eradicate invasive species, and that staff check in on the property to ensure proper cleanup of the area occurs. Douglas Lee second. All voted in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Receipt of Applications: None.

H. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

I. VIOLATIONS: None.

J. ADJOURNMENT: Douglas Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM. Michael Lahan seconded. All voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary