

Regular Meeting Minutes October 6, 2022
CITY OF NORWICH INLAND WETLANDS, WATERCOURSES AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
HYBRID MEETING / PUBLIC HEARING
100 BROADWAY, ROOM 319, NORWICH, CT

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, Peter Chalecki (ZOOM), Michael Lahan, and Brandon Hyde.
Absent: Vice Chairman Douglas Lee.

Also Present: Michael Doherty, SLR Consulting (ZOOM); Pam Keggles, Three Rivers Retrievers; Dan Daniska, City Planner (ZOOM); and Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary.

C. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Michael Lahan put forth a motion to APPROVE the September 1, 2022 special meeting minutes. Brandon Hyde seconded. Michael Lahan, Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: None.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. IWWCC #22-14: 196-200 Yantic Street** Selective clearing of invasive trees between 6-14", to be replanted with native trees and shrubs, site grading, construction of accessible walkways, lighting features, a stone amphitheater, and preservation and enhancement of the historic mill building. Work will take place in the Upland Review Area. Assessor's Map 92, Block 2, Lots 1-2; Map 84, Block 1, Lots 43-44. Zone NC.

Michael Doherty of SLR Consulting was in attendance on behalf of the application for the Uncas Leap Heritage Park, as the Principal Landscape Architect. Mr. Doherty presented the site plan on screen for all to see. Mr. Doherty clarified that the master plan for the site was adopted in 2018. Mr. Doherty stated the project would begin just outside of the Yantic Streetscape and would include improvements to the sidewalk east of the existing parking lot as well as along the frontage of the park property. Mr. Doherty stated the park site was about 1.7 acres in size with no delineated wetlands on the site but noted that the ordinary high water line of the Yantic River had been flagged. Mr. Doherty noted that a majority of the site fell within the 100-foot upland review area and showed on the site plan where the upland review area delineated. Mr. Doherty explained that formal stairs would be installed where there was currently a steep asphalt walk and a walking path would be put in from the pedestrian bridge to Yantic Street to allow for two accessibility routes. Mr. Doherty stated some vegetation along the upper river banks would be removed to improve the site line and provide a better view of the upper falls from the various seating areas that would be installed. Mr. Doherty discussed the assorted seating and gathering areas that would be incorporated into the park. Mr. Doherty stated that the material of the permeable sidewalks to go within the main park had not yet been decided but in the master plan they envisioned limiting the amount of paved surfaces in the park and utilizing materials that are maintenance free. Mr. Doherty stated the pathways would follow the park edges towards the Yantic River and lead to another proposed overlook structure nestled within the trees. Mr. Doherty stated in the east area of the park there would

be a permeable paver decorative circle with an outer decorative ring to serve as a 'Story Circle' gathering area; which was a change from the submitted plans that showed the area as a lawn. Mr. Doherty explained the area would be a small amphitheater event space which could be used daily for casual gatherings, for city events or to be used by the Mohegan Tribe; which was an agreement included in the master plan. Mr. Doherty discussed some of the work that had occurred to the stone mill building on the site and that some terracing from it would be utilized for the amphitheater area. Mr. Doherty stated there was a proposed small boardwalk to be placed over the grading in the southeast area of the property leading to the former mill building. Mr. Doherty stated this would allow people to enter the skeletal structure that was built which would be used as an exhibit room to experience the look and feel of the mill. Mr. Doherty stated there would be a decorative fence to keep people at a safe distance from the structure. Mr. Doherty stated at the top of the stairs leading from the mill there would be a proposed bumped in angled parking area to provide parking in closer proximity to the park, as well as space for bus drop offs or vendors during events to not impede traffic on Yantic Street. Mr. Doherty stated the overall site plan would be to clean up the park and that most existing soil on the site is distributed. Mr. Doherty stated work would be done to remove any controlled and contaminated soils on the site. Mr. Doherty stated the plan also includes improving the vegetation on the site through cleanup and removal of invasive species. Mr. Doherty stated there would be a small bathroom facility within the park with a storage room. Mr. Doherty stated the plan also proposed landscaping along the upper ridges of the upland area to keep people away from the edge as well as improve the condition of the area. Mr. Doherty stated they felt plantings could help keep people within contained areas opposed to erecting a fence. Mr. Doherty stated that the amount of sidewalks and connections had been reduced from the master plan.

Richard Morrell asked what the time frame was for the park development. Mr. Doherty responded the goal was to bid the project in early winter of 2023 and to have it on the street the following February. Michael Lahan asked if there was any planned seating aside from the amphitheater. Mr. Doherty showed on the site plan where benches would be placed throughout the park. Brandon Hyde asked what the amphitheater seating was constructed of. Mr. Doherty stated it was envisioned as a stone seating facade and they were hoping to reuse stones from the demolition of the building on the site. Brandon Hyde asked if there was any ENS planning in place for the topography coming off of the amphitheater area. Mr. Doherty responded the full edge of the park would be wrapped in silk fence and erosion control matting would be placed along all steep slopes. Mr. Doherty noted on the site plan where hay bails would be placed, for all to see on screen. Brandon Hyde asked if there were fencing plans for the proposed overlooks. Mr. Doherty stated the front and side of the overlooks would have fence railings. Richard Morrell asked if the restrooms would be compostable with no outflow. Mr. Doherty responded the bathrooms would be tied into the city sanitary line and have running plumbing. Brandon Hyde stated he was in favor of the permeable paving as it made sense for the site.

Brandon Hyde made a motion that the application was not a significant activity and did not require a public hearing. Michael Lahan seconded. Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde, Michael Lahan and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

City Planner Dan Daniska reviewed his memo with a list of conditions to be included in the motion and requested a waiver of reading the conditions list.

Brandon Hyde made a motion to APPROVE IWWCC #22-14 with the following conditions:

- That the approval is valid for FIVE YEARS and will expire on 10/06/2027.
- That the City's letter of approval be placed on the final revised plan set (cover page preferred), and that all plan sheets include the stamped seal and signature of the licensed professional.

- That all site activities shall be conducted in accordance with the plans, specifications and documents of record. Any deviation from the approved plans or construction sequence shall be cause for enforcement action by the Inland Wetlands, Watercourses and Conservation Commission.
- That the permittee shall notify the Inland Wetlands Agent prior to the commencement of work and upon its completion.
- That all work and all regulated activities conducted pursuant to this authorization shall be consistent with the terms and conditions of this approval. Any structures, excavation, fill, obstructions, encroachments or regulated activities not specifically identified and authorized herein shall constitute a violation of this approval and may result in its modification, suspension, or revocation. Upon initiation of the activities authorized herein, the permittee thereby accepts and agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of this approval.
- That no equipment or materials including without limitation fill, construction materials, or debris, shall be deposited, placed, or stored in any wetland or watercourse on or off site unless specifically authorized by this approval.
- That the General Provisions stated in Section 11.9 of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Regulations are applicable to this permit.
- That the permit shall not be assigned or transferred to another entity without the written permission of the Commission.
- That all erosion and sediment control measures shall be in accordance with the Connecticut Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control. Erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed and inspected prior to site disturbance. It is the permittee's responsibility to schedule the inspection with the Norwich Planning Department. Additional erosion and sediment control measures shall be installed if determined to be necessary by the Designated Agent. The permittee shall take such necessary steps consistent with the terms and conditions of the approval, to control stormwater discharges and to prevent erosion and sedimentation and to otherwise prevent pollution of wetlands and watercourses.
- That this permit will be strictly enforced. The Commission may suspend or revoke this permit, may direct the Commission's Agent to issue a cease and desist order or may require the applicant to modify, extend, or revise the site work or restore the area to its original condition if it finds that the applicant has not complied with the conditions set forth in this approval or if the applicant exceeds the scope of this approval as set forth herein or if the intended use or actual use of the general site is not as represented by the application or the plan of record.

REASON: The proposed erosion and sediment controls are sufficient to protect the Yantic River.

Michael Lahan seconded. Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde, Michael Lahan and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Receipt of Applications:** Dan Daniska reported that two applications were received, Mr. Daniska stated that IWWCC #22-15 180 North Wawecus Hill Road requested a prefab bridge to be installed in the area of the recreational trail and parking to allow for ADA access onto the trail. Dan Daniska requested the committee to determine if the application could be handled administratively by city staff. Brandon Hyde made a motion that IWWCC #22-15 be handled administratively. Michael Lahan seconded. Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde, Michael Lahan and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan Daniska stated that Pam Keggles of Three Rivers Retrievers was in attendance on behalf of IWWCC #22-16 300 Canterbury Turnpike in regard to the cease and correct order from the previous month. Mr. Daniska stated that Pam Keggles would provide an update on actions taken since the September meeting and noted the application was part of the cease and correct order. Mr. Daniska requested the committee to determine if the application could be handled by city staff administratively.

Pam Keggles stated she felt the area was fixed adequately per the committee's requests. Photographs taken by city staff of the updates were shown on screen for all to see. Pam Keggles noted that grass was starting to grow between the hay that was laid and a lot of growth had occurred. Pam Keggles stated the area was smoothed, seeded and hay was laid. Mr. Daniska stated he visited the site earlier that day and the conditions were as described by Pam Keggles. Pam Keggles stated the grass should have full coverage after the next upcoming days of sunny weather and that the pond had filled significantly since the last meeting due to the rain. Pam Keggles stated the smoothing and seeding was done up to the typical fill line of the pond, where the water currently was almost reaching. Pam Keggles stated 200 pound of grass seed were laid consisting of a half-acre of radish and premade seed mix which were laid separately. Brandon Hyde asked staff how much seed was distributed to which Dan Daniska responded he was not certain but the work that was done covered the disturbed area. Brandon Hyde asked if it would be possible to add native greenery around the pond edges or if the objective was to keep that clear. Pam Keggles stated it was ideal to keep the edges clear because of the dogs running through the water area. Brandon Hyde requested that staff monitor the area to ensure the stabilization matures but otherwise he felt the work was sufficient for the time being. Brandon Hyde recommended staff check the site in November and in early spring.

Brandon Hyde made a motion that the application be handled administratively with updates to the commission provided by staff. Michael Lahan seconded. Peter Chalecki, Brandon Hyde, Michael Lahan and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

H. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

I. VIOLATIONS: None.

J. ADJOURNMENT: Brandon Hyde made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 PM. Michael Lahan seconded. Brandon Hyde, Peter Chalecki, Michael Lahan and Richard Morrell voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Katherine Rose, Recording Secretary