

BELMONT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

August 6, 2002

Members Present: M. Flamang, R. Foster, M. King, J. Smith.
Associate Members Present: N. Davis.

Additional Attendees: Glenn Clancy (Belmont Office of Community Development), Elaine and Paul O'Connell (applicants - 80 Clifton Street), Mark Lewis (architect), Mary Crimaldi (Belmont resident), Peter Briere (BSC Group), Ellen Mass (Friends of Alewife Reservation).

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

New Business

Mrs. Crimaldi noted that there is standing water at Beaver Brook, which has been dammed up by falling trees and branches. This has caused a significant mosquito problem. The Town owns property on one side of the brook there.

It is the consensus of the Commission that Glenn Clancy should ask the Health Department and the Highway Department to have the tree at least partially removed.

Continuation of Public Hearing - Notice of Intent - 80 Clifton Street

Mark Lewis, architect, appeared on behalf of the applicants, Elaine and Paul O'Connell. The O'Connells propose two alternatives for moving their garage closer to the house. The first alternative represents the original plan, and adds a turnaround space using pervious materials. They have recalculated the amount of impervious area being altered. There was discussion regarding the proposed removal of an existing parking area, which would disturb the area. Would it be better to leave it undisturbed, or to remove the existing materials, which have probably become more compacted over time. R. Foster suggested that it might be best to leave the existing materials in place, but place a layer of soil over them and plant fescue, which would mitigate the flow off.

When asked about flooding, Mr. O'Connell stated that, even during the worst flooding in the last few years, the brook didn't overflow its bank. The drive will be curbed so that no runoff will go into the yard. Catchbasins will channel water into the storm system or sewer. A French drain will be placed where the drive meets the garage, and runoff from the roof will be directed to a drywell.

The Commission determined that the first alternative will be acceptable, provided that, in advance of any work on this project, the applicant submits to the Commission (through the Office of Community Development) evidence demonstrating that there is sufficient capacity to recapture the stormwater runoff from the garage roof and the upper part of the drive to recharge the ground and surface water as though a permeable surface, such that the Commission can conclude that it can be treated as replacement area. If the Commission concludes that replacement area provided is insufficient, the applicant will be required to provide additional replacement area by adding soil to the existing parking area and seeding it with appropriate vegetation such as fescue. Also, "Method and Sequencing of Work" as included in proposal must be followed. With these conditions, the Order of Conditions was approved.

Public Hearing - Request for Determination of Applicability - Pleasant Street (Roadway Reconstruction)

- Peter Briere appeared on behalf of the Massachusetts Highway Department, which proposes a full-depth reconstruction of the road, including new curbing and sidewalks, and more catchbasins. This reconstruction will potentially affect Winn Brook and Junction Brook. At the intersection of Leonard Street and Pleasant Street, which is within the buffer zone, the road will not be widened. In the area of Junction Brook, a trash gate will be installed, which should protect the brook. There will be no excavation of wetlands vegetation at either point.

Upon questioning about the dust that might be raised during construction, Mr. Briere stated that crushed stone will be laid as soon as the subsurface is excavated and taken for testing. They will try to make that the same day. That should be sufficient to keep the dust down, but they will use sodium chloride if necessary. N. Davis asked whether catchbasins will filter out any oil picked up on the road's surface. Mr. Briere said there is no plan to install oil traps or filters.

The Commission approved the Negative Determination of Applicability, with the following conditions: Hay bales and silt fences and silt barriers in catchbasins will be required during construction.. Dust control will be required. Routine sweeping will also be required, using equipment that retains the swept material.

Friends of Alewife Reservation - Wildlife Surveys

- Ellen Mass, President of the Friends of the Alewife Reservation, presented an inventory of wildlife at the Uplands area. David Brown found over 90 bird species and 16 mammals there. He has specific recommendations as to how to aid these species. Ms. Mass distributed summaries of the wildlife study to Commission members and delivered a complete report for the Commission's files.

She wanted to let the Commission know that the Army Corps of Engineers included Blair Pond on a list of fifteen projects they will work on. Local municipalities will be asked to kick in money for a feasibility study on Blair Pond. She requested that one of the Commission members attend the Friends of Alewife Reservation meetings, which occur every two months at the Mystic River Watershed.

New Business

- Ms. Mass also noted that the dumping of landscape debris at the Hill Estates continues to get worse. She is concerned that Wellington Brook will be affected. G. Clancy thinks materials may be stored there by Hillside Gardens. There was a discussion as to whether to send a letter and what it should say. The Commission concluded that a letter should be sent, asking that all materials be moved back beyond the buffer zone, which the Town will be asked to mark clearly for this purpose. M. Flamang will send the letter.

The Commission approved the education proposal made by Barbara Passero, which would involve the study of Rock Meadow by Belmont students.

The court suit regarding Junction Brook is still pending. The Commission has reserved the right to call witnesses.

The meeting was then adjourned. The next meeting will be held at the Faculty Dining Room at Chenery Middle School on Tuesday, September 10, 2002.