

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
January 3, 2008**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Eric Brower, Renee Seblatnigg, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Alexander Brash, Gary Silberberg and Suzanne Graham

Staff: Denise Savageau, Aleksandra Moch

Audience present: Kerry Bobick, 32 Old Camp Lane; Rob Bobick, 32 Old Camp Lane; Nancy Chapin, 190 Bible Street; John Hopley, 16 Pine Ridge Road; Gretchen Hopley, 16 Pine Ridge Road; Carolyn S. Hopley, 16 Pine Ridge Road; Nancy Standard, 8 Druid Lane; Chuck Standard, 8 Druid Lane; Pat Young, The Stanwich School; Jonathan Sheer, 16 Old Mill Road; Melissa LoParco, 114 Blueberry Drive, Stamford; Lorraine Gordon, 417 North Maple Drive; Sean D. Foran, 211 Cat Rock Road; A.L. Turuen, 215 Cat Rock Road; Rick Margenot, 8 Cat Rock Road; R. Blair Murphy, 11 Indian Mill Road; William Kenny, William Kenny Associates; Daniel Barrett, 18 Ferncliff Road; Jack Stecker, 24 Daffodil Lane; James Riley, Whitman Breed Abbott and Morgan; Charles Coates, Whitman Breed Abbott and Morgan; Garry Mintz, 3 Old Camp Lane; Mary Lou Lange, the president of Greenwich Residence for Appropriate Land Use; Andy Healy, founder of Greenwich Residence for Appropriate Land Use; Slavka Button, 127 Dingtowntown Road; Gary Dufel, Stearns & Wheler; Kyle Slocum, The SLAM Collaborative; Tylor Tregellas, Turner Construction; Cece Sanders, Historical Perspectives, Inc.; Tony D'Andrea, Rocco V. D'Andrea, Inc.; Bo Jarnstedt, 250 Stanwich Road; Martin Waine, 238 Stanwich Road; Rob Brunetti, Pecora Brothers; Mark Lancor, DYMAR, 325 Main Street, Southbury; Eric Roise, The SLAM Collaborative; Richard Schulze, 28 Dublin Hill Road; John Dugan, Haley & Aldrich, Inc.; Peter Ripp, 192 Bible Street; Megan Raymond, William Kenny Associates; Chris VonKeyserling, RTM District 8; Jay B. Kane, 22 Hilton Heath; Cynthia Chang, 277 Old Church Road; Lori Konolige, 26 Hill Road; Rajkumar Makam, 15 Ferncliff Road; Hoa Nguyen, Greenwich Time; Anne F. Dayton, Fogarty Cohen Selby & Nemiroff, LLC; Thomas Ahneman, Ahneman Kirby, Inc.

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Called to order at 7:13 p.m. by Rutherford

- 1) **Seating of Alternates:** Silberberg was seated for Henrey. During the review and discussion of the Stanwich School proposal, Graham was seated for Brower, who

recused himself.

- 2) **Review and approval of draft minutes of December 6, 2007 monthly meeting:** A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Brash to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was carried.

3) **Staff Report:**

- a) Budget 07-08: Savageau reported that she has been working on the Operation Plan that is required to be drafted annually by each department. She mentioned that she is interested in changes to the process that would address smaller departments that have limited staff and operation budget as the format better serves larger departments.
- b) City View - software: The town is finally moving forward with the application software that will serve to coordinate the land use approval/permitting process in town. This includes not only P&Z and IWWA but also building.
- c) Water Supply – Drought Status: The First Selectman’s Office holds regular bi-weekly meetings on drought conditions. The most current data shows that the reservoirs are still low, in spite of several rain events over the last few weeks.
- d) Wildlife Management – tick testing and aerial survey 2008: no updates
- e) Critical Habitat/Conservation Areas:
 - i) IBA plans –Great Captain’s Island: the Commission is waiting for the draft plan. The plan would be presented during one of the upcoming Conservation meetings.
 - ii) Fishway – update on program for next year: The fish counter will be installed in March. Eltz will prepare the monitoring program that would involve volunteers including the Greenwich High School students.
 - iii) Greenwich Point – Friends of Greenwich Point Park Plan: The Conservation Commission will schedule a meeting with the Department of Parks and Recreation to discuss the recent archeology and the bird studies. The discussion will focus on ways to preserve the history and the habitat values of Greenwich Point.
- f) Cos Cob Power Plant: due to time constraints, the discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

4) **Old Business:**

5) **New Business**

- a) Stanwich School – PSB #1925, 257 and 247 Stanwich Road
Prior to any discussion, Brower recused himself and left the meeting.

Dayton presented a summary of the site history, archeology and the proposed development for the applicant. Kenny described the environmentally sensitive areas and the proposed plan for their protection and enhancement. Slocum described the proposed landscape design for the site and how the structures were designed and situated to address the existing site topography.

Savageau presented her staff report listing the major environmental concerns related to the proposed site disturbance and alteration. She pointed out that the location and the amount of the proposed open space don't reflect the initial recommendations of the Conservation Commission that were provided during the preliminary site subdivision process.

After hearing from the applicant and the Conservation Commission Director, the voice was given to the public that attended the meeting in a large number.

Coates spoke for the *Greenwich Residence for Appropriate Land Use*, emphasizing that the project is too intensive for the site, and it could have some significant impacts on the neighborhood. Duffel, on behalf of the *Greenwich Residence for Appropriate Land Use*, criticized the proposed project designs, pointing out potential environmental impacts caused by the increased storm water discharge, ground water contamination resulting from the proposed sewage treatment plant, the proposed synthetic fields, and storm water discharge. Lange stated her concerns regarding the location of the leaching fields and the intensity of the proposed site disturbance. Barrett pointed out the importance of the woodland preservation and protection of an open space in its natural state. Among the other speakers concerned about blasting, site overdevelopment, location of the leaching fields, tree removal, increase of storm water runoff and impact on the vehicular traffic, were: Waine, Healy, Mintz, Murphy and Margenot.

Schulze and VonKeyserling were in favor of the project pointing out that the new development would expand the Town's water line to use on site, provide more efficient sewer disposal system, remove contaminants and enhance the existing wetlands/watercourses.

Lamcor addressed the issues and concerns related to the proposed sewage treatment plant. D'Andrea answered the questions and concerns related to the proposed storm water management.

After lengthy discussion and questions by the Commission the following motion was made by Dickinson.

The Conservation Commission recognizes the effort that the Stanwich School has put into the development of a comprehensive site plan that concentrates development on the western side of the property where the school is presently operating. The plan proposes leaving a good portion of the eastern property in a wooded state and providing habitat enhancement in this area. The Commission is also pleased with the location of the proposed dedicated open space along the eastern boundary of the property. It provides a contiguous area that functions as a buffer to neighbors and maintains a green corridor on the property. The applicant proposes to cleanup the hazardous material found on the wood roads and this should be completed. The applicant also proposes to apply for LEED

certification and the Commission applauds that effort.

The Commission is not satisfied, however, with the amount of open space offered by the applicant. The plan does not meet the 15% open space requirements set forth in the P&Z FSB #1777 approval and the easement area offered to offset this deficit includes leaching fields. Furthermore, the Commission views the proposal to allow for leaching fields on conservation easement land as inappropriate. It is a precedent that should not be set. Additionally, although the Commission was pleased to see surface water detention planned for the site, a more detailed stormwater management plan should be developed that reconciles the proposed wetland enhancements with the use of dry basins and provides for improved water quality. These are details, related to open space and stormwater, that should be included, even at the preliminary stage, in such an intensive land use proposal.

Therefore, the Conservation Commission recommends that the Stanwich School plans, as currently propose, be denied without prejudice, and that the applicant address the following items in any revised plans it presents to the Town. Futhermore, the Commission recommends that the applicant meet with Conservation staff on these items prior to any revisions being brought forth.

Open Space

- 1) As proposed, the applicant will provide 3.82 acres of dedicated open space, or 12% of the original property in FSB #1777. This is approximately 1 acre, or 3% less than what is required by P&Z as part of its approval of FSB #1777.*

The applicant is also proposing a conservation easement of 2.044 acres. If this is added to the dedicated open space proposed, it results in approximately 5.9 acres of open space or 18.4% of the original subdivision.

The amount of dedicated open space should be at least 15% as required in P&Z FSB #1777 approval. Easements should not be used to meet this requirement when enough land exists to provide for such open space.

- 2) Conservation easements should be provided on additional lands adjacent to dedicated open space to protect the integrity of the design, which includes intensive development on the west and limited development on the east. This will better protect the area where habitat enhancement/restoration work is being proposed and where stormwater management will take place. This will ensure that the green space being shown as a part of the plan will be maintained. Leaching fields for the wastewater system should not be located on any land restricted for conservation.*
- 3) The leaching fields are proposed to be located in the area that had previously been identified as part of the open space corridor that should be protected and will drain into what has been described as the most valuable wetland on the site. Construction of the system will require the removal of numerous trees.*

As proposed the leaching field will be lined with an impermeable layer and will be constructed of fill materials, therefore, alternative locations for the leaching fields should be considered.

- 4) No construction fencing or grading should be planned for the dedicated open space area. The only activity that should take place in this area is the removal of the arsenic contaminated soil.*
- 5) There is no access provided to the dedicated open space from the St. Agnes parcel. Access to all lots that are part of the subdivision is usually required. There is access provided to the area off of Cat Rock Road but it may be appropriate to provide for access either by fee simple or easement from the St. Agnes parcel across the Stanwich School parcel to the open space.*

Stormwater

- 1) A more detailed stormwater management plan should be developed to provide for water quality renovation. Specifically, the use of wet basins, fore bays, and other treatment trains should be explored.*
- 2) A detailed construction phasing plan needs to be developed that shows the temporary detention basins will work and transition into permanent basins, and how the overall development will take place on the site.*

Other

- 1) The Commission accepts the recommendations of HPI's Archaeology report and as outlined in a memo to the Commission from Nancy Dickinson dated January 3, 2008. These recommendations should be included in any final approval for work on this site.*
- 2) To provide for better air quality and reduce the carbon impact of the school, a bus-only policy for students should be adopted for the school.*
- 3) No lighting of ball fields, tennis courts, etc should be allowed.*
- 4) The streetscape along Stanwich School is being impacted by the proposed elevation of the field along the road. It is suggested that this elevation be lowered and that the design be reworked to reduce impact to the streetscape.*
- 5) The applicant should be encouraged to continue to work towards LEED certification for the site. As part of this effort, additional low impact development practices should be explored including the use of pervious parking.*

The motion was seconded by Seblatnigg and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Brash to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:34 a.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch