INLAND WETLANDS & WATERCOURSES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 19, 2016

The Town of Bloomfield Inlands Wetlands & Watercourses Commission held their regular meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2016, scheduled for 7:30 P.M. at the Town Hall in Bloomfield, Connecticut with the following Commissioners present:

Nicholas Panke, Chairman
Barry Berson
Alan Budkofsky
Joy Chance
David Mann
Wendell Duncan

Also present: David Peter Castaldi, Wetlands Agent
Laura James, Recording Secretary

Commissioners not present:
Howard Hunter, Vice Chair
Kenneth Bennett

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Panke called the regular meeting of the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission to order at 7:30 P.M. in Council Chambers at the Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue.

Chairman Panke read the first agenda item:

1. **Application of TFC Housing Corp. for Wetlands Permit at 15 Douglas Street for construction of apartment building and associated site development, including impacts to wetlands and watercourses.**

A motion was made by Commissioner David Mann to open the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Alan Budkofsky and was approved unanimously.

Attorney Louis George, of Hassett & George P.C, stated that the property was originally a privately owned piece of property that was a paper development, and the State took it over in anticipation of interstate I-291, when those plans changed they turned it over to the Town of Bloomfield. The Town of Bloomfield is the current owner and there is an option to purchase.

The project is a 41-unit elderly housing development which is on the western side of the property and is surrounded by a northern watercourse, wetlands to the east side and wetlands to the west. Prior to coming to this public hearing the Inland Wetland Watercourse Commission approved a wetlands map boundary amendment and the Town Plan and Zoning Commission approved a zone change to multi-family elderly residentially.

Guy Hesketh, Professional Engineer, of F. A. Hesketh & Assoc. Granby, CT. stated that the parcel for 15 Douglas Street is comprised of 5.4 acres of land. Mr. Hesketh stated the majority of the eastern portion of the site is wetlands. There is a pocket of wetlands in middle of the proposed development, an area about 2400 square feet, and some peripheral wetlands located along the western side of the large wetlands. In addition, and partially contiguous with the northern boundary of the parcel there is a natural watercourse flows from the east to the west. There is another intermittent watercourse that has a southern to northern orientation, which is manmade and an intermittent watercourse, and which conveys storm water from a discharge pipe that drains a portion of the Douglas Street storm drainage system. From the point of discharge it travels directly north, intercepts and flows into east-west watercourse along the northern boundary. Mr. Hesketh stated they will present what impact the development has on the wetlands and what has to be done to mitigate those impacts.

Thomas Pietras, Professional Soil Scientist, stated he inspected the property back in June, 2015 and had been back on the site a few times since. In the central part there is an old paper street and he reviewed maps from the 1960's that showed a lot of clearing was present at that time. Mr. Pietras further stated he found disturbed soils in the area which were probably for anticipated development and there may have been a structure present at one time. Mr. Pietras stated that grading for the development was probably responsible for creating the isolated area of wetlands which is in a depression in the landscape. The soils throughout the site have a shallow depth to clay and drain very slowly. The more valuable area of wetlands is in the eastern part of the property between Douglas Street and Cottage Grove Road. The main wetland resource area close to the development is a very narrow band of wetlands along the northerly watercourse. This watercourse has 6 to 8 foot deep and very steeply sloping banks. It picks up drainage from the surrounding storm systems and has cut, or was excavated, into the clay. Similar conditions exist at the south to north intermittent watercourse, a manmade channel, whose primary function is to convey water from the culvert outlet of Douglas Street to the northerly perennial watercourse.

Guy Hesketh, Professional Engineer, Hesketh & Assoc. Granby, CT stated they are proposing a three story building which will house 41 elderly apartment units. They are proposing 42 paved parking spaces almost all located on the west side of the building. They are also proposing an additional 20 deferred parking spaces if there is a need in the future. There is a small retaining wall on eastern portion of the site, which will be no higher than three feet to minimize impact to the adjacent wetlands. Mr. Hesketh further stated they are also proposing two storm drainage systems. At the outlet of the Douglas Street storm system where it drains into the man made ditch, they are proposing a culvert through the property which will allow the area between the parking area and building to be contiguously graded so there is no trip or fall hazard. Mr. Hesketh stated that they will take the storm runoff currently on Douglas Street and continue its conveyance to the perennial watercourse. They will grant easement to the Town and continue to drain the road runoff to the same location. The outlet of this storm system is north of the north side of the building. They will install some rip rap erosion control measures and take care of additional erosion that is in the east to west perennial watercourse which will provide some additional protection. Mr. Hesketh stated they will have MDC water service and provide a new hydrant. There are existing gas and water mains in the abandoned section of the Douglas Street ROW. These will remain abandoned in place. There are over head powerlines that are active that also follow the abandoned ROW. They are a little constrained with the construction of the building and parking areas. Some of the constraints are powerlines, location of storm drain that cuts through the property, and almost all of eastern portion is wetlands. Mr. Hesketh stated they were only left with two options for the location of the building. Mr. Hesketh stated they will

mitigate the wetland impacts and will construct a shallow stormwater wetlands that will serve two purposes: wetland mitigation and serve to mitigate discharge rates from the site. Mr. Hesketh stated there is 0.067 acres of wetlands disturbance and 204 linear feet of water course disturbance for the man made ditch. They are proposing mitigation with water quality basin and wetland mitigation storm water basin that encompasses a total of 0.149 acres of wetlands. Therefore, Mr. Hesketh states they have replicated the wetlands in which they are proposing to disturb. Mr. Hesketh further discussed the landscape plans in which they are planting a number of species along the edge of the wetlands and the water quality basins which include Winterberry, Highbush Blueberry, Arrowwood, and natural deciduous trees. The basin itself will have New England wetland seed mix around the perimeter of the basin. They are proposing rip rap to control erosion, fabric for steep slope areas of construction, and a construction exit out to Douglas Street.

Mr. Castaldi stated that he had requested additional information and received some, but the information was not received until the 13th of January and he has not had a chance to go through all the plans, but he did read the submitted memorandum from F. A. Hesketh. Mr. Castaldi stated that he is recommending the Commission ask questions and make comments to the applicant and then table the public hearing until next scheduled meeting of February 16, 2016. Mr. Castaldi also stated that the perennial (northerly) watercourse is deeply incised into the ground and may have been channelized at some point. The banks are very steep and they will probably need to adjust the angle of the new stormwater discharge. They will need to do additional armoring of the existing perennial watercourse and it will probably be quite a bit. The wetlands were properly described by Mr. Pietras. The watercourse the applicant is proposing to culvert, is the outflow channel from the Douglas Street storm drainage system. The proposal will continue this flow to the perennial watercourse and they will add some runoff to it from the site. The submitted drainage calculations indicate a small reduction in flow from the developed site for all storms. Mr. Castaldi stated he would like to have more time to review the revised plans and recommends the Commission take questions and then table the application to the next meeting.

Chairman Panke asked if there were any questions from Public – None

Chairman Panke asked if there were any questions Commission.

Commissioner Mann asked Mr. Castaldi about his concern for the vegetative buffers and if the developer has been improved with the revision. Mr. Castaldi stated that it looks like there are more plantings with the latest revision and he thought some of the trees were for a more southerly climate but will look at more thoroughly. Mr. Mann asked if the culverted ditch would be turned over to the Town for maintenance. Mr. Castaldi stated that he believes it will be turned over to the new property owner, but the Town would retain the right to drain into the system and discharge into the perennial watercourse.

Commissioner Budkofsky asked whether the generator be permanent and on concrete slab. Mr. Hesketh stated yes and on concrete slab. Mr. David Birch, Housing Enterprises, Project Coordinator, stated the sizing and type of generator is still under review but they have not established the fuel source. Mr. Budkofsky asked, if they will be using diesel or gasoline, where will the fuel tanks be stored. Mr. Birch stated that they are usually self-contained with the generator. Mr. Budkofsky stated before plans are finalized the Commission will need to know this information. Mr. Birch, stated he will provide this information.

Mr. Budkofsky asked if the transformer is on a permanent pad. Mr. Hesketh stated the transformer will be an Eversource O-12 or O-13 and on a concrete slab about six inches above the curb. Mr. Budkofsky asked if the transformer will be in an area that could potentially flood. Mr. Hesketh stated no, the flood elevation is about 3 feet below the generator. Mr. Budkofsky asked if they will remove the top soil or store it on site. Mr. Hesketh stated most will be removed from the site.

Commissioner Berson asked about the existing storm drainage system and their proposed culverting of the channel. Mr. Hesketh stated there is a 15" diameter pipe at the existing outfall. With the additional runoff from the site the drainage calculations indicate they just barely need an 18" pipe. Mr. Hesketh stated they did not model the culvert for a 100-year storm only for 10-year storm and the pipe is adequate.
Commissioner Mann asked about public utilities. Mr. Hesketh stated they will tie into the MDC water and sewer.

Mr. Panke asked whether there had been any thought given to putting the overhead lines underground and moving the building further to the west to avoid impact to wetlands. Mr. Hesketh stated they could potentially go underground but they would still have to deal with rerouting the storm drain, and an easement would have to be relocated and it would require additional expense.

Chairman Panke asked if there were any comments from the Public - None

Chairman Panke asked if there were any comments from the Commission. Several Commissioners said not at this time.

Commissioner Panke stated that since Mr. Castaldi still needs to review the plans from Hesketh & Assoc., he asked for a motion to continue the public hearing.

Commissioner Mann made a motion to continue the public hearing to the next regular meeting of Tuesday, February 16, 2016. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berson and passed unanimously.

2. *Discussion concerning long term impacts to wetlands and watercourses.*

Mr. Castaldi stated that he had prepared a memorandum for the Commission on this subject at their request. In 1985 there was an evaluation of the Town's wetlands and it is available on the Town of Bloomfield website. The evaluation looked at 54 different wetlands areas separately. The evaluators looked at various hydrologic, biological cultural functions as well as disturbances and uniqueness. The wetlands were rated based on their functions and qualities. The evaluation identified several wetland areas that were important, high quality wetlands, and most of these are in the flood control reservoirs.

Mr. Castaldi said that a more a recent approach is to look at how the wetlands function within their watershed. The evaluation identifies Wetlands #36 as associated with several streams that extend from ponds north of Blue Hills Avenue to the south, and includes the areas between the railroad tracks to the west and Woodland Avenue to the east, Peters Road and west to the railroad tracks. Mr. Castaldi is proposing to look at small section of Wetland 36 on the east side of Woodland Avenue North of Mucko Road. Mr. Castaldi stated he will try to get out before the snow and look at a section near Home Goods. It is important to look at these areas throughout all seasons, in order to get a good idea of what's going on in the areas.

Mr. Mann stated that the study area should look at the functionality of ponds and basins to see if there are have been any changes to the wetlands or watercourses. Commissioner Chase asked how to determine a storm drain design ten-year storm. Mr. Castaldi stated a 10-year storm is a storm event of about 4 inches in about a 24-hour period. Commissioner Panke asked Mr. Castaldi stated he will keep the Commission abreast of the long term impacts of wetlands and follow-up with the Commission every other month.

3. Approval of Minutes, December 14, 2015 Meeting

Commissioner Budkofsky made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mann and unanimously approved.

4. New Applications

Mr. Castaldi stated he had received an application for solar panels at the rear of 56 Filley Street for a wetland agent permit. Wetland map shows most of rear yard is wetland soils.

Mr. Castaldi also stated that he had received an e-mail from CREC asking about submittal deadlines for the February meeting for the project at 29 Griffin Road North in which they want to build a high school.

5. Status of On-Going Projects

There was some discussion on the Woodland Street site of potentially Niagara Bottling.

6. Adjournment

Motion was made by Commissioner Budkofsky to adjourn the meeting 9:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Duncan and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura James, Recording Secretary

Nicholas Panke, Chairman