

Burlington Conservation Board

149 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
<http://www.ci.burlington.vt.us/planning/>
Telephone: (802) 865-7189
(802) 865-7195 (FAX)

*Matt Moore, Chair
Will Flender, Vice Chair
Scott Mapes
Don Meals
Jeff Severson
Miles Waite
Damon Lane
Zoe Richards*



Conservation Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 4, 2013 – 5:30 pm
Planning & Zoning Conference Room – City Hall Lower Level
149 Church Street

Attendance

- **Board Members:** Miles Waite (MW), Damon Lane (DL), Jeff Severson (JS), Scott Mapes (SM), Don Meals (DM), Will Flender (WF), Zoe Richards (ZR), Matt Moore (MM)
- **Absent:**
- **Public:** UVM students, Stu McGowan, Erik Hoekstra, Peter Smiar (196-202 North St), Tim Larned (85 Riverside Ave), John Alden, Cliff Collins (3-11 George St), Patrick O'Brien and Jeff Hobson (140 Grove St)
- **Staff:** Scott Gustin (Planning & Zoning)

MM, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Minutes

Minutes of January 7, 2013

A MOTION was made by DM and SECONDED by WF:

Accept the minutes of January 7 as written.

Vote: 6-0-1

Public Comment

UVM students attended the meeting for observation.

Project Review

1. 12-0673CA/MA: 196-202 North St (NMU, Ward 3) Abes Corner, LLC

Construct new building to contain 7 new residential units and 1 ground floor commercial unit on existing vacant corner lot. 4 space parking wavier requested.

Stu McGowan, Erik Hoekstra, and Peter Smiar appeared on behalf of this item.

JS noted that he's worked with Peter Smiar on other projects, but did not feel that it was a conflict.

Peter Smiar gave a brief project overview.

DM asked what the lot is used for now. Mr. Smiar said nothing formal. Cars park there occasionally.

Mr. Smiar noted the development layout with the building on the corner with parking behind. The building would be mixed commercial and residential. There is a drywell onsite that was installed 5-6 years ago. It appears to handle up to the 1" storm event. The soils are sandy, and stormwater tends to infiltrate. The city's combined system runs down North Street past the property. However, there's no good place to hook into the city system for overflow. The drywell will be removed and replaced with a new one. The property will be graded towards a catch basin that will connect to several underground infiltration chambers.

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MW, why put a new drywell? Mr. Smiar, it will collect roof runoff. The catch basin will collect ground runoff.

SM, have you dug test pits yet? Mr. Smiar, no, but we have good information to go on at this stage. We will do the test pits.

MW, is there a concern about infiltrating through contaminated soils? Erik Hoekstra, there's no evidence of any concerning previous uses on the site. We did an environmental screen of the property.

MW asked about the condition of the abutting green belts. Mr. Hoekstra noted that it's in good condition. They met with the City Arborist about a month ago. There are three new street trees along Elmwood Avenue.

WF noted the parking waiver being sought. The Board should support this waiver.

DL asked about the proposed heating and cooling. Mr. McGowan said it would be all Reni heating units. There will be no built-in cooling.

A MOTION was made by WF and SECONDED by JS:

Support the project and recommend approval of the requested parking waiver. SM noted that this project will actually reduce flows into the city system with infiltration. DM, do we need to condition Megan Moir's approval? SG said it would have to happen whether we condition it or not. Board members agreed to condition her approval.

Vote: 8-0-0

1. 13-0701CA/CU: 85 Riverside Ave (RCO-C, Ward 1) Winooski Valley Park District
Trail improvements along Riverwalk Trail

Tim Larned appeared on behalf of this application.

Tim Larned overviewed the project. It aims to restore the trail, particularly where it's been affected by erosion. Following completion of trail improvements, new trees will be installed to help stabilize the earth.

SM, have you encountered slumping side slopes? Mr. Larned said not much.

Mr. Larned mentioned a city stormwater outfall pipe that has caused some erosion. He has spoken to Megan Moir about it. The pipe is on a list to be fixed.

SG noted that this project is here as a result of its location within the riparian buffer zone along the Winooski River. No new stormwater outfalls are proposed.

JS, do you need a state wetlands permit? Mr. Larned said he doesn't think so. JS said its worth checking with VT DEC to confirm.

DM, will any steps be taken to protect the riverbank from further erosion? Mr. Larned referred to future tree and willow plantings.

MM, is this the extent of the trail? Mr. Larned said yes.

JS thinks it would be useful to have a sign-off from ANR as to whether any other jurisdictions apply.

MW, will the new bridge be constructed with materials carried down by hand? Mr. Larned, some will be brought down by guide line.

A MOTION was made by WF and SECONDED by DL:

Support project with condition that signed ANR project sheet be provided to Planning & Zoning.

Vote: 8-0-0

1. 13-0707CA/MA: 3-11 George St (DT/RH, Ward 3) Rick Bove

Demolish existing structures on George St, construct new residential buildings above and behind existing historic structure on Pearl St corner for a total of 1 commercial unit and 26 residential units

John Alden and Cliff Collins appeared on behalf of this application.

John Alden overviewed the existing and proposed conditions. The development site straddles two properties and two zoning districts (DT and RH). It is all under single ownership. As proposed, little green space remains. An existing street tree strip along George Street will be augmented by the development. A small green area in the RH section will be provided, perhaps for a picnic table. Mr. Alden briefly touched on the building form and height.

DL, is there any possibility to move the DT line to encompass the entire site? SG, it's possible. Mr. Alden said they're not pursuing a change in the zone boundary.

MM, how many new units are proposed? Mr. Alden said that there will be a net increase of 18 with 25% inclusionary dwelling units.

Cliff Collins addressed the proposed stormwater management measures. Existing impervious surface is extensive and will remain so. Just under 2,000 sf pervious surface will remain. Proposed stormwater management assumes half of the existing pervious surface for the 1 and 10 year storm events in achieving a reduction in offsite flows. An underground detention system will handle runoff. Roof drains and catch basins will convey runoff into the underground system. ZR asked for clarity of what's being achieved. Mr. Collins replied that the rate of discharge into the city system will decrease from existing conditions, but the total volume will increase slightly.

SM noted that while the rate of discharge is being lowered, a reduction in volume should also be sought. Soils are likely sandy and can likely handle infiltration. Mr. Collins noted that in that case, the tanks could have perforated bottoms so that capacity remains unchanged but allows for infiltration. Mr. Collins noted that water quality will also likely improve over existing conditions.

MW suggested doing a soils analysis to see about the feasibility for infiltration. MW also asked about green roofs. Mr. Alden said that a PV array is under consideration but not a green roof. MW asked about LEED certification. Mr. Alden said that they are not seeking LEED certification.

WF, asked about bike parking. Mr. Collins replied that long term parking will be provided within the building, and a bike rack is proposed for the short term. WF said that the placement of the rack probably does not comply with the city's bike parking standards. It should be out front along the street.

JS, how do underground utilities affect infiltration? SM, they need to be considered and avoided as needed. SM pointed out that rooftop connections to the city system are not permitted. If they are allowed, there needs to be an offset. MW pointed out the possibility to locate the chambers under the parking. Mr. Collins said that was considered but not pursued due to maintenance concerns.

DM said there must be opportunity for infiltration galleries within the surface parking areas.

A MOTION was made by WF and SECONDED by DM:

Support the project with a recommendation that the applicant evaluate the opportunities for infiltration so that its feasibility is known. If feasible, infiltration should be made a part of the stormwater management. Final approval by Megan Moir.

(Also, bike parking should be per city standards)

Vote: 8-0-0

1. 13-0518SP: 140 Grove St (RL, Ward 1) SD Ireland Brothers Corp.

Sketch plan review for proposed removal of industrial buildings and development of 240-288 apartment units and associated site infrastructure

Patrick O'Brien and Jeff Hobson appeared on behalf of this application.

Patrick O'Brien overviewed the proposal and the existing use of the site. He noted that the boundaries between impacted and not impacted areas on the site are clearly defined. The proposed development will not increase impacted areas. The amount of green space will increase as a result of this project. He noted the wetland delineation on the project map as well as the steep slope areas. No wetland impacts are proposed. The river will remain untouched except that an existing picnic area will likely be used as an amenity for residents of the development.

Mr. O'Brien noted that stormwater will go through a stormwater management system prior to discharge into the Winooski River. Centennial Brook will not be affected.

Mr. O'Brien asked about providing a trail along an old logging road through a wetland. WF, it depends on the condition of the logging road. He also suggested coordinating with the WVPD. Mr. O'Brien said he's reached out to the District but has not yet heard back. JS suggested talking with ANR, especially with respect to potential wetland impacts. WF, looking into the feasibility of the trail is a good idea.

MM suggested reaching out to city Parks & Recreation about potential impacts to Schmanska Park and also with UVM about Centennial Woods. No trail heads are proposed for access into either Schmanska or Centennial.

DM, how recent is the wetland delineation? Mr. O'Brien replied 3 months.

JS said that he's worked for the City of Winooski regarding their trails along the river. There was concern about leading all sorts of people into the area without confining their use to certain defined paths.

Mr. O'Brien noted that the most recent sketch plans include a building within the Centennial Brook buffer zone. SG pointed out that the buffer is not a no-build zone. SM said he'd seek to open up the section of Centennial that is currently underground as part of this development. At least an open bottom enclosure would be an improvement over existing conditions, particularly for wildlife connectivity. JS noted that this stream segment is an important section of wildlife corridor. MM suggested a more compact development footprint to allow opening up this corridor.

MM stated that impacts of residents will extend beyond the defined clearing limits and will likely also include a network of informal trails.

JS suggested that no walk-out basement be provided in the rear along the clearing limits. Activity should be directed towards the fronts of the buildings. He also noted that some time ago, the Conservation Board gathered for a site visit but then was not allowed onsite, and new development was not pursued.

MM noted that bike parking will be of interest. The site should be cohesive with an integrated pedestrian network. The stormwater system will be of interest with a focus on water quality.

ZR suggested considering the addition of additional vegetative cover (other than lawn) for wildlife benefit. DM noted that some of the open areas could have once per year mowing.

Mr. O'Brien said that he's interested in the edible landscape idea and would like to incorporate it into the project design.

SM suggested compressing the footprint of the development.

DM said that this could be an excellent opportunity to demonstrate various permeable concrete products. Mr. O'Brien said this would be considered. DL noted the building construction could incorporate insulated concrete forms.

DM, is there any opportunity for small scale retail here? SG said the zoning would allow a convenience store as part of the major PUD process.

MW suggested community gardens. Mr. O'Brien said they would do so.

SM recommended consideration of offsite lighting impacts.

Board Comment

MW noted concern with discharge of more water into the city's combined system. At what point do we say no? Infiltration is required. JS said we'd need soils data. MM said that the difference on the George Street project was fairly minor. MW asked about the roof drains. SM said that the city's discharge permit prohibits such connections and calls for reductions in volumes being sent into the combined system.

MM said a one-page outline of city stormwater requirements would be helpful for the Board. DM noted that we've made progress over the years. MW would like to see soils analysis for every project that comes to this board.

SM noted that the target for developed lots downtown is 50% of existing impervious, rather than the actual impervious surface. DM suggested talking with Megan Moir about this.

WF requested that SG follow up with the Board as to what the George Street project presents to the DRB.

Open Space Subcommittee

MM noted Archibald Street and the Flynn Estate parcel as potential acquisitions. The OSPP update has finished its initial round of NPA meetings. There will be another round of NPA meetings and public outreach in the spring.

ZR is plugged into the Walter Poleman class. She noted the possibility of a masters level class pertaining to the ecological assessment of the Urban Reserve.

MW said there's much less parking in revised waterfront north project plans.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.