



Town of Hamden

Hamden Government Center
2750 Dixwell Avenue

January 12, 2022

MINUTES: The **INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION**, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting via Zoom teleconferencing technology on Wednesday, January 5, 2022 with the following results:

Commissioners in attendance:

Joan Lakin, Chair
Kirk Shadle
Tim Mack
Brad Macdowall
George Schneider
Michael Milazzo
Michael Stone
Jonathan Clapp
Lee Campo
Lauren Wholey

Staff in attendance:

Thomas Vocelli, IW Enforcement Officer
Tim Lee, Assistant Town Attorney
Natalie Barletta, Clerk

Chair Lakin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Shadle took attendance and there was a quorum.

I. New applications

a. 22-1242

30 Rossotto Drive
Construction of a gravel parking lot
Applicant/Owner - Liuzzi Real Estate, Inc.

Jim Sakonchick, P.E. shared the plans and described the project. The current Liuzzi facility does not have enough parking spaces for its staff. Therefore, they have acquired additional property that is adjacent to the current Liuzzi site. The wetlands barely touch the property which is on higher ground. He demonstrated the site plan, which includes the building and cul-de-sac. He also demonstrated the proposed parking area. He then showed existing grades and the wetlands. Mr. Sakonchick said he feels that they can do this without any direct impact on the wetlands, and they will use the existing grade of the parking lot, which is at 131. The project will use uniform crushed stone, trap rock, which will have a lot of voids. That means it will store about 3 1/2 inches of runoff, and most storms typically will have one inch of rain, and then there will be a curtain drain and a catch basin. He then reiterated that there is a need for more parking.

Mr. Clapp asked what the size of the crushed stone was. Mr. Sakonchick answered that it is 2-inch washed crushed stone, which is ten-inches deep over woven geotextile filter fabric. There is a 14,000

square foot area of stone. It will slowly drain for the next storm. Mr. Clapp asked what the access would be. Mr. Sakonchick said access will be from the existing parking lot, and demonstrated it on the plans.

Chair Lakin asked about the stone. Mr. Sakonchick said the advantage of this type of stone is that there is less need for sand in this type of area, and they don't have to use high-powered equipment for maintenance.

Mr. Shadle then asked who would be using the spaces. Mr. Sakonchick answered that it will be employee parking. Mr. Shadle asked if they have considered alternatives instead of going into the 100-foot non-disturbance area. Mr. Sakonchick said that there were a few reasons why they did, including the northern property line, and it could get difficult if the development is steeper. He also added that he wants to have the parking lot the same grade as the original.

Mr. Schneider asked about the 100-foot-line. Mr. Sakonchick demonstrated it on the plans, as well as the 200-foot line.

Mr. Milazzo asked if delivery trucks will be stored there. Mr. Sakonchick answered that is not the intent, and the loading is going to be at the existing facilities. Mr. Milazzo asked if they would be parked in the new lot when the delivery trucks are not in use. Mr. Sakonchick said that it wouldn't work for proper protection of a gravel parking lot, and it's best that it's kept for cars.

Ms. Wholey asked is there already parking in that area, and is there anything being stored there. There has been a lot of maintenance, and it's not visibly striped. Ms. Wholey then asked for the number of parking spaces that they have versus the number they want. Mr. Sakonchick noted that they are short of parking. Ms. Wholey asked if they had the numbers that say what they need.

Fernando Pastor addressed the Commission. He noted that Liuzzi Cheese is one of the largest employers in Hamden, and the rest of the parking is placed all around the building, and they need to accommodate the employees. Mr. Pastor then noted that production is growing to a future expansion. There are currently 70 employees. Ms. Wholey asked how many spots were needed. Mr. Pastor said that 42 new spaces are proposed. Mr. Milazzo suggested that the number of spots can't be dropped down because of the future expansion. Mr. Sakonchick stated that it's an expanding business. Mr. Pastor said that Liuzzi Cheese wants to stay in Hamden.

Mr. Schneider asked if a future expansion is going to take out some parking spots. Mr. Pastor said that's correct. There was a brief discussion about the location of parking spots.

Mr. Stone asked if the current parking area is paved or is it the same compound being proposed for the new lot. Mr. Sakonchick answered that the current parking area is paved. Mr. Stone asked if they are considering the same compound. Mr. Sakonchick answered that the trucks need to move around on black top.

Mr. Mack asked where the curtain drain is draining to. Mr. Sakonchick demonstrated it on the plans. There was a brief discussion of drainage.

Ms. Lakin then thanked the applicant for the detailed presentation.

Mr. Mack moved to table IWC # 22-1242 for a site walk. Mr. Schneider seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

II. Pending Applications

- a. 21-1241** 839 Sherman Avenue
Auto repair business; also, clearing of vegetation & deposition of millings
Applicant - Frederick Uihlein
Owner – Sherman Crest LLC

Mr. Vocelli announced that this application has been withdrawn.

III. Other Business:

- a.** Review December 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Schneider moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Mack seconded, and the minutes were approved. There were abstentions from Mr. Campo and from Chair Lakin.

- b.** Storm water catch-basins

Commissioners had nothing to discuss on this matter at this time.

- c.** Charter revision update

Attorney Lee addressed the Commission. He stated that the new administration intends to revise the charter and a new charter revision commission will be established. They are going to start with the charter that got denied by the Legislative Council late last year. He reminded the Commission that the denied charter stated the Inland Wetlands Commission will have nine members and three alternates. The issue of term limits for boards and commissions will come up again. A brief discussion ensued.

- d.** Review site inspection schedule

The site walk at 30 Rossotto Drive will be scheduled by Mr. Vocelli. It will take place on a weekend.

- e.** Mill River update

Mr. Vocelli gave an overview of the situation. This past fall he received a complaint about clear-cutting along the bank of the Mill River in the SW corner of 2200 Whitney Avenue. Work was reported to have been done in the river as well. He located the property manager of the Spring Glen Medical Center, who ultimately referred him to Hamden DPW. The Public Works Superintendent sent Mr. Vocelli an e-mail stating that the Regional Water Authority did the work, whereupon Mr. Vocelli called Mr. Walters.

Mr. Walters stated that the Regional Water Authority was contacted by Hamden Public Works with a request that the RWA remove a debris dam from the river. DPW said that the dam was causing backup into a storm water pump. The Regional Water Authority told Public Works that they don't ordinarily remove fallen trees from watercourses for several reasons, as the impact is worse and it could set a precedent. In this case, however, there was a substantial debris dam that was causing significant back-up, so the RWA hired a contractor at its own expense to clear a 75-foot staging area and to remedy the problem in the river. The RWA inquired about Inland Wetlands before authorizing the contractor to proceed, and the RWA was told "it's being handled." The RWA contractor then proceeded to do the work which was the subject of the complaint received by Mr. Vocelli.

Mr. Vocelli stated that the staging area along the river bank remains exposed, even though the Medical Center property-manager was good enough to spread some seed and some hay mulch at Mr. Vocelli's request. Mr. Vocelli will ask Public Works if they can spread some more hay mulch for the winter and perhaps plant some native vegetation in the spring. He added that he and Mr. Walters were the last to learn about all of the work that was done in and along the river, whereas each of them should have been notified from the outset. Mr. Vocelli said he hoped that communication among Town departments and other agencies will be better in the future.

Ms. Wholey asked if loose straw was the best thing, given that there is flooding. She suggested jute mesh. Mr. Vocelli said that's a good suggestion, and he will suggest that to Public Works. There was a brief discussion on materials that would be appropriate to stabilize the river bank. Mr. Mack suggested erosion control mats as well. Mr. Vocelli said he will reach out to Public Works with these suggestions.

Mr. Shadle said he felt that there were some loose ends on the 839 Sherman Avenue application and asked if it's something that we need to keep an eye on. Mr. Vocelli said that the asphalt millings were rather close to the wetlands, and he will approach the property-owner to see what can be done.

Ms. Lakin mentioned her concerns about millings. Mr. Vocelli said that Public Works from time to time will let people help themselves to millings, and he agrees that this can cause wetland issues. Attorney Lee stated that the DPW practice of distributing millings has caused other concerns as well, so the Town Attorney's office will try to come up with a policy about it.

Mr. Vocelli mentioned that there have been concerns about the agenda dropdown menu on the Town website. Ms. Barletta said she'll look into the issue.

Mr. Mack moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shadle, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

To view a recording of the meeting, please use this link: https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/hbtJ-r67a0IZeIF86O_ofCGtusE4U38iAbn878HcdUEG13FIKBafFOqY8wjAN1_n.TFQMgH8cSt8R2sE

Submitted by: _____
Natalie Barletta, Clerk of the Commission

