

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
INLAND, WETLAND AND WATERCOURSES AGENCY
NOVEMBER 30, 2015
REGULAR MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Melville T. Riley, Chair; Anne Pappas-Phillips; Edgar Rodriguez;
Carlos Moreno; Robert Morton; Tom Fedele

STAFF: Dennis Buckley, Zoning Official; Atty. Ed Schmidt, Associate City
Attorney; Diego Guevara, Design Review Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. A quorum was present.

DECISION

1. Application 2015-05 by Robert DiScala for an Inland Wetland Permit for Improvement Location Survey that involves the widening of an existing driveway to 20 feet for two-way traffic and that addition of six parking spaces to accommodate the proposed Office Use within the existing residential structure at 1077 Huntington Turnpike

Matthew Popp came forward to represent the application and gave an overview of its intentions. Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked about the specific location of the site, and Mr. Popp stated that it goes underneath the Huntington Turnpike.

Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked if the area is within 500 feet of the town line. Mr. Popp examined the map, and estimated that it is likely 100 feet from the town line. Mr. Popp stated that he would get his scale and make a more accurate measure, and noted that the back of the property was around 350 feet from the town line.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. Application 2015-06 by John Casey for an Inland Wetland Permit for Bruce Brook Stream relocation at Bowe Avenue

Mr. Popp stated that the application will relocate an existing concrete line. He stated that the channel at present has two 90 degree turns, and that this proposal will straighten them. He stated that the location is on the city line, and that the purpose is to relieve flooding in the town of Stratford, but that it will also alleviate some flooding in Bridgeport. Mr. Popp indicated that the top three photos he presented show the watercourse concrete line.

Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked for clarification on whether they are widening the drain or moving the walls. Mr. Popp stated that they are removing the walls and recreating the channel in the middle of the site. Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked if they will replace the walls, and Mr. Popp stated that the walls will be removed, the lines will become bric-a-brac and the top of the banks will feature plantings. Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked if there are existing plantings, and Mr. Popp stated that there is an existing oak tree, along with non-native species as it is an old house site.

The Chair asked if the tree will be removed, and Mr. Popp answered in the affirmative.

Raju Vasamsetti of Samson & Samson came forward to represent the town of Stratford. He stated that they are relocating the channel and building the new one with new plantings at the top. He stated that two properties are visible on the plan, and that the bottom section of the plan displays a proposed low foot channel. He stated that this project is primarily to alleviate flooding, particularly in the abutting intersection.

The Chair asked who owns the property. John Casey, Engineer for the town of Stratford, stated that the two lots are privately owned by the city of Bridgeport. He further stated that Stratford is proposing to purchase the properties as they get further along in the approval process.

Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked if post-purchase the town line will remain, and Mr. Casey answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Vasamsetti stated that part of the current problem is that there are drainage issues, so this is part of a larger project where most of the repair sites are in Stratford. Mr. Popp stated that he did a review of the plan six weeks ago and made some initial comments regarding the low flow channel at the bottom and the plantings. He stated that they received a letter from the City Engineer with a number of questions, but that they were largely for clarification, such as labelling and incorporating key comments.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked for clarification that this would resolve the flooding issue in the area. Mr. Popp stated that it may not resolve it, but it would definitely help and improve the

flooding radius. He stated that by moving the concrete channel, this will get some filtration into the ground and create better access, as well as a better wildlife habitat.

The Chair asked where the genesis of the watercourse is from, and Mr. Casey stated that this is Bridge Brook, which runs primarily in Stratford and runs toward the high school.

The Chair asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in favor of the application. No one came forward. He then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

John Ortiz (390 Ashewald Terrace) came forward. He stated that he owned two parcels in proximity to the Brook, and only received notification on one. Mr. Ortiz stated that the problems with the Brook he has seen derive from people cutting their trees and throwing the debris into the brook. He stated, since his property is at the end of the brook, he is privy to the problems it experiences. Mr. Ortiz stated that two of the three pipes are blocked solid, and that the town of Stratford comes in every six months to clean them out. He stated that the issues with the brook cannot be fixed until the garbage issue is fixed. He suggested that the pre-existing pipes should be fixed, and that gates placed incrementally down the brook could catch the garbage. Mr. Ortiz stated that, when he brought this idea to Stratford, they shot down the idea. He further stated that there needs to be better communication with the property owners in the area.

Humberto Sanchez (85 Bowe Avenue) came forward and asked if he could have a translator. Commissioner Rodriguez came forward to translate. Mr. Sanchez stated that he has lived at his property for 14 years, and that it is anguish every time it rains. He stated that there is miscommunication in terms of who is responsible for the problems- Stratford or Bridgeport. Mr. Sanchez stated that the whole Brook needs to be cleaned, and that this may alleviate a great number of the problems.

The Chair stated that many of Mr. Sanchez's issues were with the town of Stratford, and that representatives from the town were present to speak with him.

The Chair asked if the applicants would like to offer a rebuttal.

Mr. Casey stated that this project is to address the upstream portion of the brook, not the downstream portion. He stated that the segment they are working on is to make improvements rather than solve the entirety of the problem, for which they are looking at other options. Mr. Casey stated that they are exploring solutions for the issues with the downstream portion of the brook at present. He stated that it is very expensive to do any segment of this repair, and that it is beyond the means of the Town of Stratford alone. He further stated that perhaps the stream is something that needs to be addressed as well.

Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked how regular cleaning of the stream may impact the cost of having to redirect the stream itself. Mr. Casey stated that what they do upstream will not significantly impact downstream. Commissioner Pappas-Phillips asked if the stream is dirty upstream, how this will express itself downstream, and Commissioner Rodriguez asked if a regular cleaning program would relieve the flooding and save money. Mr. Casey state that different size rain storms will create different flows in the stream, and that regardless of cleaning, the Brook at present is not wide enough to accomodate larger rainstorms. He further stated that in his professional opinion, this widening can only help the current situation.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were not a sufficient number of members present to vote on the previous minutes.

DECISIONS

1. Application 2015-05 by Robert DiScala for an Inland Wetland Permit for Improvement Location Survey that involves the widening of an existing driveway to 20 feet for two-way traffic and that addition of six parking spaces to accommodate the proposed Office Use within the existing residential structure at 1077 Huntington Turnpike

**** COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ MOVED TO ACCEPT APPLICATION 2015-05 RE: AN INLAND WETLAND PERMIT FOR IMPROVEMENT LOCATION SURVEY THAT INVOLVES THE WIDENING OF AN EXISTING DRIVEWAY TO 20 FEET FOR TWO-WAY TRAFFIC AND THAT ADDITION OF SIX PARKING SPACES TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED OFFICE USE WITHIN THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE AT 1077 HUNTINGTON TURNPIKE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. PROPER CERTIFICATIONS FOR EACH OF THE CHANGES BE OBTAINED SHOULD THEY BE DETERMINED TO BE APPROPRIATE BY THE SURVEY.**
- 2. NATIVE PLANTINGS WILL BE INSTALLED AS PER PLANS.**

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Application 2015-06 by John Casey for an Inland Wetland Permit for Bruce Brook Stream relocation at Bowe Avenue

City of Bridgeport

Inland, Wetland and Watercourses Agency

Regular Meeting

November 30, 2015

**** COMMISSIONER MORTON MOVED TO ACCEPT APPLICATION 2015-06 RE:
AN INLAND WETLAND PERMIT FOR BRUCE BROOK STREAM RELOCATION AT
BOWE AVENUE WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS**

- 1. PLANTINGS BE ADDED AS PER PLANS.**
- 2. KNOTWEED IS TO BE CONTROLLED AS PER PLANS.**
- 3. EROSION MONITORING WILL BE IN PLACE, AS PER PLANS.**

**** COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER FEDELE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER MORENO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Ramos

Telesco Secretarial Services