



Memo

TO: Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner *pb*
DATE: February 2, 2017
SUBJ: February 8, 2017 Conservation Commission Meeting

225 Borthwick Avenue Conditional Use Permit Application

This is an application for Liberty Mutual Insurance Company located at 225 Borthwick Avenue. There have been a number of changes at the site as Liberty Mutual has installed new Generators and conducted renovations to the building. Liberty Mutual is working to consolidate all of the changes that have occurred on the site and update their site plan. In doing so it was discovered that there are some issues on the site where work has been conducted in the buffer beyond what they have had approved on their past conditional use permits. This application is intended to capture all the work that has either taken place already or is planned in the wetland buffer.

According to *Article 10 Section 10.1017.50* the applicant must satisfy the following conditions for approval of this project.

- 1. The land is reasonably suited to the use activity or alteration.* The work proposed by the applicant is on a portion of their property that is in the buffer of a wetland swale and a manmade pond. The work proposed is in a park-like area where Liberty Mutual maintains a walking trail for its employees around a pond and adjacent to their building and backup generators. The plan calls for restoring a stone dust path 424 square feet in area to grass, adding 1,039 square feet of stone dust path parallel to the restored area; adding 622 square feet of impervious area around the new generators and building and changing an area 923 square feet in size from a temporary disturbance area to a permanent disturbance where reinforced grass pavers are installed. The majority of this area is mowed lawn with some landscaped area including trees and shrubs. The site is reasonably suited to the proposed changes.
- 2. There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The proposed changes are not feasible outside of the buffer given the nature of the site.
- 3. There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* The changes proposed will not likely amount to any impact beyond prior applications. However, staff believes that some consideration should be given to the stipulation from the prior approval in 2015 which called for an area of native plantings in the area called out as temporary disturbance. In addition some site management changes such as reduced mowing are recommended to enhance the site.
- 4. Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* There are no plans to alter any vegetation in its natural vegetative state with this requested application.
- 5. The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* The proposed amendment will not substantially change or impact the site.

Conclusion: Staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit application as proposed with two stipulations.

- 1) That the applicant provide an area of native plantings 923 square feet in area to account for a stipulation on their 2015 Conditional use application calling for native plantings.
- 2) That the applicant discontinue mowing within 25' or up to the walking path from the edge of the wetland area. North of the Bridge which crosses the North end of the manmade Pond.