

Memo

TO: Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner
DATE: May 7, 2020
SUBJ: May 13, 2020 Conservation Commission Meeting



400 Little Harbor Road

This is an application to install a new septic system in the buffer of an inland wetland.

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 location for the proposed septic system is in a lawn area which will be near where the existing system is located.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* According to the applicant this is the most feasible location on the site to locate the new septic system given constraints of ledge, property line and proximity to the wetland.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* The proposed septic system will require some grading to install. As a result the lawn area where the septic system is proposed will be 2-3 feet higher than the current grade but will be returned to lawn.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* There is no change to the natural woodland proposed with this project.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* Given the need for a new septic system and the availability of locations to locate the proposed septic this is the least impacting alternative for this proposal.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant will restore the lawn area to lawn after the new septic system is installed.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the application as presented.

400 Little Harbor Road

The applicant is requesting conditional use approval to install a new waterline to the Carey Cottage for domestic and fire water supply.

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.* This project is to install a new waterline main on Little Harbor Road to the Carey Cottage. The Carey Cottage needs the new waterline due to insufficient supply with the current line. Given the applicant has designed the new route for the waterline to reduce impact to the
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The access from Little Harbor Road to the Carey Cottage is being improved from a route along the shoreline to a route cross country in the upland area. There is no alternative that does not require some aspect of impact in the wetland buffer for this project.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* While there will be temporary impacts of the proposed waterline the area where the waterline is installed will be allowed to be restored to natural conditions after the waterline is installed.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* The proposed project will be impacting any natural vegetation for this project but the applicant is taking care to reduce the impact to natural vegetation and the site will be allowed to re-vegetate after the waterline is installed.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* The applicant has worked to reduce the impacts by selecting an alternate route with less potential for impact.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant is proposing temporary impacts to the site and has stated that all areas will be allowed to be restored to natural conditions after the installation has been completed.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval as presented.

**Borthwick Avenue and Islington Street
Borthwick Forest, LLC, Owner**

This is not an application for approval, rather it is a referral from the Planning Board which said the applicant should go back to the Conservation Commission before they include the expanded parking area.

Given there are no specifics about the review requirements and that there is no approval needed staff recommends the commission provide any constructive input to the applicant that will help protect natural resources in this area. The entirety of the expanded parking area is outside of the 100' wetland buffer zone.

105 Bartlett Street

This proposed project consists of two multi-family apartment buildings with basement level parking and one mixed use building with first floor office and upper story apartments. The project proposes 174 dwelling units in total. The proposed development includes 48% open space which includes a greenway park between the proposed buildings A&B.

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.* This project is located in an area along the North Mill Pond that has long gone without site maintenance and includes derelict structures gravel areas and invasive species. Given that this area has not been maintained and there are opportunities for site enhancement the land is reasonably suited to the proposed use.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The location has been selected as it an unused railroad area which has not been maintained. The applicant sees this area as ready for redevelopment and has provided a feasible approach for that development.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* Overall this plan does appear to improve the derelict site conditions and looks to enhance the area generally given its current condition. However, there is quite a large amount of impervious surface proposed which must be balanced with the site improvements and protection of water quality and buffer areas of the North Mill Pond. According to the City Zoning Ordinance Article 10 section 10.1017.25 A wetland buffer enhancement plan should be developed to describe in detail how the wetland buffer will be improved by this project. The site plan provided does include a landscape plan which shows conceptually how the buffer will be enhanced. It would be helpful if an existing conditions plan showed the extent of invasive species and degraded areas and then a wetland enhancement plan to show exactly what wetland and wetland buffer enhancements are proposed. The site does have the potential to reduce adverse impacts from what exists today and looks to be moving in that direction based on the current plans. More details are needed to better understand those enhancements.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* The proposed project will be impacting natural vegetation but there is quite a bit of invasive vegetation on the site. There will also be enhancements to those vegetated areas and others along the pond which should be detailed as described above.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* The applicant has worked to enhance the site and overall impacts from the project. There are still questions about specific vegetation improvements and also about the need for the impervious areas of parking. While this has been reduced with the underground parking it should be described in detail how this impervious area is offset through site improvements. Additionally, the applicant should discuss contaminated soils and materials if any that have been found in site investigations and steps that are being taken to insure that contaminated materials will not be introduced to the area or the pond through excavation for the site.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant has a conceptual landscape plan that needs additional detail. Overall the concept of reducing the amount of invasive plants and improving the site with native vegetation and an easement for enhancements and a public trail have been presented in their application.

Recommendation: Staff recommends this application be postponed until additional planting details are provided in a wetlands enhancement plan.

375 F.W. Hartford Drive

This is an application to install a new shed in the buffer of an inland wetland.

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 location for the proposed shed is in a lawn area in the back yard of the applicant's property.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* According to the applicant this is the most feasible location on the site to locate the shed on this property.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* The proposed shed will not significantly change any of the wetland functions and values.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* There is no changed to the natural woodland proposed with this project.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* Given the small size if the shed this is the least impacting alternative for this proposal.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant plans to remove the grass from below the shed to be replaced with crushed stone to allow infiltration of water below the shed.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the application as presented.