

Izak Gilbo

From: Private General <qatoday@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 11:26 AM
To: Planning Info
Subject: Please share with the Conservation Commission

Dear Members of the Conservation Commission,

I was recently reading the Site Plan Review Regulations and thought you might be interested in what is "supposed" to be brought before you regarding landscaping. Many aspects of Landscaping are often discussed regarding protecting habitats, wetlands, etc. I thought seeing it in black in white might be encouraging to know so many of the discussion had are "supposed" to be met **prior** to coming to Conservation Commission as part of the Site Plan Regulations.

What is most disconcerting is how many times the ideas put forth by Conservation Commission Members, which should have been there to begin with, entice little to no follow through by developments. I would suggest reviewing this information (there are two more pages with other details) and advising developer to go back to the drawing board and **not return until the minimum requirements of the Site Plan Review Regulations are met**. Its great *to talk the talk* about wetland restoration and wetland protections but until a lot of appropriate bushes, ground covers and less lawns with irrigations systems are provided which show developments *are walking the legal walk as listed*, **please hold your ground! Thank you for all you are able to accomplish!!**

Respectfully,
Elizabeth Bratter
Portsmouth Property Owner

Site Plan Review Regulations:
<http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/planning/SitePlanReviewRegs.pdf>
Actual Page 33,34,35 (reader page 37,38,39)

Article 6 Landscaping and Screening Standards Section 6.1 General Provisions

Landscaping shall be provided that:

- (a) Defines areas for pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
- (b) Breaks up the mass of buildings and impervious areas;
- (c) Incorporates existing native vegetation and other natural features into the site design;
- (d) **Micromanages and controls stormwater at its source to minimize off-site impacts;**
- (e) **Conserves water and reduces outside water use on the site;**
- (f) Provides buffers between incompatible land-uses or sites;
- (g) Softens architectural and structural materials;
- (h) Minimizes the need for fertilizer and pesticide usage and the introduction of pollutants to the environment.

Section 6.2 Landscaping Plan

1. A landscaping plan shall be submitted with each application for Site Plan Review showing:
- (a) Existing and proposed vegetation including trees, shrubs and plant beds including all vegetation that shall be retained as required by the Planning Board;
 - (b) Dimensions of undisturbed areas and measures that shall be used to protect during construction existing natural features that are to be retained;

- (c) Location of all utilities above ground and below ground and related easements;
- (d) Required front, side, and rear yards.

2. A plant schedule shall accompany the plan that includes the following information:

- (a) Botanical and common names;
- (b) Planting size and size at maturity;
- (c) Quantity;
- (d) Growth habits (branching, crown spread, root spread);
- (e) Tolerance to urban conditions including road salt, soil; compaction, drought, heat, and air pollution;
- (f) Planting requirements.

Section 6.3 General Requirements

1. Areas not occupied by buildings or other structures, parking, loading, and accessways shall be landscaped to provide visual relief from expanses of paving and buildings while providing shade and stormwater management benefits.
2. At a minimum, all yards, setbacks, and areas of open space as required by the Zoning Ordinance shall retain existing natural features or be landscaped as required herein.
3. **Landscaped areas shall consist of a combination of grass, flowers, vines, groundcovers, trees and/or shrubs. All planting areas shall be landscaped with a combination of climate tolerant plant material and protective groundcover. Bare soil is not permitted. Managed lawn areas should be kept to a minimum to the extent practical especially areas that will not be accessed and where alternative options are available.**
4. Natural features, existing healthy mature trees, and other existing vegetation shall be identified on the landscaping plan and shall be retained when required by the Planning Board.
5. Existing invasive plant species shall be removed and destroyed if required by the Planning Board. Applicants shall refer to the Prohibited Invasive Plant Species List maintained by the NH Department of Agriculture.
6. No loam or other topsoil shall be removed from the site as part of site development. Topsoil shall be appropriately stockpiled and stabilized for redistribution within new planting areas

RE: 1 & 31 Raynes, 203 Maplewood Ave

Meeting: 05/12/21

Dear Members of the Conservation Commission,

The biggest areas of concern and answers asked for by this committee in April were in regards to: soil and water contamination, snow removal, lack of dense vegetation along shoreline, mowing, actual plans for outfall, more info on boat launch, parking lot not being porous, actual pier plans, environmental reports were requested, safety protection on ramp, new layout of plantings along 0-25' buffer, more details on where the snow will go, shoreline restoration other than seeds, statements made were not what was shown on the landscape details.

Upon comparing the April 14th submission to the May 12th submission, more information has been provided regarding soil contamination and mitigation measures. Three thoughts came to mind, how close to the surface is the ground water, what about the outfall and how and when will the boat launch and dock be constructed. The boat launch is a direct access point to the North Mill Pond. *I did not notice any mention of it in the provided Mitigation Measure letter*(pg 118) other than: "Temporary methods for protecting water quality including erosion, sediment, and runoff control will be implemented in accordance with Env-Wq 1505.05 as well as a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that will be prepared prior to the start of site development". Current testing results can be found on page 119 but none for the water or sediment where they will be working.

There will definitely be work in the vegetative buffer. 10.1017.26 states shoreline restoration or preservation is required. Pictures as well as descriptions show a shoreline in need of complete restoration. *The landscape plan does not include any Living Shoreline plantings.* IF the City is going to providing the Living Shoreline plantings the paperwork should reflect this **to ensure it really happens.**

Looking at the Landscape plan found on page 9 all the snow storage will be in the 50 to 100' buffer. It will be within inches of plantings and looks quite close to trees. Even an experienced snow plower will have difficulty not hitting the trees when clearing the snow off the parking lot. *How will a bucket loader get in there to remove the snow once minimum heights for off-site removal? How will direct plowing onto the buffer be prevented? This does not seem like a feasible solution for even 1 or 2 inches of snow!!*

7 more trees were added when comparing May's page 134 to April's page 17 plant lists, however, the number of shrubs are not shown nor any additional shrubs shown on the landscape plan (pg 9). Something may be added around the 7 additional trees, the question is what? The landscape plans for April and May are trees, seeds and "planting beds". The "planting beds" do not indicate what is proposed to be in them. There are now 9 ornamental grass species on the list where previously there were only 6. ***It might be more environmental to reduce the number of grasses and replace them with native shrubs as nesting and food sources.*** This lack of specifics regarding "planting beds" along buffer is very disconcerting.

Mowing is still presented as twice a year, at 3" (pg 134 #15, 16) which **will prevent naturally occurring trees, plants and shrubs from being allowed to grow in the buffer.** *Mowing will eliminate any possible winter food sources as well as winter cover for birds, reptiles and mammals. No mowing is necessary.* "Weeds" are beneficial, some are quite beautiful and invasives can be hand removed if needed.

This project still seems to have too many parking spaces (yet not enough), no viable snow removal sites, no testing results for the areas around the dock or boat launch and a detail lacking landscape plan.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Bratter
159 McDonough St
Portsmouth Property Owner