

RE: Lot 123-15 Area 1

Meeting: Conservation Commission 10-13-2021

Dear Conservation Commission,

It is important to acknowledge the amount of work that has been put into this application. It is my understanding a Living Shoreline Grant has been applied for. **There are some concerns which should not be ignored, in light of this being a city project.** It might be helpful to review the entire NMP Trail when thinking about this piece of land. Reader page 13 of this link shows the "Proposed Greenway Alignment" http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/files/planning/190725_nmp_concept_final.pdf

The application for Lot 123-15

The landscape plan on page 19 Plan L-101

The application does NOT seem to include many protections via plantings or fencing for the HOTL. Looking at McEachern Park's HOTL area most of the wetland plantings close to the edge of the land have been destroyed by people walking there during low tides. Where is the HOTL on this plan?

It might be helpful to consult with Dave Burdick from UNH, who has supervised and done most of the plantings in the NMP for over 25 years. He knows what actually grows there, before spending money on plantings in the HOTL which may not survive.

The restoration plants (3,4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,15) should replace most of red fescue. This would create a better border for the edge of the trail and encourage people to stay on the trail. A few small areas of red fescue with single and double chairs would make it a peaceful place to visit. The new park along Market St has a lot of group seating and pic-nicing areas. The amount of red fescue and closeness to the edge of the water in some areas vs the actual habitat restoration plants is disappointing and makes the water's edge very accessible.

Boardwalk on reader page 17 Plan C-105

The plan shows a need for what seems like **39, 1' pilings** being dug into the sensitive, contaminated and recovering North Mill Pond. **The boardwalk seems to be very redundant when looking at the whole NMP Trail.** The current proposal for 1&31 Raynes Ave includes an approved restoration of a *boat launch AND a viewing dock* along the NMP Trail. 53 Green St got approval for the NMP Trail along with *various art displays.* *Both directly about this lot!*

The proposed boardwalk is shown as metal with no handrails. It will give direct access to the pond's sediment which acts like quicksand when stepped in. Anyone who has ever stepped on a wooden dock knows they are slippery when wet. How safe will a metal surface, in normal NE weather conditions be?

Location, safety and uses page 21, "Invasive Species Inventory

This plan not only shows the invasive species but also shows how isolated this lot is from any road. It will be abutted by a 5 story hotel and a 5 story condo making it completely invisible for patrolling police cars. Both the Rock St and Goodwin parks had people sleeping in them because the landscaping and locations made it hard for patrol cars to see in these parks. Landscaping and accessibility have changed which has helped. The row of gray dogwoods and the red cedars between the trail and the abutter will make it difficult to see activities taking place on the trail much less beyond it. Perhaps some taller trees should be considered for this side of the trail or low trees which could be pruned to keep the canopies higher, similar to the Magnolias in Goodwin Park.

1&31 Raynes Ave needs a parking CUP. This whole area has a parking crunch. Lot 123-15 will more likely be a place for people to sit quietly or pass through on their bikes, due to the lack of parking. It may become a great place to live, due to its isolation. *The landscaping should keep safety and realistic uses in mind.*

It needs to be remembered this area has been untouched by human activity for years. The invasive species have provided an excellent habitat for many creatures. There is nothing better than a Multi-flora rose for birds and rabbits and it works great to keep humans away! The proposed plan seems to be for more human use than preserving the habitat that has been there for years. It should be remembered all these developments along the NMP Trail are providing humans closer access to the pond and more of it and removing quiet habitats for the many creatures everyone has enjoyed watching for years in and around the North Mill Pond! As a city this area should be to help preserve some of the habitats which are being replaced by massive developments in trade for the North Mill Pond Trail!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bratter
159 McDonough St
Property Owner

To: Barbara, chair, Conservation Commission meeting 10/13-2021
From: Nancy & Brian Johnson, 81 Clinton St
Re: CUP application for North Mill Pond Greenway, Vaughan St

The project (Map 123 Lot 15) off Vaughan St and Raynes Ave has requested a CUP for shared parking but yet are using as justification for their landscape plans the use of this area by the general public. They do not have sufficient parking for their own use, so how is the public supposed to access this secluded spot? It sounds good, on the surface, but unless the details of the **parking for the general public are addressed**, the whole concept of providing access to the shoreline by the general public is moot. Considering this restriction, what they are proposing will essentially become a private park for the tenants of their development.

The parcel is secluded and thus difficult to police, especially at night. The only general residents who will be able to access it will have to arrive on foot or by bicycle. So it is not especially a benefit to the citizen's of Portsmouth. Providing the single path (as shown) behind the development linking it with the potential for a Green St extension to allow access to Market St (provided the developer for Green St agrees) will allow bikers to complete the bikeway to Market St. There is an assumption that access across the Green St development property will be provided by that developer, to complete the trail from Maplewood to Market St .

For biking and walking, a simple trail, without access to the water, should be sufficient. A widening near the center of the path would provide ample opportunity for the public to enjoy views of the water and the bird life. By appropriate plantings, keeping the public (including children and dogs) away from the water's edge, will encourage use by native waterfowl. The less the disturbance at the boundary of the marsh, the greater the benefit to native species, and thus to local birdwatchers.