

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD
CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, October 26, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING

The meeting was conducted exclusively as a virtual meeting, pursuant to emergency Executive Orders Nos. [7B](#) and [7I](#), and in accordance with the Town Plan and Zoning Commission Rules and Regulations for the Transaction of Business.

The Commission was called to order at 7:05 PM.

1. Roll Call, members present: Matt Macunas, Rick Bush, Shawn Daly, Ted Newton, Roni Rodman, and Emilee Scott

2. Old Business: S. Daly moved to adopt the August 31, 2020 minutes and R. Bush seconded;

3. New Business:

a. Examination of School Bus Fuel Types: postponed to next meeting

b. Fern Street – Fern Street Bridge – Town of West Hartford – Application (IWW# 1127), of the Engineering Division of the Town of West Hartford, requesting approval of an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Permit to conduct certain regulated activities which may have an adverse impact on a wetland area. The applicant is proposing to replace the Fern Street Bridge including a realignment of the West Branch Trout Brook for approximately 200 feet upstream of the bridge. The proposed work is within both a watercourse and within the 150 ft. upland review area. Submitted for IWWA receipt on October 5, 2020. Presented for determination of significance)

The Town presented the project narrative, represented by Dwayne Martin, Town Engineer, and Milone & Macbroom staff Shelley Plourde and Matt Stanford.

Originally conceived of as a replacement project for the original 1939 bridge – now mostly complete – the project evolved to include Fernridge Park improvements and watercourse channel realignment, which proponents noted will help the conditions of the bridge and support channel health long-term.

CEC members inquired into several aspects of the project, including various flow control measures and structures, and environmental scoping and screening. Landscaping and plantings to improve wetland conditions will occur along the watercourse. The road will remain at its height, as raising it would have the effect of impounding more water on the overall roadway. To facilitate crane entry for construction, utility poles would require relocation, and several mature trees removed in the south side of the project.

The existing parking area is a fairly large paved surface. The Town will reconfigure the area to a reclaimed gravel surface except for several special accessibility parking spaces, thereby increasing pervious area. The outer embankment of the watercourse is scoured by runoff from the existing impervious lot.

Initial construction will be April-November 2021. Work then moves to the park, including pond drawdown for modular wall installation. Flows will direct to Trout Brook and be coffer dammed off. Work will then move to the other side as flows are rediverted.

Project was presented to DEEP and DOT, abutting property owners, and Friends of Fernridge. As a member of FoF, Emilee Scott abstained from conversation on the project.

c. Discussion on Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Policy

Commission members discussed exploring the potential environmental impacts of ADU policy. While not taking any formal action, the commission decided to ascertain whether the town had conducted or reviewed an existing environmental impact study as part of the proposal in front of Town Council.

d. Available Information - Pesticide Use at School Buildings

Public notices from West Hartford Public Schools summarizing 2019 practices on asbestos and the Integrated Pest Management Plan prompted discussion of future ongoing exploration on these subjects. The commission will seek further information.

e. Available information – UConn Property Hygiene

Aimee Kraus, Director of Health for the West Hartford/Bloomfield Health District indicated no new areas of concern for the property and no sightings of vermin.

f. Future items for consideration

Planned guests for future meetings

- Katherine Breer-Burns, town Recycling Coordinator
- Marc Riccio, VP at Highland Electric Bus (formerly of all-fuels bus manufacturer Blue Bird) on various forms of fuel technology in the present school bus market landscape
- West Hartford Public Schools or town facilities delegate regarding Integrated Pest Management Plan and asbestos remediation

4. Meeting Adjournment – at 9:05 P.M. Motion from Daly, second from Newton.