

Department of Planning and Community Development

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Mayor Joseph C. Sullivan

Braintree Conservation Commission

Patrick Flynn, Chair
Donald Murphy, Vice-Chair
Diane Francis
Matthew Hobin
Daniel J. McMorrow, Jr.
Gail Poliner-Feldman
Alan Weinberg

Staff Kelly Phelan

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2013

APPROVED

Present: Patrick Flynn, Chair; Gus Murphy, Vice Chair; Gail Feldman, Diane Francis; Matthew Hobin; Alan Weinberg & Kelly Phelan, Staff

Absent: Daniel McMorrow, Jr.

Public Hearings

Request for Determination of Applicability

Watson Park River Walk/Department of Planning & Community Development

Christine Stickney, Director of the Planning and Community Development Department, gave the background of the River Walk project. Mayor Sullivan directed the Department to focus to East Braintree. One of the first things the Department did was work with an organization called Walk Boston which works with communities to map walking routes. They put together a map of walking routes through East Braintree. This included a route along the East Braintree waterfront. The Town then worked with Community Design Group and held design charettes for the redevelopment of the BELD property on Allen St. That group furthered the river walk concept and helped the Town get a National Park Service grant for technical assistance with the walk. Other efforts in East Braintree included the Public Works and Economic Development (PWED) grant for streetscape improvements in the Landing. Ms. Stickney said they are working to increase connectivity through pedestrian connections as well as economic development.

Kelly Phelan, Conservation Planner, discussed the RDA for the walking path. She said the path will begin at Gordon Rd. head toward the river and continue along the river toward the splash pad and playground. From there it will tie in with the existing Toland Walkway to Smith Beach. She said the path will be 6-8 feet wide and 6 inches deep. The DPW agreed to construct the path. They will excavate the 6 inches of grass and topsoil, line the excavation with landscape fabric and backfill with stone dust. Signs will be placed at the entrance at Gordon Rd. and the Toland Walkway sign will be upgraded. Two informational signage boards will be installed. One will be at the wildflower meadow to be created as mitigation or the splash pad. The wildflower meadow will include milkweed, New

England aster and other New England wildflowers to increase biodiversity and provide habitat for butterflies and pollinators. The other informational signage board will replace the deteriorated signage board with information on the Fore River and fisheries. Two benches will be installed along the path.

Ms. Phelan continued with the final component of the project which is shoreline stabilization. An area at the end of the seawall is severely eroding. Staff said the area will have to be graded and stabilized with an aggressive shrub such as Rosa rugosa or northern bayberry. Something that will grow quickly, is deep-rooted and will form a thicket.

Mr. Weinberg asked if invasive species removal was included in the project. Staff said it was not. Mr. Weinberg said he has been talking with East Braintree Civic about planting wildflowers along the Toland Walkway and that, if funding allows, it would be good to incorporate this into the project.

Ms. Feldman said she was concerned about adding attractions to the park when there is not sufficient parking. She is concerned that as more people use the park the Town will need to add parking and the only place left is in the resource areas. Ms. Stickney replied that the path is intended primarily for neighborhood walkers and is part of the Town's efforts to create "pocket parks" throughout town that will serve local neighborhoods.

Mr. Flynn asked if they considered a spur from the parking lot to the path. He indicated an area on the map which would not interfere with the ball fields. Staff said they did not but that if funding allowed they could consider it.

Mr. Flynn asked for public comment.

Leland Dingee, Councilor at Large and East Braintree resident, said he was in favor of the walking path. He noted that he walks through the neighborhood regularly and sees many other people walking. He said the walking path which BELD created by their plant along the Fore River is frequently used.

Michael Lang said he understood Ms. Feldman's concern that about the projects being piecemeal but that they have to take the opportunities as they come. He noted the potential to connect the path to the Allen St. site when it is redeveloped. He also suggested that the eroding slope be rip-rapped and that the erosion was due to a nearby storm drain.

Dave Oliva, Chair of the East Braintree Civic Association said they are very excited about the path and supportive of it. He said they would like to see it expand over time and connect with the Pond Meadow.

The Commission discussed that conditions for erosion control will be needed.

Motion by Mr. Murphy, second by Mr. Hobin, to issue a negative determination of applicability with conditions for erosion control for the walking path project. Vote: 6-0.

Other Business

Request for Certificate of Compliance

8-600 75 Granite St. /Herb Chambers Ford of Braintree

Staff said she received the as-built plan, reviewed the conditions and visited the site with the project engineer. She recommended issuing the Certificate of Compliance with surviving conditions for drainage system maintenance, snow storage, salt restriction and fence maintenance. Staff also recommended releasing the \$4000 as-built guarantee.

Motion by Mr. Weinberg, second by Mr. Murphy, to grant the Certificate of Compliance with surviving conditions for 8-600. Vote: 6-0.

Motion by Mr. Weinberg, second by Mr. Murphy, to release the \$4000 as-built guarantee. Vote: 6-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance

8-606 Sun Valley Estates/Sun Valley Estates Homeowners Association

Staff said the representative from the Homeowners Association had been out of town. Since a project representative should be at the final site visit and this had not been done, she recommended tabling the request to the March 7th meeting. The Commission agreed.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Weinberg second by Mr. Murphy, to accept the minutes of January 17, 2013. Vote: 6-0.

Adjourn

Motion by Mr. Weinberg second by Mr. Murphy, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. Vote: 6-0.