

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES

January 22, 2014

7:30 P.M.

Room 206, Town Hall

Chairman Riccardo called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M

Commission Members Present: Vickie Riccardo, Keith Kearney, Ed Sweeney, Rick Rohr, Alan Armstrong, Eric Joosten

Staff: Jacobson

Court Reporter: Syat

Channel 79 recorded the meeting

Ms. Riccardo called the public hearing to order:

EPC-46-2013, Darien Athletic Foundation, 80 High School Lane, proposing conversion of existing natural turf fields to synthetic turf, and enlarge existing detention basin within an upland review area. The site is shown on Assessor's Map #9 as Lot #'s 80 &81.

Joe Canas, P.E., and Certified Floodplain Manager, Tighe & Bond, represented the Applicant. He described the existing site conditions and provided an overview of the proposed construction of three artificial turf fields. The proposal he discussed had already included modifications suggested by Redniss & mead regarding the appropriate flood zone constraints for the Stadium East field. With a new Flood Zone boundary, the applicant reduced the disturbed area, the amount of fill, the drainage direction (to and opposite corner) and the filtration method (from using the existing drainage network to a new wet pond). He described the regulated areas and the activities within the 50 foot upland review area and the 100 foot Stony Brook upland review area. He described the synthetic turf and proposed drainage system.

Mr. Rohr asked about the slope of the proposed flat drain system. Mr. Canas said the slope is 1%.

Mr. Canas said the storage in the stone under the field has been modelled as a detention system and there will be no increase in peak flows as a result of the project. He said they are adding additional features for water quality as a result of the comments from Redniss & Mead. He said they will modify the grading to avoid any filling within the flood plain as defined by the 2009 Stony Brook study by Milone & MacBroom. He said they will be expanding the existing detention basin to provide additional water quality benefits. He said they will be disturbing a wetland area in the bottom of the basin and will replant the wetland.

Mr. Canas addressed questions previously raised by the Commission. He said the runoff curve number value of the turf field is between 50 and 75 based on underlying soils. He said he used 98 for the purposes of his calculations. He said that, with respect to thermal impacts, the drainage layer below remains at ambient temperature to mitigate thermal impacts, and the temperature on

the surface decreases rapidly when there is cloud cover. He said they considered natural turf for the fields but rejected that alternative because of the decreased playability of natural turf. He said his review of the previous soil test indicates that the fill material is suitable but they have scheduled additional test pits.

Mr. Canas said there may be 10 to 13 trees that were evergreen that were planted that might need to be moved or replaced. He said there will be no encroachment beyond the existing fence and, therefore no trees disturbance beyond the fence line.

Mr. Rohr asked if the Stadium East field will be curbed. Mr. Canas said yes. Mr. Rohr asked where the runoff will go if it does not infiltrate. Mr. Canas said he believes the runoff will infiltrate. Mike Lynch, Facilities Director for Darien Public Schools said they have never observed flooding or sheet flow from the fields.

Mr. Rohr asked how much decrease will there be in the amount of fill. Mr. Canas said approximately 18". He will provide the revised quantities.

Mr. Rohr asked what the square footage of wetland disturbance will be. Mr. Canas said approximately 153 square feet as described in the alternative in the report.

Mr. Rohr asked Mr. Canas to provide a sample of the flat drain.

Craig Flaherty, P.E., Redniss & Mead, said he reviewed the application on behalf of the Commission. He said they provided the applicant and the Commission with comments in a January 8 letter. He said their most important concerns relate to the floodplain. He said the additional test pits that have been scheduled will address the water quality concerns. He said the CN associated with the filed may be between 50 and 75, however, Mr. Canas is using 98 and is, therefore, creating more water that has to be dealt with and mitigated. He said those calculations are sound. He said there is an opportunity to hold back more water but they must be careful not to hold back so much that the discharge corresponds with the peak of Stony Brook. He said that holding back more water will also help with thermal impacts and water quality.

Ms. Riccardo opened the hearing for public comment.

Chris Roland, 136 West Avenue, Asked if the applicant will be required to comply with DEEP stormwater permit requirements. Mr. Canas said the project meets the criteria for the General Permit for Construction and Stormwater and will require registration and weekly inspections.

Walter Raleigh, 369 Middlesex Road said the wooded area on the school property has been reduced over time and wetlands were filled since 1975. He said the detention pond does not work and has never been maintained. He questioned the percentage of runoff to Stony Brook attributed to the High School property.

Mr. Michalski, Middlesex Road, said the report states no increase in usage but in the presentation Mr. Canas said the turf field can be used more. He said there are trees falling in the woods and he is concerned about tree replacement and wildlife impacts. He said there should be a master plan required for the Town athletic fields.

Cheryl Russell asked about the location of the detention pond. Mr. Canas showed her the location on the map.

Ms. Russell said that when the high school was built the neighbors were told that the detention basins would hold back water. She said the neighbors were told that erosion and sediment controls would be maintained. She said 90% of what the neighbors were told was not true. She said the Flood & Erosion Control Board should look at the whole picture. She said the Commission should say no to the application.

Chris Roland said he lives near the West Avenue bridge which has heavy flooding issues. He said the Commission should look at the big picture. He said the wetlands as a whole have been compromised.

Mr. Canas addressed Mr. Raleigh's comment and said the high school property is approximately 55 acres which represents slightly less than 5% of the 1120 acre watershed. He said they will add phasing details for the erosion and sediment controls, including weekly inspections.

Mr. Flaherty said the proposed throwing areas where there were materials stockpiled should be surveyed and limits of the floodplain based on field shots.

Mr. Canas said they will recalculate the runoff from large storms based on the Redniss & Mead recommendation to use data from the Connecticut Institute of Water report in 2002.

The Commission continued the public hearing to February 5 to confirm the date for a special meeting on February 12 pending the availability of a meeting room.

Mr. Kearney made a motion to approve the minutes of January 8 as amended. Mr. Sweeney seconded the motion and it passed 4-0. Mr. Rohr and Mr. Joosten abstained.

Election of Officers:

Mr. Rohr nominated Ms. Riccardo for Chairman. Mr. Armstrong seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations, and the Commission voted 6-0 in favor to elect Ms. Riccardo Chairman.

Ms. Riccardo nominated Mr. Rohr for Vice-Chairman. Mr. Armstrong seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations, and the Commission voted 6-0 in favor to elect Mr. Rohr Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Kearney nominated Ms. Shapiro for Clerk. Mr. Armstrong seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations, and the Commission voted 6-0 in favor to elect Ms. Shapiro Clerk.

Mr. Joosten made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Rohr seconded the motion, and it passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Jacobson
Environmental Protection Officer