

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING/PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES
September 4, 2013
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, Rick Rohr, Alan Armstrong, Eric Joosten, Ed Sweeney, Keith Kearney

Staff: Jacobson

Court Reporter: Syat

The Commission discussed the draft presentation to the Board of Selectmen by Chairman Riccardo, scheduled for Monday September 9, 2013. Ms. Riccardo asked if the members were in agreement with the presentation, and that the EPC should continue to support the hiring of a person to review drainage plans. It was the consensus of the members that no changes be made to the presentation.

Ms. Riccardo called the public hearing item:

EPC-29-2013, Town of Darien, Department of Public Works, 95 Rose Lane, proposing to replace a storm drain with a box culvert as part of replacement of upstream drainage system. The site is shown on Assessor's Map #25 as Lot #12. (Continued from August 7, 2013)

Darren Oustafine, P.E., Assistant Director of DPW represented the applicant. He introduced Joe Canas, P.E., Tighe & Bond. He said that Joe Canas has responded to the issues raised at the previous hearing. He summarized the project and said they have tried to reach a balance between the physical and economic challenges of the project.

Joe Canas reviewed the items in his letter of August 30. He provided a planting plan.

Mr. Rohr asked if he analyzed the raising of Rose Lane.

Mr. Canas said there are issues with driveways, existing drainage, and utilities.

Mr. Armstrong asked about the additional cost. Mr. Canas said it probably be comparable to the additional cost of the West Avenue/Holmes Avenue route.

Mr. Canas provided photos of typical box culverts.

Mr. Rohr asked about the direction of flows on Holmes and Park. Mr. Canas said the flows are North & West.

Mr. Joosten asked if the area near Abby and Intervale is a wetland. Mr. Canas said it is not on the wetland map, but they did not look at the soils in that area.

Mr. Rohr asked about tree loss. Mr. Canas said at least one tree near the headwall will be removed. He said they can provide that information. He said they will save as many trees as possible in the temporary easements.

Mr. Rohr asked if they will provide erosion control beyond the outlet protection shown. Mr. Canas said they will consider it. Mr. Rohr said he did not observe a lot of obstructions in the channel.

Mr. Oustafine said they will plant additional trees if necessary.

Cindy Brown, 8 Devon Road, provided a photo of her driveway that was washed away in a storm.

Donna Gauthier, 12 Park Lane said her family had five feet of water on their yard in the April 2007 storm. She said she is concerned the drainage ditch will have increase flow and increased velocity.

Peter Silcox said that one neighborhood's problem should not be transferred to another. He said the applicant should consider a retaining wall.

Steven Pietrie, 6 Park Lane, said the box culvert would be adjacent to his property. He said they have experienced three one hundred year storms in recent years.

Howard Seymour, 22 Park Lane, showed photos of a 2' x 4' foot box culvert would look like. He said the activity is a significant activity and alternatives must be considered.

Keith Boros, 26 Park Lane, said the applicant has chosen the lowest cost option with the least regulatory hurdles. He said the cost of obtaining easements has not been discussed. He said the Noroton River study described the advantages of the Holmes Lane alternative.

Rob Cardone, 17 Park Lane, said new construction upstream has caused problems. He said the water was over the banks of the river in April 2007.

Mr. Oustafine said obtaining easements will be the hardest part of the project. He said the DEEP permits are additional hurdles that the Town should try to avoid, and should not seek out.

Mr. Canas said the Town has adopted much stricter regulations on future development and stormwater. He said the applicant is attempting to minimize wetland impacts with their proposal.

Mr. Pietre said the Town should be looking for a superior solution.

Jayne Stevenson, First Selectman, said she supports the Town staff, and they are looking for the best possible solution balanced against the outcome.

Mr. Kearney asked why this is not a transfer of a problem from one neighborhood to another. Mr. Oustafine said there will be no negative impact on Rose Lane. He said the channel is not the source of flooding experienced by the neighbors. The River is the source.

Peter Silcox said it is intuitive there will be more water. Mr. Oustafine said he is sure they will not make the problem worse.

Mr. Pietrie said their concern is the total volume moving faster.

Rob Cardone, 17 Park Lane, asked what 57 cfs refers to. Mr. Canas said the existing flow is 57 cfs in a 50 year storm and 67 cfs is the proposed velocity. Mr. Cardone said he feels there will be more water.

Mrs. Gautier said she thought the Commission's role is to preserve wetlands.

Mr. Boras asked that the project bypass the bridge.

Mr. Sweeney asked for more analysis of the hard and soft costs of the alternatives.

Mr. Rohr asked if they could split the flows and take some water down Rose Lane. Mr. Canas said they will look at that.

Peter Venezia, 93 Rose Lane said that Rose Lane is private and each owner along the road owns the piece of the roadway that is adjacent to his or her roadway to the midline of the road. In response to a question from Ms. Riccardo, the Commission learned that the Rose Lane neighbors have not formed an association to manage their common affairs regarding the road.

The Commission continued the hearing to the next regular meeting on October 2. No additional testimony will be taken on October 2. Instead the Commission will set a date for a special meeting in October.

Mr. Joosten made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Sweeney seconded the motion, and it passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Jacobson
Environmental Protection Officer