



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING MINUTES
ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
September 8th, 2021

1
2 Present: Gene Crouch (Chair)
3 Bill Moulton (Vice Chair)
4 Cathy Van Lancker
5 Carl Hakansson
6 Greg Wands
7
8 Absent: Maeghan Dos Anjos (Agent)
9
10

11 **Meeting held by Zoom**

12
13 **Call to order: 7:03 P.M.**

14
15 **7:03 NOI/SMP, Town of Ashland, Mindess School, 90 Concord Street, New School**
16 **project (continued from 8/24/2021)**

17 Present for Project representation on behalf of the Town of Ashland: Mike Quinlan-Senior
18 Project Manager (Compass Engineering), Jared Gentilucci- Lead Civil Engineer (Nitsch
19 Engineering) and Phil Conroy (Shawmut Engineering).
20

21 Mr. Crouch opened the hearing and explained this is a special meeting and the only agenda
22 item is the Mindess School project. A draft Order of Conditions have been circulated to the
23 Commission. Mr. Crouch briefly reviewed the goals of this meeting for reaching the point of
24 finalizing an Order of Conditions, Storm Water Permit, and the closure of the hearing.
25

26 Mr. Gentilucci opened the project discussion by reviewing the new submittals to the
27 Conservation Commission which consisted of the following:

- 28 1. Revised set of technical drawings
- 29 2. Revised Storm Water report
- 30 3. Revised Notice of Intent and Stormwater Permit report
- 31 4. Revised waiver request letter for Ashland Wetlands Bylaw
- 32

33 New Submittals included all the comments from the Commission members and peer review
34 comments (GCG). Most important topics for discussion were the updates to the site drainage
35 system that increased the pre-treatment levels of stormwater prior to ground infiltration.
36 Other updates to changes included underground recharge system #5, adjacent to the main
37 driveway and changes were based on test pit data. Original design was a subsurface infiltration
38 system and changed to a surface infiltration system with a sediment pre-treatment forebay.
39 Mr. Gentilucci shared the relevant drawing and discussed these changes and justifications in
40 detail.

41 Mr. Gentilucci also reviewed another design change as recommend by the peer reviewers
42 (GCG) within the Southwest region of the project. New changes included a provision for a
43 vegetated filter strip and connecting the filter strip to an isolated vegetated wetland on the site.
44 After reviewing the major plan changes for stormwater infiltration on the site, Mr. Gentilucci
45 and Mr. Crouch solicited comments and questions from the Commission.

46
47 Ms. Van Lanker asked for clarification on matching runoff volumes at each of the 4 design
48 points during 1 inch, 2-year, 10-year and 100-year storm events. Mr. Gentilucci reviewed the
49 data in the stormwater report to her satisfaction.

50 Both Ms. Van Lanker & Mr. Crouch requested clarification regarding the under slab drainage
51 and pre-treatment system for the school building.

52 Mr. Crouch requested additional information on invert elevations and outlet pipe elevations,
53 Mr. Gentilucci provided the information and addressed questions regarding the bioretention
54 basin within the bus loop.

55 Mr. Crouch asked that fencing around bioretention basins should be added to the design as an
56 additional safety feature.

57 Discussion occurred around the details regarding the functionality of the new southwest grass
58 filter strip and connectivity to the isolated wetland; as well as the placement of boulders to
59 prevent parking on the filter strip and posting of no parking signage to protect the grass.

60
61 Mr. Moulton asked whether Subsurface System #3 (SI-3) in the stormwater report is the same
62 feature as the isolated wetland in the design drawings. Mr. Gentilucci confirmed that they are
63 the same feature and the discrepancy is the result of a typo in the stormwater report.

64
65 Mr. Moulton pointed out an inaccuracy in the updated design where the old SS#5 system is still
66 depicted on the stormwater plans and needs to be updated to show the new surface infiltration
67 system in the same location. Mr. Gentilucci agreed and will make the changes.

68
69 Mr. Crouch asked if the isolated vegetated wetland will be improved with new planting and
70 Mr. Gentilucci replied that it will be left "as is" because sufficient vegetation already exists.

71
72 Mr. Hakansson described his concerns regarding the removal of ledge and the impact on
73 stormwater runoff on abutting properties during construction. Mr. Gentilucci reviewed the
74 construction and sizing of temporary sedimentation basins based on stormwater calculations
75 and DEP stormwater standards. Mr. Hakansson also spoke about the consequences of
76 undersized temporary sedimentation basins on other construction projects in town.

77
78 Mr. Crouch questioned the amount of excavation required to build a temporary sedimentation
79 north of the footprint of the new school's stormwater recharge system, given the steepness of
80 the slop in that area. Mr. Gentilucci concurred that there will be a significant amount of
81 excavation in that area, however he believed there is a need to have stormwater control in that
82 area and that the excavation into the hillside is necessary.

83
84 Mr. Crouch asked for more detail on test pit data and how this data was applied to the design
85 change from a subsurface infiltration system (SS#5) to a new surface infiltration system. His
86 main concern was maintaining 2 feet of separation with ground water with this design change.
87 Mr. Gentilucci reviewed the data and described that the design change is shallower and the

88 shift in location also was driven by the need to maintain the 2 feet of ground water separation.
89 Mr. Crouch also spoke about his efforts to create a table from submitted data, for the
90 comparison of surface elevation with the depth of ground water. He described how that
91 comparison is more useful than just the depth of ground water below the surface at a particular
92 test pit. What are the actual ground water elevations referenced to the site datum is the data
93 that Mr. Crouch is seeking.

94
95 Mr. Crouch asked about the fate of the 48-inch oak tree on the site. He acknowledged that this
96 tree is not a wetland or stormwater issue, however on the plans presented, the tree is depicted
97 as being saved. As a matter of public record, Mr. Crouch wanted to hear whether the tree will
98 be saved or not. Mr. Quinlan addressed the question and did say that the tree will not be saved.

99
100 Mr. Crouch revisited the topic of stormwater management and pretreatment during
101 construction. He spoke of the success of using a 3-chamber tank system with polyacrylamide
102 flocculant blocks in one tank, coupled with two overflow tanks to remove fine sediments from
103 stormwater as a pretreatment system at another project in Town. He suggested that during
104 construction, a similar system for this project should be considered to remove fine particulates
105 from stormwater before it leaves the site.

106 Mr. Moulton reiterated the need to re-label the isolated wetland to the north as a Bordering
107 Vegetated Wetland in the plans. Mr. Crouch responded by saying that change will be
108 addressed when the draft Order of Conditions are reviewed later in the meeting.

109
110 After all the Commissioners finished asking questions, Mr. Crouch solicited comments from
111 the public. Steve Morgan (30 Concord St.) raised his hand electronically and was recognized.

112
113 Mr. Morgan commented that there was more information presented at this meeting than was
114 available on the Ashland Conservation Commission website. Mr. Crouch stated that the Order
115 of Conditions is still in draft form and will be reviewed later in the meeting and the final form
116 will be posted on the ConCom website.

117
118 Mr. Morgan reviewed his comments on the stormwater report and concerns that the water
119 volume numbers are based on surface runoff and do not take into consideration ground water
120 volumes. His concern is that redevelopment of the site may deprive the stream flowing under
121 Concord street of water. Mr. Crouch responded to the question by referencing an old aerial
122 photo taken in 1956, showing the exposed ground during installation of the current 12-inch
123 drainage pipes in the athletic fields that drain to the stream. Mr. Gentilucci showed the aerial
124 image overlayed with the proposed design plans, generating discussion regarding how the
125 12-inch drainage pipes will be removed and the newly proposed drainage swale with
126 underdrain will convey the water to the stream (in place of the old 12-inch underground pipes)
127 and not deprive the stream of water.

128
129 Mr. Morgan and expressed concerns regarding stormwater phasing and the potential effect on
130 property abutters, especially the stormwater runoff from the proposed construction road. Mr.
131 Gentilucci reviewed two possible options for collecting stormwater runoff:

- 132 1. Pitch construction road and send water to the North edge, away from the abutters
- 133 2. Design a settling basin specific for catching stormwater runoff from the construction
- 134 road

135 Mr. Morgan brought up the issue of protecting the cemetery from future construction. Mr.
136 Crouch suggested he raise this topic and discuss with the Planning Board's at their next
137 meeting. Mr. Morgan also mentioned that there have been problems with erosion at the
138 cemetery, Mr. Crouch said that he visited the cemetery prior to the meeting and did not
139 observed any evidence of erosion. Mr. Morgan asked questions about fencing around surface
140 detention basins and if there will be safety fencing around the drainage swale with underdrain.
141 The final question Mr. Morgan asked pertained to a stone monument and if the proposed level
142 spreader will impact that feature. Both Mr. Hakansson and Mr. Crouch responded that the
143 stone monument is outside the jurisdiction of the Commission as well as the limit of work and
144 that he should continue the conversation with the Planning Board at their next meeting.

145
146 Mr. Crouch asked the Commission if there were any last-minute questions and comments. Mr.
147 Moulton responded by asking if the Commission was sure that there will be sufficient water
148 feeding into the intermittent stream from the drainage swale with underdrain. Mr. Crouch
149 reflected on his experience that a 23% reduction in flow rate to the stream post construction (as
150 discussed earlier from the stormwater report) will not decrease overall flow to the stream, but
151 may extend the duration of water feeding into the stream thereby keeping overall flow close to
152 preconstruction levels.

153
154 Mr. Hakansson revisited the topic of the functionality of the existing drainage piping in the
155 athletic field. Mr. Gentilucci responded that when the pipe is dug up the new drainage system
156 is put in place, the new system (swale and underdrain) will replicate the function of the
157 existing drainage system by conveying water to the intermittent stream.

158
159 Ms. Van Lanker suggested that we move on and review the Ashland Bylaw waiver letter for
160 the proposed work in the 25 foot no disturb area submitted by Nitsch Engineering. Mr.
161 Gentilucci presented the letter. Mr. Hakansson mentioned that all the changes requested were
162 captured in the revised letter, such as the reclassification of the isolated wetland to Bordering
163 Vegetated Wetland and the inclusion of an underdrain feature as part of the drainage swale.
164 Also, he mentioned that the letter was well vetted by the Commission.

165
166 Mr. Morgan was recognized by the Chair again and asked questions about the Ashland Bylaw
167 waiver letter regarding the work in the 25 foot no disturb zone. Mr. Gentilucci said that most
168 of the work in the 25 foot no disturb zone is specific to the installation of the drainage swale
169 with underdrain to maintain flow to the intermittent stream and the installation of fencing. Mr.
170 Morgan requested that the new construction should be kept back as far as possible from his
171 property line and out of the 25 foot no disturb zone.

172
173 Mr. Quinlan contributed to the waiver discussion and reported that the parking lot size has
174 been revised by the removal of 24 spaces. This change will have a favorable impact by shifting
175 the drainage swale and underdrain to the West by 36 feet, thereby minimizing impact to Mr.
176 Morgan's property and to the 25 foot no disturb area on the current plans. Mr. Quinlan
177 acknowledged that the design plans will have to be revised to capture the parking lot changes.

178
179 Mr. Crouch also agreed that the design plans need to be updated with the revisions and are
180 necessary for the drafting of a final Order of Conditions. Mr. Crouch suggested that the
181 Commission review the draft Order of Conditions and make as much progress with the

182 document review, with the knowledge that the design plans need to be updated with the
183 parking lot changes.

184
185 Mr. Crouch shared the draft Order of Conditions and methodically explained each of the
186 specific conditions listed below the standard administrative conditions (#1 through #21).
187 After Mr. Crouch's review of the OOC, additional discussion ensued around the inclusion of
188 wetland bounds and identifying snow storage areas on the property.

189
190 Additional discussion revolved around when the new technical drawings and updated
191 stormwater calculations will be available to the Commission. The was agreement that this
192 hearing will be continued to September 13th for a status update, then continued once more to
193 September 27th, with the assumption that the updated material will be available to the
194 Commission a few days before the 27th.

195
196 Mr. Crouch requested that the Commission review the draft Order of Conditions as discussed
197 and make comments and modifications for the next meeting.

198
199 Mr. Crouch stated that the draft Order of Conditions will be made available to the public and
200 will reach out to Jenn Ball (Assistant Town Manager) for posting on the Town website.
201 The expectation for continuance of this hearing is to review updated stormwater calculations
202 and revised technical drawings and Draft Order of Conditions.

203
204 **11:05 Meeting Adjournment**

205 A motion was made by Ms. Van Lancker, and seconded Mr. Wands, to adjourn the meeting.
206 Motion passed 5-0-0. (Roll call vote: CH, CVL, GW, BM, GC).

207
208 **Documents Reviewed by the Conservation Commission on 9/ 08 / 2021**

- 209
- 210 • Document entitled; *Agenda* dated 9/08/2021
 - 211 • Document entitled, *Storm Water Report, for David Mindess Elementary School, 90
212 Concord Street, Ashland MA, dated June 14th, 2021, Revised August 5th, 2021*
 - 213 • Waiver Letter submitted by Nitsch Engineering, Document entitled, *Nitsch Project
214 #23609, 25-ft No Disturb Zone Waiver, David Mindess Elementary School Ashland
215 MA, dated September 1st, 2021*
 - 216 • Technical Drawings entitled, *David Mindess School, 90 Concord Street Ashland MA
217 01721, Notice of Intent & Stormwater Permit Application*
 - 218 • Draft OOC, 95-958, Town of Ashland, Mindess School, 90 Concord Street, new school