



Memo

TO: Conservation Commission Members
FROM: Peter Britz, Environmental Planner
DATE: April 9, 2021
SUBJ: April 14, 2021 Conservation Commission Meeting

53 Green Street

This project proposes replacement of an existing building and reconfiguration of parking landscaping and the addition of a new waterfront pedestrian bicycle trail and new landscaping. Much of this work is proposed in the 100 foot tidal buffer zone of the North Mill Pond. While the building is not getting any closer portions of the proposed building are further back from the edge of the North Mill Pond with a result that the applicant was able to reduce the total impervious surface for the project area from 11,581 square feet to 8,523 square feet or a reduction of 3,058 square feet.

According to *Article 10 Section 10.1017.50* the applicant must satisfy the following conditions for approval of this project.

1. *The land is reasonably suited to the use activity or alteration.* This project is located in an area along the North Mill Pond that is currently private and not open to the public. The current property is being improved to include a bicycle and pedestrian trail made of porous pavement and a new landscaping plan which enhances what is there today and provides public access along the water consistent with the North Mill Pond Greenway plan. The overall project reduces the amount of impervious surface. For these reasons the land is reasonably suited to the proposed alterations.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The location of the property is primarily within the 100' wetland buffer. The location for the project is feasible as the applicant is reducing the impacts in the buffer with the proposed development.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* The proposed building is not closer to the edge of wetland and there is a reduction in impervious surface with this proposal. The proposal also seeks to improve the treatment of stormwater on the site with a treatment and detention system. The pedestrian trail that is proposed is planned for porous pavement. Staff has one concern with the trail and its proximity to the proposed fire access. The proposed fire access is adjacent to the proposed trail. If the applicant were to combine the proposed trail with the fire access in the area that is within the 25' tidal buffer there could be greater reduction in impacts on the site. The project provides community space that will allow people to walk along the pond on a safe accessible trail and proposed a landscape plan which is an improvement over the existing landscaping which is largely lawn and a mix of invasive species.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* The proposed project has plans to replace a large lawn area with long grass

and trees adjacent to the water and more intensive landscaping up against the building. These landscape plans will be an enhancement over what landscaping exists today.

5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* This application propose to provide enhancements to the tidal buffer zone over what exists today. The project will provide enhanced landscaping over what exists today and will provide public access this portion of the North Mill pond where none exists today. Given these improvements and the reduction of impervious surface and treatment of stormwater on the site staff believes this project has worked to provide an application which reduces the overall impacts. One improvement which was mentioned above would be to reconfigure the pedestrian/bike trail to move inland and outside of the 25 foot vegetated buffer further reducing impacts on the site.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant provided a landscape plan which includes plantings around the proposed building and within the 100' tidal wetland buffer. The use of native trees and plantings within the 100 foot buffer and removal of invasive species on this site.

Recommendation: Staff believes this application represents a reduction in impacts to the tidal buffer zone and provides public access through a location that has been private. The applicant has complied with section 10.1017.24 which requests the removal of impervious surface in the buffer to below what exists. Staff recommends approval of this application with the condition that the trail be brought further inland to coincide with the fire access proposed thereby reducing the footprint of the trail in the buffer.

Raynes Ave and Maplewood Ave Mixed Use Project

This project includes removing three buildings and impervious surface in the wetland buffer to be replaced with two new buildings parking a public access waterfront trail and landscaping. Overall the project has reduced impervious surface impacts in the first fifty feet of the tidal wetland buffer by 3,787 square feet. The project proposes an increase in the 50-100 foot wetland buffer by 55 square feet. Overall the net reduction amounts to 3,732 square feet of impervious surface removed from the tidal wetland buffer.

According to *Article 10 Section 10.1017.50* the applicant must satisfy the following conditions for approval of this project.

1. *The land is reasonably suited to the use activity or alteration.* This project is located in an area along the North Mill Pond that is currently private and not open to the public. The current property is being improved to include a bicycle and pedestrian trail made of porous pavement and a new landscaping plan which enhances what is there today and provides public access along the water consistent with the North Mill Pond Greenway plan. The overall project reduces the amount of impervious surface. For these reasons the land is reasonably suited to the proposed alterations.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The location of the property is primarily within the 100' wetland buffer. The applicant has removed the majority of the impacts from the first fifty feet of the wetland buffer. Given the small amount off developable area outside of the wetland buffer there is no alternative location that is reasonable for a project in this area.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* The proposed development is significantly further from the edge of wetland and there is a reduction in impervious surface with this proposal. The proposal also seeks to improve the treatment of stormwater on the site with a treatment and detention system. The pedestrian trail that is proposed is planned for porous

pavement. The project provides community space that will allow people to walk along the pond on a safe accessible trail and proposed a landscape plan which is an improvement over the existing pavement and small area of vegetation currently in the buffer.

4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* The proposed project has plans to remove a good deal of building and impervious surface from the buffer. The plans include a landscape plan which will provide a small amount of habitat and an amenity to the public using the greenway trail.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* This application propose to provide enhancements to the tidal buffer zone over what exists today. The project will provide enhanced landscaping over what exists today and will provide public access this portion of the North Mill pond where none exists today. Given these improvements and the reduction of impervious surface and treatment of stormwater on the site staff believes this project has worked to provide an application which reduces the overall impacts.
6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.* The applicant provided a landscape plan which includes plantings around the proposed building and within the 100' tidal wetland buffer. The use of native plantings within the 100 foot buffer and removal of invasive species on this site will provide a benefit over the vegetation in buffer which exists today.

Recommendation: Staff believes this application represents a reduction in impacts to the tidal buffer zone and provides public access through a location that has been private. The applicant has complied with section 10.1017.24 which requests the removal of impervious surface in the buffer to below what exists. Staff recommends approval of this application as presented.

145 Lang Road

This project is to install playground equipment in a lawn area of an existing play area in the Arbor View Pines development. The work will include removing existing lawn and replacing it with an area of woodchips to provide fall zones for the play equipment. The applicant also proposes to remove a debris pile and install a stormwater outfall which was approved as a part of a prior application.

According to *Article 10 Section 10.1017.50* the applicant must satisfy the following conditions for approval of this project.

1. *The land is reasonably suited to the use activity or alteration.* The lawn area is being disturbed to accommodate the playground equipment. It is likely that the woodchips and playground equipment will provide better infiltration than the lawn that is there today.
2. *There is no alternative location outside the wetland buffer that is feasible and reasonable for the proposed use, activity or alteration.* The proposed location is lawn area now and the use will not substantially change the way the area functions today.
3. *There will be no adverse impact on the wetland functional values of the site or surrounding properties.* This project as proposed should not create adverse impacts to the adjacent wetland area.
4. *Alteration of the natural vegetative state or managed woodland will occur only to the extent necessary to achieve construction goals.* The only vegetation proposed for removal is the existing lawn area.
5. *The proposal is the alternative with the least adverse impact to areas and environments under the jurisdiction of this section.* The proposed removal of lawn area and replacement with woodchips is a better alternative than an impervious surface for the fall zone below the playground equipment.

6. *Any area within the vegetated buffer strip will be returned to a natural state to the extent feasible.*
The plan provides for removal of lawn area and replacement with woodchips which is likely slightly better from an infiltration standpoint. .

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of this application as proposed.