

Holyoke Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes 6/24/2021 (Remote via Zoom)

Conservation Commission Members Present: Michael Dodge (Chairperson) (left at 7:11 PM), Bernice Bowler (Vice Chairperson), Jeffery Horan, Rosemary Arnold (arrived at 6:39 PM), John Perdrizet

Conservation Commission Members Absent: Mary Moriarty

Staff Present: Yoni Glogower (Holyoke Conservation and Sustainability Director)

Members of the public present: Carlos Nieto (Berkshire Design Group), Adrienne Dunk (GZA) Daniel Nitzsche (GZA)

## 1. Call to Order

Chairperson Michael Dodge called the public meeting to order at 6:18 PM. He explained the protocols for remote open meetings.

## 2. Request for Determination of Applicability – Filed 6/14/2021

Applicant: Rise Holdings, Inc.

Representative: Berkshire Design Group, Inc.

Location: 100 Water Street (MBP 048-01-004, 005, 006, 008)

Description: Redevelopment activities within Riverfront area and 100 foot buffer zone of banks

Chairperson Dodge invited Carlos Nieto of Berkshire Design Group to present the project on behalf of the Applicant. Carlos Nieto shared site plans onscreen, a reuse of the historic Hampden Papers building with new additions. The improvements include interior design of a portion of the building spaces for marijuana production, as well as parking lot upgrades and new emergency egress locations within Riverfront Area of the Connecticut River within existing paved surface. At a request from the Chairperson, Carlos Nieto showed onscreen where the 50 foot buffer line lies in relation to the project area, and demonstrated that no work was proposed for this area.

Vice Chair Bowler asked about vehicle access within the 50 foot buffer to do repaving work within this area, Carlos Nieto answered that there would be no vehicle traffic there either because of a steep drop toward the river beyond an existing retaining wall. He then showed recent images of current conditions, showing the gravel drive presently used for access to the rear of the building. Commissioner Horan asked if a landing pad would be included in the new construction, Carlos Nieto showed where it would be located off of the building within the existing disturbed area, and added that they were no longer requesting an exemption for this project as a Historic Mill Complex because it was hard to prove that the parking lot area was part of the original building footprint. Director Glogower added that on the advice of DEP, the Commission should request aerial imagery from before or around 1946 demonstrating the extent of the total building area, and noted that a negative 3 would still be requested from the Commission since a portion of the repaving would still take place within the buffer zone of banks.

Chairperson Dodge asked for total proposed area of repaving. Carlos Nieto answered that there would only be about 130 square feet for the egress points and 260 s.f. access road on existing asphalt. Vice Chair Bowler asked about cement truck access and precautions for spillage. Carlos Nieto showed where

this would occur within existing paved areas, and answered that there would be complete erosion control and spill management plans in the final plan documents, and that the Commission could consider adding a condition in their Determination that no washing of cement trucks could take place in resource areas. Commissioner Perdrizet asked about vegetation management moving forward, especially with regard to herbicide usage. Carlos Nieto answered that there were no current plans in place for this type of work. Director Glogower suggested the Commission use a blanket condition stating that no work could take place outside of existing developed footprint within jurisdictional areas. Vice Chair Bowler suggested a condition that the Conservation Director be invited to inspect erosion controls prior to construction.

The Commission voted unanimously with one absent to issue a Negative 2 and 3 Determination for this Item, with the conditions as noted.

### 3. Public Hearing – Notice of Intent (DEP 186-0289)

Applicant: Timothy Bernard

Representative: GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.

Location: 35 Keyes Rd. (MBP 196-00-062)

Description: Construction of a single-family home within a Riverfront Area

The Commission voted unanimously with one absent to open the public hearing for this item.

Chairperson Dodge invited Adrienne Dunk of GZA GeoEnvironmental to present this project on behalf of the Applicant. Adrienne Dunk shared site plans onscreen showing the location and location of Broad Brook and gas pipeline right of way relative to the proposed work area, as well as recent property subdivision. She discussed the portion of the work subject to Conservation Commission jurisdiction, including a portion of driveway and tree clearing in the vicinity of the proposed structures for safety reasons. This total area totals near 10% of the Riverfront Area within this parcel. Other work not within jurisdictional areas

Vice Chair Bowler asked about alternatives that were considered to keep work outside of the Riverfront Area. Adrienne Dunk answered that there was no enough land on the eastern side of the gas line right of way, and that the house could not be moved closer to the pipeline on the western side. The driveway was oriented to match the grade, and the proposed house would be equivalent size to other properties in the area. Vice Chair Bowler asked whether the garage could be rotated to remove the driveway outside of the Riverfront. Adrienne Dunk responded that in that instance a small portion of the garage would then be in the Riverfront. Vice Chair Bowler responded that she would like to see it attempted in a plan, and Adrienne Dunk answered that they would do so, but would likely request an expanded area of tree removal.

Commissioner Horan asked about square footage of proposed work within Riverfront. Adrienne Dunk gave the number, as well as the total area of Riverfront on the parcel. Commissioner Perdrizet stated that he shared Vice Chair Bowler's view that the driveway and garage should be rotated to get them outside of the Riverfront. He and Adrienne Dunk discussed several possible configurations and drawbacks of each. Chairperson Dodge recommended that GZA sketch out these options for the next meeting that show what the best options would look like within a tight footprint. Adrienne Dunk answered that they would do so in advance of the next meeting. Commissioner Horan also suggested possible reconfiguration of the garage.

Chairperson Dodge asked if there were other questions about the project. Commissioner Perdrizet asked about status of the wood turtle habitat. Adrienne Dunk answered that they have been in touch with Natural Heritage and that they were actively reviewing the project. She outlined the probably requirements for a turtle protection plan, including sweeps by a biologist prior to work and a conservation easement for the portion of land that is wood turtle habitat.

Chairperson Dodge turned leadership of the meeting over to Vice Chair Bowler and left the Public meeting at 7:11 PM.

Vice Chair Bowler asked if there were other questions from Commissioners. Commissioner Horan commented that it seemed the Applicant had gone to some lengths to protect the resource area in their plans. Vice Chair Bowler agreed but still wanted to see possible alternatives.

Vice Chair Bowler suggested scheduling a site visit. Director Glogower, the project representatives, and Commissioners set a site visit date for 7/6 at 9 AM.

Director Glogower asked if Adrienne Dunk had anything to comment upon in their response to Mass DEP's comments on the project. Adrienne Dunk reviewed the comments in brief, relating to the parcel division, MESA process, and alternatives analysis.

The Commission voted unanimously with one absent to continue this item to 7/8/21

#### 4. Mail/other items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Director Glogower reported on recent visit to Gloutak Woods with Commissioner Arnold and HCC instructor to look at possible field trip sites. He updated the Commission on the ongoing ATV violations.

The Commission discussed ways to access digital recordings of Public Meetings.

#### 5. Adjourn

The Commission voted unanimously with one absent to adjourn at 7:23 PM