

DATE APPROVED:

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 13, 2021 PAGE #21-28

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman, Ted von Rosenvinge, Vice-Chairman, Sarah Schlechter, Mike Reiner, Holly Charlesworth, Bob Turner, Jim Smith

Also present: Tom Failla, Conservation Planner and Tracy Kulikowski, Land Use Director

PUBLIC HEARING AND DISCUSSION/DECISION: TOWN OF WESTON, CT & THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CT [OWNERS], FRIENDS OF LACHAT, INC. [AGENT]; 106 GODFREY ROAD WEST; OFFUTT EDUCATION CENTER AT LACHAT TOWN FARM – CONSTRUCTION OF MULTI-USE COMMUNITY BUILDING AND ASSOCIATED PARKING, STORMWATER DETENTION AND SEPTIC SYSTEM

Mr. von Rosenvinge explained to all who were attending the meeting that the Commission is only interested in discussion on matters concerning wetlands and inland watercourses.

Carol Baldwin, representing Lachat, began with a history of the Friends of Lachat which was formed 11 years ago when there was no plan for what to do with the Town owned land. The farmhouse was in risk of being demolished and a group raised enough money to save the farmhouse. The master plan was to turn the property into a Town owned farm with a community garden, different programs, music and it needed to be self-sustaining. She explained that the garage is deteriorating and they want to get funding to replace that building with something more functional. She also noted that Mr. Offutt left money to the farm and they decided to build something in Mr. Offutt name. They need heated space to be used in winter months and there are no public bathrooms. They would also like to have a teaching kitchen and art studio teaching classroom.

Attorney Eric Bernheim, representing neighbors, noted that he is Weston resident and initially neighbors had a lot of concerns but through a lot of conversations they came to a resolution with the Town and everything went to P&Z for review and approval for a settlement agreement. The Selectmen approved the agreement it was further approved at a Town Meeting.

Robert Sanders, architect, showed the plans and indicated the area that has been used historically as sledding slope, excess parking etc. In an effort to minimize the impact to the land, it would be desirable to stay in the area that has already been disturbed. The proposal is to take down the 3 car garage and incorporate a shop building into the square footage. He then showed alternatives in different locations and explained why those areas are not preferable. Mr. Sanders stated that the proposed building is 5,200 sq. ft. and showed the layout of the building.

Tom Nelson, P.E. from McCord Engineering discussed the proposed septic system for the farmhouse and new facility and storm water management for runoff. He also discussed the erosion controls, and indicated the location of a triple row silt fence with hay bales. Mr. Nelson

stated that there should be no impact to the wetlands or watercourses on the site. Discussion turned to storm water management and Mr. Nelson stated that there will be no increase of flows to the wetlands with the designed system.

Ms. Charlesworth posed a question regarding parking and what to do with any contaminated water flowing into the wetlands. Mr. Nelson explained that the upper level parking is an “overflow” parking site just for temporary events, and would not be used during foul weather.

Ellen McCormick, 91 Old Easton Turnpike, noted that there was an issue with the compost pile and they will be moving the whole pile and they are working with Tom Failla with the invasive species.

Margaret Wirtenberg, former resident, stated that she loves the plan and hopes that there is a plan to make sure that runoff doesn't go into the street as it is a heavily used road.

Hearing no additional discussion or public comment the following motion was made:

MOTION FOR APPROVAL

Ms. Charlesworth made a motion to approve the application for 106 Godfrey Road, Town of Weston & Nature Conservancy as shown on plans prepared by McCord Engineering dated 8/3/2021 and on plans prepared by Architect Robert Sanders dated 7/30/2021, subject to Standard Conditions A-G and H. Install a water quality swale at point discharge adjacent to wetlands for roof and sump drains. I. Enhance runoff from greenhouse with rain barrels. J. Establish maintenance measures with Lachat Town Farm to deal with the compost pile near garden plots and wetlands to the west of the building site. Mr. Von Rosenvinge added that resolution of conditions H through J be submitted to the Conservation Planner for verification and for condition J. a best practices plan be developed to avoid recurrence of dumping compost near wetlands. Mr. Reiner seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried (6-0).

MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. von Rosenvinge made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Schlechter seconded. All in favor (6-0), the public hearing closed at 9:23 p.m.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. von Rosenvinge made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Smith seconded. All in favor (6-0), the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Delana Lustberg
Recording Secretary