

CITY OF CHICOPEE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting July 19, 2023

Pursuant to Mass. General Law Ch. 131, Section 40 and the Chicopee Wetland Ordinance Ch. 272, the Chicopee Conservation Commission held a public hearing on **Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 6:15 PM** in the Chambers Conference Room, City Hall Annex, 4th Floor, 274 Front St., Chicopee, MA 01013

Celeste Donovan opened the meeting at 6:16 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Conservation Commission attendance:

Member	Present	Absent	Excused
Celeste Donovan	X		
Charles Payne	X		
Meghan Balakier	X		
Richard Valcourt			X
Bianca Thomas	X		
Barbara Chamberlain	X		
Sharon Balcom	X		

Planning/Conservation Staff attendance:

Member	Present	Absent	Excused
Lee Pouliot, Director	X		
James Dawson, Development Manager	X		
Nick Kiser, Associate Planner			X
Patrick Collins, Assistant Planner	X		

Item 1: Request for Certificate of Compliance – Veden, LLC, 55 Main St., Assessor Map 202, Parcel 10. Order of Conditions File NOI 17-009.

Notes: Mark Reed from Heritage Land Surveying presented a brief overview of the project and requested a Certificate of Compliance. The Applicant was also in attendance. The request for a Certificate of Compliance was in response to an Order of Conditions (NOI 17-009) issued by the Commission on January 10, 2018. Staff provided feedback from a site visit that was performed. Staff found the project not completed as approved in the approved Order of Conditions and recommended denial of the request. The rain garden was being maintained as mowed turfgrass. The Applicant noted the seed mix used in the rain garden area was that which was approved in the OOC. Staff explained that since it was being mowed it was impossible to determine if the proper seed mix was used. Staff recommended the area of the rain garden be overseeded with the approved mix and that mowing stop in the rain garden area. Staff explained the area should only be mowed once in early spring and allowed to grow for the remainder of the growing season each year. Staff suggested revisiting the request for a Certificate of Compliance in 2024 once the rain garden area was properly maintained.

Motion to deny was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Barbara Chamberlain. Vote was 6-0 to deny the Request for Certificate of Compliance.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan		X		
Charles Payne		X		
Meghan Balakier		X		
Bianca Thomas		X		
Barbara Chamberlain		X		
Sharon Balcom		X		

Item 2: Request for Certificate of Compliance – 70 Britton St. - The Commission issued a Partial Certificate of Compliance for this property on April 12, 2023. A Partial Certificate of Compliance was issued because the grass had just been seeded and had not grown to provide stability at the time.

Notes: The Applicant received a partial Certificate of Compliance in April 2023. Staff noted at that time the erosion control was in place and the grading was satisfactory but vegetative cover had not established sufficiently enough to warrant granting of a full Certificate of Compliance. The Applicant was asked by the Commission to return in July to revisit the Request and a determination

on a full Certificate of Compliance would be made at that time. The Applicant provided the Commission with photos and Staff visited the site on July 19, 2023. Staff determined that the grass had established sufficiently to provide adequate stabilization and recommended the Commission issue a full Certificate of Compliance. Staff also reminded the Applicant that he still needed to file a request for a Certificate of Compliance for 62 Britton Street.

Motion to issue a full Certificate of Compliance was made by Meghan Balakier and seconded by Barbara Chamberlain. Vote was 6-0 to issue a full Certificate of Compliance for 70 Britton St.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan	X			
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Bianca Thomas	X			
Barbara Chamberlain	X			
Sharon Balcom	X			

Item 3: NOI for the backfilling of a portion of the Chicopee Falls Local Protection Project Easement and adjacent upland areas to facilitate future site redevelopment. Location: 0 and 154 Grove Street and 75 (0) West Main Street. (Assessor Map 0124, Parcel 3, and Assessor Map 0173, Parcel 1, and Assessor Map 0147, Parcel 6.) Applicant: City of Chicopee c/o Lee Pouliot., 274 Front Steet.

Notes: Lee Pouliot along with representatives from BETA, Inc. presented the project to the Commission. They explained the backfilling was to facilitate future development on the property. The site is a former historic mill property which is exempt from Riverfront regulations but not other wetland regulations. The Beta representatives explained the fill that would be deposited on the site will be heavily regulated. As the site is backfilled, stormwater management basins will be constructed to manage stormwater runoff. The project is slated to begin as soon as possible and may take up to 3 years to get the site completely backfilled and ready for development. It is estimated that 160,000 cubic yards of fill are needed to complete the project. The Commission tabled a decision on the project pending comments and a file number from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Motion to table to August 2, 2023 was made by Charles Payne and seconded by Meghan Balakier. Vote was 6-0 to table to August 2, 2023.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan			X	
Charles Payne			X	
Meghan Balakier			X	
Bianca Thomas			X	
Barbara Chamberlain			X	
Sharon Balcom			X	

Item 4: Minutes from June 21, 2023

Notes: Commissioner Balcom noted one typo in the minutes. Staff will make the correction prior to submitting the minutes to the City Clerk.

Motion to approve with the noted correction was made by Barbara Chamberlain and seconded by Charles Payne. Vote was 6-0 to approve with the noted correction.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan	X			
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Bianca Thomas				X*
Barbara Chamberlain	X			
Sharon Balcom	X			

*Bianca Thomas abstained since she was not in attendance for the June 21, 2023 meeting.

Item 5: Sign Bills – Staff indicated there were no bills to sign.

Item 6: Upcoming Projects/Discussion/Communications

- Discussion on the progress of Enforcement Order at 129 Dejordy Lane – At the June 21, 2023 hearing, the Property Owner was provided a list of Wetland Specialists to research to assist in preparing an NOI to remedy the situation that resulted in the Enforcement Order (23-E001)
 - The Commission requested that Staff send the Property Owner a certified letter requesting his attendance at the August 2, 2023 meeting to provide an update on his progress.

Item 7: Adjournment – Next scheduled meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2023

Motion to adjourn was made by Barbara Chamberlain and seconded by Charles Payne. Vote was 6-0 to adjourn.

Member	Approve	Deny	Continue	Abstain
Celeste Donovan	X			
Charles Payne	X			
Meghan Balakier	X			
Bianca Thomas	X			
Barbara Chamberlain	X			
Sharon Balcom	X			

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.