

Rye City Planning Commission Minutes
February 16, 2016

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commission Members:

- Nick Everett, Chair
- Martha Monserrate, Vice-Chair
- Andrew Ball
- Laura Brett
- Hugh Greechan
- Richard Mecca
- Alfred Vitiello

Other:

- Christian K. Miller, AICP, City Planner
 - Carolyn Cunningham, CC/AC Chair
 - Melissa Johannessen, AICP, LEED AP
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I. HEARINGS

NONE

II. ITEMS PENDING ACTION

1/2. 20 and 26 Gramercy Avenue

- Leo Napior (applicant's attorney) stated that the two separate wetland permit applications consist of a project to construct a residence on two existing and zoning-compliant building lots. He noted that each lot is approximately 18,000 square feet and exceeds the 10,000 square foot minimum lot area of the R-3 Residence District. Mr. Napior stated that the applicant could have submitted separate applications at separate times, but choose to submit simultaneously so as to create a coordinated wetland mitigation program for the two properties.

- He stated that the applicant seeks to transform a low-quality wetland into a higher functioning stormwater wetland consistent with the design that the Planning Commission approved in connection with a three-lot subdivision on the corner of Forest Avenue and Grace Church Street. Mr. Napior provided pictures of the Forest Avenue wetland restoration. He stated that the proposed project would result in the removal of 14 trees of the 38 trees on the two properties. He stated that the landscape plan includes replacement trees.

- The Commission questioned the impact of the additional stormwater runoff from the project on the existing stormwater outlet and downstream drainage infrastructure. The Commission noted that the stormwater would be conveyed from one property to the other and that the two properties would need to share in the wetland maintenance. Mr. Napior responded that

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- 1 easement agreements would be established for each lot that sets forth
2 access and maintenance responsibilities similar to those approved by the
3 Planning Commission in connection with the Forest Avenue Subdivision.
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- 5 • The Chair of the CC/AC noted concern with the amount of impervious area in
6 the wetland buffer. Mr. Napior stated that the project would result in an
7 increase in impervious area, but that the wetland size and function would be
8 improved. He stated that the project would increase the size of the wetland
9 from 2,750 square feet to 4,000 square feet. This would be similar to the
10 Forest Avenue Subdivision, which increased the wetland size from 6,100
11 square feet to 9,000 square feet.
 - 12
 - 13 • The Commission stated that based on its observations at the site walk there
14 was a significant amount of exposed rock ledge on the adjacent property to
15 the west. The Commission stated that the plan be revised to include drainage
16 measures that manage this off-site drainage that appears to drain onto the
17 applicant's property.
 - 18
 - 19 • Michael Stein (applicant's engineer) stated that he will review the conditions
20 on the adjacent property and revise the plan accordingly. Mr. Stein provided a
21 review of the drainage and grading plan and that it would result in a net
22 reduction in flows for each design storm event.
 - 23
 - 24 • The Chair of the CC/AC noted concern with the precedent that would be
25 established with the construction of two new residences within the wetland
26 buffer.
 - 27
 - 28 • William Kenny (applicant's environmental consultant) provided an overview of
29 the wetland mitigation program. He highlighted the project's similarities to the
30 project he designed for the Forest Avenue Subdivision. He stated that the
31 existing wetland is the result of poor drainage likely caused by the blocked
32 flow of stormwater associated with the construction of Grammercy Avenue.
33 He stated that the wetland is low functioning. The proposed wetland would
34 have increased functions as a result of the captured stormwater runoff and
35 the installation of a diverse species of wetland plantings including 22 trees
36 and 116 shrubs. Mr. Kenny confirmed that the wetland is not associated with
37 the presence of groundwater but rather the collection of stormwater from
38 overland flow. The project engineer confirmed that the deep hole tests on an
39 adjacent property showed no sign of groundwater.
 - 40
 - 41 • The Commission considered the proposed wetland and agreed that it
42 appeared to have potential benefits and enhancements over the existing
43 wetland. The Commission discussed alternative driveway arrangements and
44 house locations to reduce impacts. The Commission also reviewed the
45 proposed total mitigation relative to the proposed increase in impervious area.

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1 The Commission stated that the applicant should consider a combination of
2 enhancements to expand the amount of wetland mitigation and reduce the
3 amount of increase in impervious area in the buffer.
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6 **1. 28 Walnut Street**

- 7
- 8 • The City Planner stated that the applicant is seeking a request for an
9 extension of its prior approval to allow for additional time to file the approved
10 subdivision plat with Westchester County.
 - 11
 - 12 • The Commission had no objection to the request.

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14 **ACTION:** Hugh Greechan made a motion, seconded by Andrew Ball, to conditionally
15 approve Wetland Permit application number WP#407, which was carried
16 by the following vote:

17

18 Nick Everett, Chair:	Absent
19 Martha Monserrate, Vice-Chair:	Aye
20 Andrew Ball:	Aye
21 Laura Brett:	Absent
22 Hugh Greechan:	Aye
23 Richard Mecca:	Aye
24 Alfred Vitiello:	Absent