

**APPROVED**

On Meeting Date: 11/6/24

**Westwood Conservation Commission Minutes  
Tuesday, September 24, 2024  
7:00 pm  
Via Zoom Remote Participation  
Westwood, MA 02090**

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, On March 29, 2023, Governor Maura Healey signed into law, an Act Extending pandemic-related authorizations related to public meetings, allowing remote meeting options for public bodies through March 31, 2025. The September 24, 2024, Planning Board and Conservation Commission meetings were conducted via remote participation by the Boards.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair Ellen Larkin Rollings at approximately 7:02 pm. The remote meeting was video recorded by Westwood Media Center and was available on Comcast channel 6, Verizon channel 42 and on Westwood Media's YouTube channel: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=westwood+media+center](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=westwood+media+center). Chair Rollings explained the meeting procedures, and how the Planning Board process works.

**Present via Remote Participation**

Planning Board members present via Roll Call: Ellen Larkin Rollings, Philip M. Giordano, Sean Weller & Kathleen Nee.

Staff members present: Elijah Romulus, Town Planner; Nora Loughnane, Director of Community & Economic Development; Amanda Wolfe, Housing & Land Use Planner; and Jessica Cole, who recorded the meeting minutes.

Ms. Rollings invited the Conservation Commission into the meeting.

Conservation Commission members present via roll call: Grace Weller, Debra Odeh, Vesna Maneva, Todd Sullivan, Michael Walsh, Stephen Harte and Elias Fares. Karon Skinner Catrone, Conservation Agent is also present.

**Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Environmental Impact & Design Review approval for the proposed new Fire Station 1 at 637 High Street (to be immediately continued to 10/15/24 to allow additional time for review of proposed plans)**

Ms. Rollings read the Hearing Notice into the record.

**637 High Street – Stormwater Land Disturbance – SMP #? – Town of Westwood**

Ms. Weller states the Conservation Commission will now open the public hearing for 637 High Street.

Action Taken by the Planning Board

**MOTION TO CONTINUE THE PUBLIC HEARING**

Ms. Nee moved that the Planning Board continue the public hearing for the EIDR public hearing for the new Fire Station 1 at 637 High Street, as described in the Application therefore submitted to the Planning Board and filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on August 22, 2024 to Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 7:00 pm via Zoom, where a Zoom link and associated call in numbers will be provided on Town's calendar on the homepage at:

<https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/>.

Mr. Weller seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ellen Larkin Rollings-Yes  
Philip M. Giordano-Yes  
Kathleen Nee-Yes  
Sean Weller-Yes

Action Taken by the Conservation Commission

**MOTION TO CONTINUE THE PUBLIC HEARING**

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Sullivan to continue the Stormwater Land Disturbance hearing for 637 High Street to October 15, 2024 at 7:00 pm to be held as a concurrent zoom meeting with the Planning Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Grace Weller – Yes  
Debra Odeh – Yes  
Vesna Maneva – Yes  
Michael Walsh – Yes  
Todd Sullivan – Yes  
Stephen Harte – Yes  
Elias Fares - Yes

**Continuation of Public Hearing for Consideration of a Shared Driveway Special Permit approval for a shared driveway for five single-family residences at 101 High Street (continued from 9/10/24 to allow for simultaneous meeting with Conservation Commission)**

Peter Zahka, the attorney, was present with Giorgio Petruzzello, Stephen Martorano of Bohler, and Angela Botto of Bohler.

Mr. Zahka asked that Mr. Ames read the minutes, watch the meeting via video, and sign the correct paperwork so he could participate in voting later.

The applicant was present to discuss a special permit for a shared driveway.

**101 High Street – Notice of Intent – DEP #338-0767 - Town of Westwood**

Ms. Weller states the Conservation Commission hearing for 101 High Street is open as well so the Conservation Commission will be participating in the discussion.

Mr. Martorano, the engineer at Bohler, presented how the project started and how they got to a shared driveway. He went through his landscape design, and 236 trees will be impacted, 137 new trees will come in—and 411 new shrubs.

Mark Bartlett, a peer review engineer at PSC, was present to give a summary of his review. Tom Houston did the initial peer review. 38 original comments, only 4 remain to be partially resolved. There is work to do, and some fieldwork will be required.

Mr. Romulus addressed some comments that were sent to him.

- Currently, the EMM is the correct route.
- Assumption made that a stormwater land management land disturbance permit is required to develop the proposed shared driveway. No separate land disturbance permit is required.
- Definitive subdivision plan Rather than an ANR plan, the Planning Board would limit its review to the creation of the subdivision roadway utilities and apparatus and would not review the proposed development of individual single-family house lots. The development of individual houses will be subject to administrative EMM approvals for each lot and a review by the Conservation Commission under the Wetlands Protection Act and local Wetlands bylaw or stormwater management as appropriate for each of the 5 lots.

Board Comments from both Boards:

- Did you consider 2 curb cuts or something other than the 5? What else did you look at? *Mr. Martorano: The current driveway cut was chosen because it is clear of the wetland areas, and the slopes work pretty well; the other location is far to the east and is close to Grove Street, which not as ideal, but did look at, but did not draw it. This is most efficient.*
- Fire apparatus: is it safer to have a second curb cut? *Mr. Martorano: We did meet with the Fire Department and made changes, and they did not have any concerns and can turn around. Mr. Petruzzello: We did look at doing 5 curb cuts, the topography would not have worked, too much blasting would be needed.*
- Why sequential? *Mr. Zahka: We have applied for a special permit that is required. The shared driveway was the alternative and it is the better way to go. Sequencing is set up for us. We understand that the neighbors have concerns, it is a benefit in regards to the review process.*
- 7 additional concerns, I wrote down 5? *They are listed on the last 2 pages of the September 24th memo. 39-45 in the memo.*
- Ms. Rollings suggested doing a site visit. Mr. Romulus will work with the applicant team.
- Has Town Counsel provided any opinion if the shared driveway subverts or does not subvert the intent of the Subdivision Control Law? *Mr. Romulus: It does follow in line with the Town bylaws, section 6, shared driveway. We have the proper conditions in place.*
- Stormwater perspective the impact on the wetlands. *Mr. Bartlett: 5 driveways would drain right to High Street, a lot more strain on the town. This should have no net change to High Street or the wetlands, hydrology-wise. Better this way than 5 separate driveways.*
- You can have controls with the Homeowners Association, The O&M plan looks appropriate, they need to take care of the stormwater treatment systems, it will be the HOA's responsibility. They can be held accountable.
- Mail delivery in a shared driveway. Safety. *Mr. Petruzzello, we created an area for him to deliver the mail off of High Street, even UPS and Amazon.*
- Town Counsel made any comment? *Mr. Romulus: We have not approached Town Counsel on it.*
- Snow storage? *A landscaper will be at the next meeting to discuss this.*

- Explain the large bunch of trees. *Creating a buffer, there is no mature landscaping in that zone, and thought of it as a positive.*
- Can we change to a cul de sac? *Mr. Martorano, met with the Fire Department, it is a low volume use, a cul de sac is bigger and will reduce the imperviousness.*
- Lot 1, significant concerns of it as a buildable lot. The trees serve a very important purpose. *Mr. Martorano, pulled the disturbance out of the 35 feet, the tree cutting and stormwater, we do account for the change. We are following the MA law. Mr. Petruzzello moved the house out of the buffer zone too, not just the driveway.*
- Stormwater, would like to see how you can improve the current situation.
- Ms. Loughnane explained that we are only discussing the shared driveway, and then explained the process, but tonight is only the shared driveway. There are several steps to go. There is a sequence.

Public Comments:

- Mr. R. Chiurri, 165 High Street, lived for the last 46 years, and tried to change their screened porch into a driveway, but was denied a building permit, as it would have an impact on the wetlands. It did not involve any blasting. Our yard has a drainage ditch, it comes from houses and the water generated can impact the drainage ditch and our basement. Blasting could have an impact on our house. Trucks and construction will be dangerous. Concerned about the stormwater.
- Y. Tsipis, 152 Grove Street, submitted a letter and has some questions as a civil engineer. Had some concerns with the mature trees and the viability. Bohler: Wants to answer at the next meeting with the landscape architect. Confusion of the future build, but we are only discussing the shared driveway which is the process.

Action Taken by the Planning Board

MOTION FOR CONTINUANCE

Mr. Weller moved that the Planning Board continue the public hearing for the Shared Driveway Special Permit for 101 High Street, as described in the Application therefore submitted to the Planning Board and filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on July 3, 2024 to Tuesday, October 15, at 7:00 pm via Zoom, where a Zoom link and associated call in numbers will be provided on Town's calendar on the homepage at: <https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/>.

Ms. Nee seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Ellen Larkin Rollings-Yes  
Philip M. Giordano-Yes  
Kathleen Nee-Yes  
Sean Weller-Yes

Action Taken by the Conservation Commission

MOTION FOR CONTINUANCE

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh, to continue the hearing for 101 High Street, DEP #338-0767 to October 15, 2024 to be held as a concurrent zoom meeting with the Planning Board.

Roll Call Vote:

Todd Sullivan - Yes  
Debra Odeh - Yes  
Stephen Harte -Yes  
Michael Walsh - Yes  
Elias Fares – Yes  
Vesna Maneva – Yes  
Grace Weller - Yes

Motion Made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Maneva, to adjourn the Conservation Commission meeting

Roll Call Vote:

Michael Walsh - Yes  
Todd Sullivan – Accidentally bumped off meeting  
Debra Odeh - Yes  
Elias Fares – Yes  
Vesna Maneva – Yes  
Grace Weller – Yes

The Conservation Commission meeting is adjourned.