

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

SITE VISIT 12June2020

869 Massachusetts Ave - AHS / DEP FILE #091-0323

SITE VISIT NOTES

Susan Chapnick, Chair, Chuck Tirone, Co-Chair, Nathaniel Stevens, Commissioner, Pam Heidell, Commissioner, Dave Kaplan, Commissioner, and Cathy Garnett, Assistant Commissioner of the Arlington Conservation Commission performed a site visit at 869 Massachusetts Avenue, on 6/12/2020, at 8:30AM. We were accompanied on site by Steve Garvin, P.E., Applicant's representative, and several members of Consigli Construction including Cam Patch, Assistant Site Superintendent.

General Observations:

The site is secure with the main entrance on Mass Ave, where we filled out electronic forms for COVID19 emergency regulations. Signage at the site entrance clearly showed the MassDEP File No. Construction was on-going during our site visit for portions of the site already permitted and/or outside of the Commission's jurisdictional areas.

Observations on Jurisdictional Areas Observed:

We walked on Mass Ave and Mill Street to the Parking lot entrance at Mill Brook Drive and along Mill Brook at the East end of the site to see the eastern portion of the site within Commission's jurisdiction. Proper sedimentation/erosion controls were observed in this area, including silt fence /stacked bales and silt sacks on storm drains. We discussed the proposed sidewalk, which will be pushed back to approximately 15 feet and pitched away from the brook and discussed invasives along Mill Brook. The parking spaces also will be pushed back, with this new sidewalk between parking spaces and Mill Brook.

C. Tirone asked if the parking lot curbing for the center island could be removed and the flowerbeds could be designed with an underdrain to promote sheet flow infiltration in that area. S. Gavin said that they would look into it but the elevations for the parking lot are lower than the proposed location for the "storm sceptor" located upgradient and closer to the high school. C. Tirone asked to look into a separate "storm sceptor" closer to the property line parking lot entrance were the elevations would benefit the design. S. Garvin said they would look into it further.

C. Tirone asked about the vegetation along Mill Brook. S. Garvin said they are not proposing any work in this (Bank) area. C. Tirone said it was our one opportunity to improve this area and during this project and we would not have another opportunity to make any improvements. S. Garvin said they would look into it.

We discussed working with the Commission to discuss options to:

- improve the vegetation/habitat along Mill Brook such as removal of invasive species and some new plantings (the applicant was amenable to suggestions from the Commission) and
- potential to improve the design of the proposed "storm sceptor" in the adjacent parking area.

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We walked along the back of AHS towards the proposed Artificial Turf field, which is currently a natural grass field. Along the way, C. Tirone noticed three storm drains that were not protected (see photos). These storm drains were not in the Commission's jurisdictional areas; however, surface water flow from these drains would ultimately end up in Mill Brook.

The current natural turf field that is proposed for Artificial Turf abuts the existing Artificial Turf field, which will not be altered. We discussed where the 100 foot Buffer to Mill Brook / AURA was located – approximately half-way to the current pitcher's mound on the existing natural turf field. S. Chapnick made the observation to S. Garvin that the proposed Artificial Turf field approximately doubles the amount of plastic surface / Artificial Turf from existing conditions, which he agreed was correct. S. Garvin also confirmed that based on the proposed project, the Artificial Turf field will abut a parking lot. S. Chapnick observed that the Artificial Turf fields served no habitat function and were, essentially, similar to under-drained porous pavement parking lots.

The Commission members had questions about where the rain garden was located, how it would be constructed in a low spot near a building of the AHS campus on one side and parking lot on the other side of it, and the timing of its being put online. We discussed working with the Commission to:

- improve the design of the rain gardens to allow for heavy rainfall to by-pass the rain garden area until the plantings are established
- provide metrics on rain garden detention basin / treatment
- maintenance / resilience of rain garden

P. Heidell asked about green roofs as a mitigation strategy for changing natural turf to Artificial turf. S. Garvin explained that the AHS planners worked with Sustainable Arlington on some measures and the buildings will be LEED certified for energy efficiency. S. Garvin said they may have also looked at green roofs. S. Garvin said that Photovoltaics are planned over the parking in this section of the site in the future. He also mentioned that the geothermal energy system was dropped from the design after it was deemed impractical due in part to the barrier under the surface capping hazardous materials. S. Chapnick asked for the contact information for the Sustainable Arlington group that interfaced with the AHS project team.



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