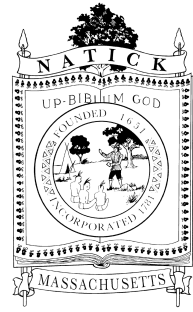


Memorandum



To: Natick Board of Selectmen

CC: Matthew Gardner, Chair, Conservation Commission

From: Jillian Wilson Martin, Sustainability Coordinator
Ted Fields, Senior Planner
William McDowell, Town Engineer

Date: August 1, 2019

Subject: Proposed Warrant Article regarding Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw

We respectfully request the Board of Selectmen's sponsorship of a warrant article to amend the Town's existing Stormwater and Erosion Control By-Law. Background on the need for proposed changes and a draft warrant article are provided below:

Background

The Town of Natick has been working with Dodson & Flinker, a consulting firm, to incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) considerations into local land use regulations. This work is funded by a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant and relates directly to recommendations identified in the 2019 Natick 2030+ Master Plan, 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan, and 2018 Community Resiliency Building Report.

Modifying Article 79A, Natick's Stormwater and Erosion Control By-Law, is core to this effort, and a team of Town staff and volunteers, including Victoria Parsons, former Conservation Agent; Ted Fields, Senior Planner; William McDowell, Town Engineer; Jillian Wilson Martin, Sustainability Coordinator, and Susan Simone Kang, Associate Member of the Planning Board, have been working with Dodson and Flinker, a consulting firm, to support these changes.

Why are Changes to the Stormwater and Erosion Control By-Law Necessary?

At present, the Town of Natick, as led by the Conservation Commission, only regulates large projects, greater than an acre in size, for stormwater impacts. However, the cumulative effects of Natick's recent surge in development, for construction projects of all sizes, has increased stormwater runoff and, as a result, reduced local water quality.

Every water body in Natick is categorized as impaired by the [Massachusetts Year 2016 Integrated List of Waters](#) (a publication prepared by MassDEP related to the Clean Water Act), and higher levels of impervious surface and increased rainfall are expected to increase stormwater runoff and further reduce the quality of Natick's local water resources. These include Dug Pond, Lake Cochituate, the Charles River and others.

Given Natick's highly developed nature, it makes sense for the Town to adopt regulations that would optimize the Conservation Commission's ability to regulate projects that result in a significant disturbance of land (e.g., the clearing of land for the construction of a new home) and take a more comprehensive and thoughtful approach to managing stormwater impacts. This is in line with communities that are similar to Natick in size and level of development.

The By-Law should also be updated to reflect changing Federal regulations, such as the new Municipal Storm Separate Sewer System (MS4) permit, and to encourage the adoption of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques by providing a pathway to increase infiltration via nature-based solutions.

Proposed Warrant Article

While the Conservation Commission was planning to sponsor an Article for the 2019 Fall Town Meeting Warrant to support this effort, the Warrant closes prior to the Commission's next scheduled meeting. As such, we respectfully request the Board of Selectmen's sponsorship of the following Article, which has been reviewed by Town Counsel:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the existing Stormwater and Erosion Control By-Law, as codified in Article 79A of the Natick Town Bylaws, to optimize the Town's regulation of land disturbance activity, for purposes that shall include, but shall not be limited to the following: (1) the protection of local drinking water supply; (2) the reduction of stormwater runoff; (3) compliance with new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations; (4) the preservation of natural resources; and (5) the achievement of recommendations proposed in the 2019 Natick 2030+ Master Plan, 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan and the 2018 Community Resilience Building Report; or otherwise act thereon.