
Project Narrative

REV 9/8/2026

Notice of Intent – Proposed Single Family Home
55 Whiton Avenue
Hingham, MA 02043

Introduction

The project proponent, Sky Box Development, is requesting permission from the Hingham Conservation Commission to raze the existing single-family dwelling and construct a new single-family dwelling, garage, associated paved driveway, patio, walkways, retaining walls, and stormwater management improvements at 55 Whiton Avenue. The project also includes a Vegetation Management Plan to remove invasive and non-native vegetation and restore approximately 5,365 SF of area consisting of Coastal Bank, Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, and Buffer Zone areas with native vegetation. Approximately 765 SF of this planting area will be mitigation over existing lawn. The site contains Coastal Bank, Salt Marsh, Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, Land Containing Shellfish, and Rocky Intertidal Shore. However, no work is proposed within Land Containing Shellfish or Rocky Intertidal Shore for this project. The previously approved dock is being addressed separately and is not included as part of the work proposed under this Notice of Intent. The property and surrounding resource areas are depicted on the accompanying Site Plan.

Existing Conditions

The subject property is located at 55 Whiton Avenue, Hingham, MA. The total lot area is approximately 0.59 acres or 25,700 SF according to the Hingham Assessor's Department, although the property technically extends to Mean Low Water. The lot abuts Hingham Bay to the north, Paige Street to the south, Whiton Avenue to the west, and an abutting property to the east. The lot is developed with a single-family dwelling, a paved driveway, hardscaping and landscaping. The topography of the lot slopes from south to north towards Hingham Bay.

A majority of the site is located within 100 feet of the Coastal Bank and Salt Marsh resource areas. A smaller portion of the site is located within Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage (F.I.R.M Zone VE) based on FEMA Flood Map, community panel No. 25023C0019J dated July 17, 2012, and is also within a Special Flood Hazard Area (by graphic plotting only).

The existing site contains a substantial amount of previously altered areas associated with the existing residential development. The existing Coastal Bank Buffer Zones include the existing dwelling, paved driveway, walkways, and other developed surfaces. The existing Salt Marsh Buffer Zone similarly contains portions of the existing dwelling, paved driveway, and walkways. The proposed project has been designed to maintain the existing residential use of the property while pulling development farther away from the resource areas as well as incorporating stormwater management and resource-area restoration measures.

Proposed Conditions

The owner proposes to raze the existing single-family dwelling and construct a new single-family dwelling with an attached garage, driveway, deck, patio, walkways, retaining walls, and associated site improvements. The proposed redevelopment has

been designed to maintain the established residential use of the property while minimizing impacts to the Coastal Bank, Salt Marsh, Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, and associated Buffer Zones.

The proposed project has been designed to increase the separation between the principal structure and the Coastal Bank. The existing dwelling foundation is located approximately 7.7 feet from the Coastal Bank at its closest point, while the proposed dwelling foundation will be located approximately 26 feet from the Coastal Bank at its closest point. This represents an increase of approximately 18.3 feet in the separation between the dwelling foundation and the Coastal Bank. The closest point of proposed impervious area (impervious patio) will be approximately 19.4 feet from the Coastal Bank. Although the proposed redevelopment remains within portions of the 50-Foot Buffer Zones due to the constrained nature of the property, the principal structure is being moved substantially farther landward from the Coastal Bank. In addition, all paved driveway access has been moved outside of the 50 foot buffer and into the 50-100 foot buffer exclusively.

The proposed impervious coverage has also been designed to minimize impacts within the Buffer Zones to the Coastal Bank and Salt Marsh. As shown on the Impervious Coverage Summary, within the 0–50 foot Buffer Zone to the Coastal Bank, existing impervious coverage totals approximately 2,180 SF, while proposed impervious coverage totals approximately 2,170 SF, representing a net reduction of approximately 10 SF. Existing building coverage within this area totals approximately 1,683 SF and will decrease to approximately 1,674 SF, a reduction of approximately 9 SF. Existing paved driveway coverage totals approximately 437 SF and will be completely removed from the 50-Foot Buffer Zone. Existing walkway coverage totals approximately 60 SF and will decrease to approximately 16 SF. The proposed project does introduce approximately 480 SF of patio coverage within this area; however, the removal and reduction of existing building, driveway, and walkway coverage result in an overall reduction of approximately 10 SF of impervious coverage within the 0–50-foot Coastal Bank Buffer Zone.

Within the 50–100-foot Buffer Zone to the Coastal Bank, impervious coverage will be increased by approximately 2,231 SF. This increase is primarily associated with the proposed building and driveway. Building coverage increases from approximately 1,270 SF to approximately 1,882 SF, an increase of approximately 612 SF. Paved driveway coverage increases from 0 SF to approximately 1,351 SF. Walkway coverage increase from approximately 236 SF to approximately 298 SF, an increase of approximately 62 SF. Approximately 206 SF of retaining wall coverage is also proposed within this portion of the Buffer Zones.

When the entire 0–100 foot Coastal Bank Buffer Zone is considered, existing impervious coverage totals approximately 3,686 SF, compared to approximately 5,907 SF proposed, representing a net increase of approximately 2,231 SF. The majority of this increase occurs within the more landward 50–100 foot portion of the Buffer Zone, while impervious coverage within the 0–50 foot portion is reduced by approximately 10 SF.

Within the 0–50 foot Buffer Zone to the Salt Marsh, the existing dwelling clips this zone slightly, resulting in an existing impervious coverage total of approximately 1 SF. No impervious coverage is proposed within 50 feet of the Salt Marsh, resulting in a net reduction of approximately 1 SF.

Within the 50–100 foot Buffer Zone to the Salt Marsh, existing impervious coverage totals approximately 2,883 SF, compared to approximately 2,818 SF proposed, resulting in a net reduction of approximately 65 SF. Building coverage decreases from approximately 2,410 SF to approximately 2,338 SF, a reduction of approximately 72 SF. Existing paved driveway coverage of approximately 413 SF is completely eliminated from this portion of the Buffer Zone. Existing walkway coverage of approximately 60 SF is also eliminated. The proposed project does introduce approximately 480 SF of patio coverage within this area. These changes result in an overall reduction of approximately 65 SF of impervious coverage within the 50–100 foot Buffer Zone to the Salt Marsh.

When the entire 0–100 foot Salt Marsh Buffer Zone is considered, existing impervious coverage totals approximately 2,884 SF, compared to approximately 2,818 SF proposed, resulting in a net reduction of approximately 66 SF.

Two trees are proposed for removal within 50 feet of the Coastal Bank and Six trees are proposed for removal within the 50-100 feet of the Coastal Bank. These removed trees will be mitigated, as shown on the Landscape Plan included in this application.

No impervious area or yard grading is proposed within Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage. Work within Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage and the Coastal Bank itself is limited to the Vegetation Management Plan accompanying this project proposal, as described below.

In addition to minimizing impervious coverage within the 50-foot Buffer Zones, the project includes a substantial Vegetation Management Plan encompassing approximately 5,465 SF. Existing invasive vegetation will be removed and replaced with native plant species. Approximately 2,235 SF of the restoration area is located within the Buffer Zones to the Coastal Bank and Salt Marsh, 765 SF of which will be over existing lawn area. The remaining approximately 3,230 SF will be located directly within the Coastal Bank itself. The restoration area is shown on the Site Plan, and more details can be found in the Vegetation Management Plan Document by ECR included within this Notice of Intent Application. The proposed Vegetation Management Plan will provide a substantial improvement to the existing condition of the site by removing invasive vegetation and establishing native species immediately adjacent to and within the Coastal Bank.

Stormwater management is incorporated into the proposed design which will reduce peak flows and volumes running off the site compared to existing conditions. Two subsurface infiltration systems are proposed. Subsurface Infiltration System #1 is designed to treat and infiltrate runoff from the paved driveway and the gray-shaded portion of the proposed dwelling. Subsurface Infiltration System #2 is designed to treat and infiltrate runoff from a proposed yard drain and the gray-shaded portion of the proposed dwelling.

In conclusion, the proposed redevelopment has been designed to move the principal structure substantially farther from the Coastal Bank, eliminate impervious coverage within the 0–50 foot Salt Marsh Buffer Zone, reduce impervious coverage within the 0–50 foot Coastal Bank Buffer Zone, reduce overall impervious coverage within the 0–100 foot Salt Marsh Buffer Zone, avoid all new impervious coverage within the Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, provide substantial native vegetation restoration / mitigation, and incorporate stormwater infiltration and erosion control measures. These measures have been incorporated to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts to the Resource Areas while allowing for the redevelopment of the existing residential property.

Compliance with Regulations for Work Within Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, Section 19.1(d), Hingham Wetland Regulations

1. *A proposed project shall not cause any adverse effect or cumulative adverse effect on the wetland values of LSCSF.*

Proposed work within Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage is limited to Vegetation Management, which will improve the area substantially. No adverse effects are anticipated from this proposed work.

2. *When LSCSF is significant to protection of wildlife habitat, a proposed activity shall not impair the capacity of LSCSF to provide important wildlife habitat functions.*

The vegetation management, as proposed, will benefit the capacity of LSCSF to provide important wildlife habitat functions.

3. *When LSCSF is significant to pollution prevention, a proposed activity shall not cause ground, surface, or salt water pollution triggered by coastal storm flowage or flooding. For those areas within 100 feet of another Resource Area, activities shall minimize adverse effects to maintain the capability to remove suspended solids and other contaminants from runoff before it enters the resource area*

Vegetation Management will not result in pollution and will benefit the resource area as well as buffer zones to other nearby resource areas (Salt Marsh).

4. *For activities proposed in VE-zones and AE-zones, at a minimum, the historic rate of relative sea level rise in Massachusetts of 1 foot per 100 years shall be incorporated into the project design and construction. The Commission may also take credible evidence of projected sea level rise, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change into consideration.*

The proposed vegetation management will not be impacted by sea level rise.

5. *The following activities proposed within VE-zones and/or AE-zones are likely to have an adverse effect on the protected values and are therefore prohibited:*
 1. *New construction or placement of new structures, including buildings, sheds, garages, and retaining walls...*

None of these activities are proposed within LSCSF as part of this project.

6. *Notwithstanding the above, the Commission may permit the following activities in VE- and AE-zones provided that the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Commission that best available measures are utilized to avoid or minimize adverse effects on all wetland values of all Resource Areas...*

Not Applicable.

7. *Notwithstanding the above provisions, no project may be permitted which will have any adverse effect on specific habitat of rare vertebrate or invertebrate and rare plant species, as identified by procedures established under 310 CMR 10.59.*

No rare vertebrate, invertebrate or rare plant species have been identified on the site.

8. *Refer to HWR 23.0 et seq. for additional project-specific performance standards.*

Not Applicable.

9. *The Commission may impose such additional requirements as are necessary to protect the wetland values protected under the Bylaw.*

The project is presented to the Commission for their review.

Compliance with Performance Standards for Work in the Buffer Zone, Section 22.0(d), Hingham Wetland Regulations

1. *The intent of the Conservation Commission is to move all structures and activities as far away as possible from any Resource Area, in order to protect the wetland values of Resource Areas.*

The proposed project has been designed to move the principal structure farther away from the Coastal Bank. The existing dwelling foundation is located approximately 7.7 feet from the Coastal Bank at its closest point, whereas the proposed dwelling foundation will be approximately 26 feet from the Coastal Bank at its closest point. This represents an approximately 18.3-foot increase in separation between the dwelling foundation and the Coastal Bank.

The closest point of proposed impervious area, including the proposed deck, will be approximately 19.4 feet from the Coastal Bank. Therefore, although the proposed redevelopment remains within the Buffer Zone due to the constrained nature of the existing residential lot, the proposed building itself is being moved substantially landward from the Coastal Bank.

The proposed project also reduces impervious coverage within the 0–50 foot Coastal Bank Buffer Zone from approximately 2,180 SF to approximately 2,170 SF. The increase in impervious coverage is primarily within the more landward 50–100 foot portion of the Buffer Zone. The project therefore represents an effort to concentrate

development away from the Coastal Bank and Salt Marsh while minimizing the amount of development immediately adjacent to the Resource Area.

2. *Except as otherwise specified, Resource Area buffers shall be retained and maintained in a naturally vegetated condition. Where buffer disturbance has occurred during construction, revegetation with native vegetation may be required.*

The proposed project includes a comprehensive Vegetation Management Plan that exceeds simple post-construction revegetation. Approximately 4,600 SF of existing invasive vegetation will be removed and replaced with native species. Approximately 1,425 SF of this work occurs within the Buffer Zones to the Coastal Bank and Salt Marsh, while the remainder occurs within the Coastal Bank itself and Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage. See the attached Vegetation Management Plan by ECR for more information.

The Hingham Buffer Zone Mitigation Policy specifically recognizes removal of invasive plants and replacement with native vegetation as appropriate mitigation and restoration measures. It also states that mitigation locations closest to the Resource Area should be prioritized where feasible. Therefore, we believe that this Vegetation Management Plan will be adequate mitigation for the proposed work.

3. *The Commission may require that already-altered buffer zone be restored in order to protect or improve Resource Area values. Restoration means planting native vegetation, grading, correcting site drainage, removing debris, or other measures which will improve, restore and protect the wetland values of the Resource Area.*

Portions of the buffer zones containing invasive species will be restored as well as the entire Coastal Bank area itself.

4. *Notwithstanding the above provisions, no project may be permitted which will have any adverse effect on specified habitat of rare vertebrate or invertebrate and rare plant species, as identified by procedures established under 310 CMR 10.37 for Coastal Resource Areas or 310 CMR 10.59 for Inland Resource Areas.*

No rare vertebrate, invertebrate or rare plant species have been identified on the site.

5. *The Commission may impose such additional requirements as are necessary to protect the wetland values protected under the Bylaw.*

The project is presented to the Commission for their review.

Compliance With Performance Standards for Work in a Coastal Bank (§18.1(d)(2) Hingham Wetland Regulations)

- a. *Proposed work shall not cause any adverse effect or cumulative adverse effect on the wetland values of the Coastal Bank.*

The proposed project has been designed to minimize impacts to the Coastal Bank while substantially improving the existing condition of the bank through the proposed Vegetation Management Plan as noted above.

- b. *All projects shall be restricted to activities as determined by the Commission to have no adverse effect on bank height, stability, bank vegetation and wildlife habitat.*

The Vegetation Management will have no adverse effect on these aspects of the Coastal Bank.

- c. *The Commission may allow projects to approach the top of such a Vertical Buffer Coastal Bank, which meet all other performance standards for the Coastal Bank, or condition such projects so that they meet all performance standards.*

We believe this project will fall in line with other previously approved structures along the same bank.

- d. *Notwithstanding the above, elevated walkways designed not to affect bank vegetation and bank stability may be permitted to allow for pedestrian passage over a bank, provided that the stability of the bank and wildlife habitat are not adversely affected. Public access must not be limited or impaired in any way.*

Not applicable.

- e. *Refer to HWR 23.0 et seq. for additional project-specific performance standards.*

Not applicable.

- f. *The Commission may impose such additional requirements as are necessary to protect the wetland values protected under the Bylaw.*

This project is presented to the Commission for their review.

Compliance With Performance Standards for Work in a Coastal Bank – Wetland Protection Act (310 CMR 10.30)

3. *No new bulkhead, revetment, seawall, groin or other coastal engineering structure shall be permitted on such a coastal bank except that such a coastal engineering structure shall be permitted when required...*

No structures are proposed within the Coastal Bank as part of this project.

4. *Any project on a coastal bank or within 100 feet landward of the top of a coastal bank, other than a structure permitted by 310 CMR 10.30(3), shall not have an adverse effect due to wave action on the movement of sediment from the coastal bank to coastal beaches or land subject to tidal action.*

The proposed raze and rebuild of a Single family home is proposed within 50 and 100 feet of a Coastal Bank. Many steps were taken in the design process to reduce impacts on the Coastal Bank and to improve its functions. The existing single family home is located only 7.7 feet from the coastal bank. The closest point of foundation from the coastal bank to the proposed home will be approximately 26 feet, a substantial increase in distance. Impervious areas will be reduced by 10 SF in the more sensitive 50 foot buffer zone to the coastal bank. The 2,231 SF impervious increase within the 50-100 foot buffer zone will be mitigated with 1:1 mitigation in the 50 foot buffer zone as well as an extensive vegetation management plan proposed for the Coastal Bank itself. It is intended that these improvements will result in a net improvement to the Coastal Bank resource area once the project is completed.

5. *The Order of Conditions and the Certificate of Compliance for any new building within 100 feet landward of the top of a coastal bank permitted by the issuing authority under M.G.L.c. 131, § 40 shall contain the specific conditions: 310 CMR 10.30(30), promulgated under M.G.L.c. 131, § 40, requires that no coastal engineering structure, such as a bulkhead, revetment, or seawall shall be permitted on an eroding bank at any time in the future to protect the project allowed by this Order of Conditions.*

This condition is accepted.

6. *Any project on such a coastal bank or within 100 feet landward of the top of such coastal bank shall have no adverse effects on the stability of the coastal bank.*

The proposed development will be moved farther away from the coastal bank than the existing, and extensive vegetation management is proposed which will improve the stability of the bank.

7. *Bulkheads, revetments, seawalls, groins or other coastal engineering structures may be permitted on such a coastal bank except when such bank is significant to storm damage*

prevention or flood control because it supplies sediment to coastal beaches, coastal dunes, and barrier beaches.

No structure is proposed on the coastal bank as part of this project.

8. *Notwithstanding the provisions of 310 CMR 10.30(3) through (7), no project may be permitted which will have any adverse effect on specified habitats of rare vertebrate or invertebrate species, as identified by procedures established under 310 CMR 10.37.*

No rare vertebrate, invertebrate or rare plant species have been identified on the site.

Compliance With Performance Standards for Work within 100 feet of a Salt Marsh – Wetland Protection Act (310 CMR 10.32)

3. *A proposed project in a salt marsh, on lands within 100 feet of a salt marsh, or in a body of water adjacent to a salt marsh shall not destroy any portion of the salt marsh and shall not have an adverse effect on the productivity of the salt marsh. Alterations in growth, distribution and composition of salt marsh vegetation shall be considered in evaluating adverse effects on productivity. 310 CMR 10.32(3) shall not be construed to prohibit the harvesting of salt clay.*

The proposed work will reduce impervious coverage within the 50 and 100 foot buffers to the salt marsh. A large portion of the 50 foot buffer to the salt marsh will be improved by the vegetation management plan. Therefore, no destruction of the salt marsh shall occur as a result of this project and the proposed work will likely result in a net improvement to the salt marsh resource area and its buffer zones.

4. *Notwithstanding the provisions of 310 CMR 10.32(3), a small project within a salt marsh, such as an elevated walkway or other structure which has no adverse effects other than blocking sunlight from the underlying vegetation for a portion of each day, may be permitted if such a project complies with all other applicable requirements of 310 CMR 10.21 through 10.37.*

No structure is proposed within the salt marsh as part of this project.

5. *Notwithstanding the provisions of 310 CMR 10.32(3), a project which will restore or rehabilitate a salt marsh, or create a salt marsh, may be permitted in accordance with 310 CMR 10.11 through 10.14, 10.24(8), and/or 10.53(4).*

Restoration is proposed for the adjacent coastal bank which will likely have positive impacts on the salt marsh.

6. *Notwithstanding the provisions of 310 CMR 10.32(3) through (5), no project may be permitted which will have any adverse effect on specified habitat sites of Rare Species, as identified by procedures established under 310 CMR 10.37.*

No rare vertebrate, invertebrate or rare plant species have been identified on the site.