

APPROVED

6/12/24

On Meeting Date:

Town of Westwood
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Karon Skinner Catrone, Conservation Agent
kcatrone@townhall.westwood.ma.us
(781) 251-2580

Grace Weller, Chair
Michael Walsh, Vice Chair
Debra Odeh
Elias Fares
Todd Sullivan
Vesna Maneva
Stephen Harte
R.J. Sheer - Associate

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes: Conservation Commission Meeting Date: May 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
Location: Champagne Meeting Room, 50 Carby Street, Westwood, MA

7:00 p.m. Call to Order

The Conservation Commission meeting of May 22, 2024 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Champagne Meeting Room, 50 Carby Street, with the following members present: Grace Weller, Debra Odeh, Elias Fares, Todd Sullivan, Michael Walsh and Vesna Maneva. Member Stephen Harte, and associate member R.J. Sheer are absent. Also present is Karon Skinner Catrone, Conservation Agent.

7:00 p.m. – Call to Order

- Approval of minutes – March 27, 2024, April 17, 2024 and April 24, 2024

Action items:

1. Eagle Scout project at Currier Conservation Area – Present is Jack Strzepka, Eagle Scout. Mr. Strzepka states he is proposing an Eagle Scout project at Currier Reservation. He is proposing the installation of 4 benches within the Conservation Area and a post for a map at the entrance. The work will take approximately a week. The benches will be secured with gravel and dirt and will be constructed with pressure treated wood. The location of the benches were chosen because these areas are flat and have nice views. Mr. Fares states if pressure treated wood is being used you have to wait 1 year before painting.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh to approve the bench installment at Currier Reservations. Unanimous.

2. 100 High Street – DEP #338-0723 – Request for Extension – Ms. Weller states Ms. Catrone and I visited the site on 5/20/24. A parking lot was approved in 2021 but the work was never started. The area is sloped and wooded. Meditech has a very large parking lot next door.

Ms. Maneva states she recalls the applicant wanted to install this parking lot so his employee can park on his lot and the parking in front can be used for customers.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Maneva, to issue an Extension Order for one year to expire on 10/19/25. Ms. Odeh abstains. Mr. Walsh, Ms. Maneva, Ms. Weller and Mr. Fares are in favor. Vote passes 4 to 1.

3. 215 Clapboardtree Street - DEP #338-0724 – Request for Certificate of Compliance – Ms. Weller states Ms. Catrone and I visited the site on 5/20/24. The project involved improvements to the sewer pump station and forced main.

Ms. Catrone states this request was continued from the 4/24/24 meeting because the area was not stabilized.

Pictures of the area are shared.

The Commission agrees the area is now substantially stabilized.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh, to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 215 Clapboardtree Street, DEP #338-0724. Unanimous.

4. 73 Dover Road – DEP #338-0720 – Request for Extension – Ms. Weller states Ms. Catrone and I visited the site on 5/20/24. The Order was approved for an addition on the left side of the existing single family house and repaving of the driveway. The applicant is requesting an extension for the repaving of the driveway which was not completed due to financial issues. Lawn clippings were observed in the wetland area which the owner was asked to remove.

Ms. Catrone states she did not make it by the site to inspect and suggests if the extension is approved it be conditional on the removal of the yard waste.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh, to extend the Order of Conditions for 73 Dover Road, DEP #338-0720, for one year with the condition the lawn clippings are removed from the wetland.

Unanimous.

5. 103 Country Lane – DEP #338-0755 – Request for Minor Modification to construct a deck – Present is Daniel Fenton, owner of 103 Country Lane, requesting a Minor Modification to Order of Conditions DEP #338-0755 to construct a deck on the rear of the existing single family home.

Mr. Fenton states there was a patio in this area that was causing water damage in the basement. When the patio was removed the water did not reoccur. The deck will be constructed of wood on piers and construction access to the area will be around the right side of the house (upland side).

The Order of Conditions was for a detached garage and hydro-raking of the pond.

Mr. Fenton states there were 17 dumpsters of material removed from the pond.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Fares, to approve the construction of a deck on piers at 103 Country Lane as a minor modification to Order of Conditions, DEP #338-0755. Unanimous.

6. 133 Tamarack Road – DEP #338-7 – Request for Certificate of Compliance – Ms. Catrone states this is a very old Order of Conditions associated with work done by the Town.

The Commission discusses the close proximity of the lawn to the stream. They suggests requiring the owner to install shrubs along the stream.

Ms. Catrone states she discussed this with Town Counsel. He advised the commission require plantings if this or a new owner files for work in the buffer and riverfront area. The owner should not be required to plant mitigation planting for a town project.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Fares to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 133 Tamarack Road, DEP #338-7. Unanimous.

7. 298 Summer Street – DEP #338-0721 - Request for Minor Modification – Ms. Weller states the applicant is requesting a Minor Modification to reduce the foot print of the proposed house.

Ms. Maneva asks if it is customary to request a minor modification if the change is less impacting.

Ms. Catrone states the former Commission wanted the approved plan to match the as-built.

Ms. Maneva asks what happens if the Commission denies the minor modification.

Mr. Walsh states they build a larger house.

Ms. Weller states we could continue this Action Item and have the applicant come in to speak to us about it.

The Commission reviews GIS pictures of the property.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Fares, to approve the request for a minor modification for a reduced footprint of the proposed house at 298 Summer Street, Order of Conditions DEP #338-0721 Ms. Odeh and Ms. Weller are opposed. Motion passes 3 – 2.

The Commission discusses the motion.

Motion made by Ms. Odeh, seconded by Mr. Fares, to continue the discussion on the Request for Minor Modification to 6/12/24 at 7:00 pm at 50 Carby Street to discuss tree removal with the applicant. Ms. Odeh, Ms. Weller and Mr. Fares vote in favor. Ms. Maneva abstains and Mr. Walsh votes no. Vote passes 3 – 1 - 1. Ms. Odeh asks that the applicant have a landscape plan at the 6/12/24 meeting.

Public Hearings:

Update Rules and Regulations – Continued from April 24, 2024

Discuss and vote on the adoption and/or amendment of various sets of Rules and Regulations of the Town of Westwood Conservation Commission, including the following:

- Stormwater Management Regulations.

Mr. Fares states he has reviewed the stormwater regulations and any other related information he could find. He states the regulations are not detailed enough and there are several things that he does not agree with in the document. Dedham's stormwater regulations have many more definitions. Any infiltration into the ground can impact our drinking water supply. Drainage is very important. It is very important to capture the first flush. He states he is happy with capturing of the first ½ inch. Runoff ends up in resource areas. The Commission should have guidelines as to how to capture the first flush.

Ms. Catrone states the Regulations are referring to the MA Stormwater Handbook.

Mr. Fares states the Regulations need to be very clear. We need catchment to slow down the water and have it absorb into the ground.

Mr. Walsh states he understands this but how do we solve it.

Mr. Fares states we need to focus on no increase in runoff.

Ms. Catrone states if you would like to see changes to the regulations you can give them to me or we could meet with BETA.

The Commission discusses the MA Stormwater Handbook.

Present is Margery Eramo of 48 Clapboardtree Street. Ms. Eramo states she has been looking over the bylaw and understands the trigger is land disturbance over 5,000 sq. ft. She asks if there is a trigger for less disturbance.

Ms. Catrone states the trigger of 5,000 sq. ft. was developed based on new construction including a modest home, yard and driveway.

Ms. Eramo states the regulations discuss nuisances created with a disturbance of less than 5,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Walsh states we should continue this hearing and have BETA attend a meeting and discuss these issues with Mr. Paradis.

Shawn Weller of 48 Clapboardtree Street is present and states he has been reviewing the Stormwater Bylaw and there is language which refers to retaining the volume equivalent to or greater than one inch of runoff. He is unsure if this is up to standards. He asks if the Conservation stormwater review can be combined with Planning Board Stormwater review.

Ms. Catrone states the Commission uses the Planning Board stormwater review whenever possible.

Mr. Fares states regarding stormwater review, Westwood is behind.

Ms. Catrone recommends Mr. Fares meet with BETA.

Ms. Weller asks if anyone has edits to the stormwater regulations.

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh, to continue the discussion on updating the rules and regulations to July 10, 2024 at 7:00 at 50 Carby Street. Unanimous.

Discussion Items:

1. Commissioners' observations around town and next scheduled site visits
2. Update on significant projects and other topics not reasonably anticipated – Ms. Maneva states she reached out to Todd Korchin, Director of DPW regarding the last meetings discussion on Perry Crouse Pond. She asked him about any grants for stormwater. Ms. Maneva reads an email she received from Mr. Korchin which states Phil Paradis of BETA is our point person for stormwater. Funds have been secured for a stormwater master plan. He will have BETA look at the catch basins at Perry Crouse Pond.
Ms. Maneva reads an email from Phil Paradis explaining the stormwater master plan.
The Commission discusses having Mr. Paradis attend a future meeting.
Ms. Maneva states she did not reach out to Neponset River Watershed Association but did speak to her inhouse resource and was made aware that there is a grant (MA Dredging Program, Fiscal 2025, Inland Dredging Pilot Round) for dredging inland ponds. She states there is no fund matching required.

Ms. Weller states she would like to have an associate member that could be learning so if a new member is needed they would be ready to step up.

3. Representative for dog park task force

Upcoming Meeting: 6/12/24 – 50 Carby Street

Note: Agenda items and order subject to change Subject to change

Motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Ms. Odeh, to adjourn the meeting. Unanimous.