



City of Watertown
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main St.
Watertown, MA 02472

Maria P. Rose, Chair
Jamie O'Connell, Vice Chair
Leo Martin, Member
Rachel Danford, Member
Patrick Towler, Member
Marilyn Salvas, Member
Josh Coefer, Member

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

Conservation Commission Members Present: Maria Rose, Leo Martin, Rachel Danford, Patrick Towler, Marilyn Salvas, and Josh Coefer.

Absent: Jamie O'Connell

Also Present: Michelle Moon (City of Watertown), Conor Nagel (VHB), Kevin McHugh (Coneco), Nick Hebel (Coneco), Mark Beaudry (Civil New England), Daniel Lepine (Comcast), and Steve Smith (Comcast).

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent; Susan Jenness, Assistant

Rose chaired the meeting and took roll call.

1. Wetland Decisions

- A. **Request for Certificate of Compliance:** 550 Arsenal Street: (MassDEP #: 321-0096).
Alexandra Real Estate Equities (Property Owner) and VHB (Representative).

Conor Nagel (VHB) was present to discuss the request for a Certificate of Compliance to close the final Order of Conditions for the work for the redevelopment of the existing commercial property at the Watertown Mall associated with the Target store and associated parking lot and drainage improvements that was completed in 2004.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- Rose asked if ARE has met the special conditions # 42 (maintenance schedule for all indoor and outdoor sumps and hoods of drainage structures...) and # 45 (written reports confirming the periodic cleaning of all drainage structures...).
 - ARE was aware that they are responsible for the maintenance of the BMPs in perpetuity when they purchased 550 Arsenal Street in 2021.
- Rose read O'Connell's emailed comments for the COC request:
 - Maintenance log appears to show broken hoods (one photo in the "Before" section and one photo in the "after" section).
 - It's unclear if the broken hoods are from the same catch basin or if another hood broke during cleaning. If these hoods were in the plans/permit for which they are requesting a CoC, they should be fixed before we issue a CoC. Can VHB engineer clarify this?
 - There's also a photo that shows a CB grate in the sump. Is that something that needs to be fixed or is it OK to leave in there?
 - Are the BMPs where no maintenance was performed because they do not exist on site or has/will maintenance be performed for those BMPs at a different time?
 - The 2002 Construction Plan submitted by the Applicant shows that a WQU was added as part of the stormwater management improvements. Photos show that VHB confirmed that the two DMHs were added but no maintenance records or otherwise show the existence of the new WQU. Need to make sure the WQU is maintained and in good working order before issuing the CoC. Or was the 3k gallon WQU tank cleaned out when the CB sumps were cleaned?
- Nagel responded to the comments from O'Connell and Rose
 - VHB will follow up and confirm to make sure that the BMPs are fixed.
- Rose and Martin did not feel comfortable to vote to issue a Certificate of Compliance. Rose asked VHB to submit supplemental materials showing the fixed BMPs and said they do not need to come back to the next scheduled meeting.

B. 2026 Filing and Meeting Dates Review

The dates for filing and meetings were reviewed, and one request was made to amend the list.

- Update July meeting date.

2. Updates

A. Arsenal Park Phase B (MassDEP filing #: 321-0181): landscaping updates

Nick Watkins (CDM Smith) was present to update the Commission on the landscaping for Arsenal Park Phase B.

- Majority of the planting was installed in the Fall of 2024 and Spring of 2025. During that time, there was a large loss of vegetation establishment due to heavy rabbit predation.
- To address the rabbit predation and replacement of the plants, there was ongoing conversation with CDM Smith, City Staff, and sub-contractor Essex Horticulture.
 - August – a replanting plan was developed to incorporate plants that are resilient to rabbit predation and to address loss of vegetation due to erosion in the playground area and skate park.
 - October – there was a delivery of new plants, they looked healthy, and hand flagged by CDM Smith and installed by Essex Horticulture.
 - Final count of replacement plants:
 - 480 herbaceous species (drought tolerant and)
 - 120 shrubs
 - 23 trees (new plant materials as of 10/7/25) - species of replacement is not 1:1, losses of evergreens, a lot of dogwoods were under a lot of stress of disease (replaced with hawthorn and same size and drought tolerant), larger oaks were replaced in place of evergreens (5 new species of new trees)
 - Follow up – inspection, erosion control, and reseeding are agreed upon and reseeding in areas where there is erosion, will put up a fenced off area (temporary).
 - There is no irrigation in phase B – depending on the rain garden and overflow.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- Majority of the new 18 trees – large mature shade trees
- CDM Smith will be issuing a final report for the planting – will include the watering aspect.
- CDM Smith has a rough plan and will document where and what was planted – the Commission wants an as built to include for the whole Phase B.

3. Public Hearings

- A. **Notice of Intent:** (Continued from September 3, 2025 hearing) 114 Pleasant Street - Dealtry Memorial Pool (MassDEP #: 321-0190). Coneco Engineering and Scientists (Representative) and Department of Conservation and Recreation (Property Owner).

Notice of Intent submitted for the renovation of the existing pool, concrete pool area, and the adjacent deck, within the Bordering Land Subject to Flooding and Riverfront Area. There were no staff members from DCR present for the hearing. Kevin McHugh and Nick Hebel from Coneco were present. The project address is 114 Rear Pleasant Street, known as 138 Pleasant Street, by the Assessor's Office.

The proposed work includes:

- renovations to the existing pool

- concrete decks and adjacent spray deck, which are all deteriorating, and the pool is not full size. The area is previously disturbed.
- The pool will be enlarged to full size to meet the needs of the public.
- Spray deck is getting upgraded
- A shade structure is being added
- Four trees to be removed for a proposed ramp for emergency access
- Impacts to the riverfront area, bordering land subject to flooding with minimal impacts to the no build zone.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- Restoration – 8 trees proposed, Coneco submitted a planting plan, per public safety to have a sight line
- This project is redevelopment and expansion of the pool
 - Rose does not feel that the proposed work does not meet the definition for degraded under 10.58(5)(e).
- Erosion control plan.
- Mitigation plan (2:1 plan)
 - More trees vs shrubs (1:1 on trees plus the shrub)
- Move the ramp outside the 50 ft no build zone – emergency exit.
- FEMA Flood Zone
 - Potential fill within the flood zone
 - Corner of project in FEMA Flood Zone
 - Flood storage area – compensatory flood storage
 - Pool deck with shade structure over it
 - Submitted 2012 FEMA Map for the site and did not update the plans to reflect the updated 2025 FEMA map.

Public Comments:

- Moon commented about the DCR pool operations.

McHugh agreed to continue the discussion to the November 5, 2025, meeting in order to address the concerns mentioned by members of the Commission.

B. Notice of Intent: 25 Clarendon Street (MassDEP filing #: 321-0191). Comcast (Owner) and Civilworks New England (Representative).

Notice of Intent submitted for construction of site improvements around 25 Clarendon building, including removal of existing pavement and replacement with landscape area and a generator yard and transformer. Addition of landscape islands, curbing, and striping to create a driveway opening and designated parking spaces within the state and locally regulated 200 ft Riverfront Area.

The proposed work includes:

- Asphalt pavement removal to construct a generator yard (1,218 SF), new landscape areas (1,360 SF) and installation of underground fiber conduit (175 SF) in Riverfront Area. The generator yard will house up to two new diesel generators

and will be installed within a sound protective enclosure on a concrete pad surrounded by stone..

- Proposed stormwater improvements are primarily achieved by removing 2,150 SF of impervious area and placement of stone around the existing catch basin.
- Temporary erosion controls are proposed during and after construction.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- Is the proposed diesel generator contained and soundproof?
 - Beaudry noted that the generator will be in a soundproof enclosure and on a concrete pad. Belly tank is electronically monitored – if there is a concern there is a secondary tank and self-contained. Could Comcast share with the Commission the policy on catch basin cover and spill kits.
- Pg 2 of O+M plan – send update to Watertown
- The location of the catch basin is too close. Could there be additional stormwater BMPs such as a dry well or an infiltration component?
- Provide sediment and erosion control and landscaping plans as Comcast does not own the property or the building.

Motion: Martin made a motion to close the hearing for 25 Clarendon Street redevelopment project and Salvas seconded.

Roll Call: All members present were polled and agreed with the motion made by Martin.

Motion: Towler made a motion to approve 25 Clarendon Street for the redevelopment project with the Special Order of Conditions for MassDEP filing #: 321-0191. Salvas seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled and agreed with the motion made by Towler

4. Updates

A. **Chair updates:** None

B. **CPC Updates:** None

C. **Agent Report:**

- a. Swan announced that MACC was holding their Fall Conference on October 25th, 2025. She encouraged everyone to attend and said they can get reimbursed by reaching out to her.
- b. 10-30 Manley Way (MassDEP filing #: 321-0189) – work started in September, already installed new stormwater outfall.
- c. Walker Pond Meeting # 2- Swan announced that the next upcoming Walker Pond meeting will be on November 6, 2025, at 6 pm and at the Jewish Community Day School.

5. Acceptance of Minutes

A. September 3, 2025 Conservation Commission minutes were approved.

Motion: Martin made a motion to accept the minutes from the September 3, 2025 meeting. Towler seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled and agreed with the motion made by Martin.

6. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 pm. Towler seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present were polled and agreed with the motion made by Martin.