



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

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

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2025, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

Conservation Commission Members Present: Maria Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Patrick Towler, Marilyn Salvas, Leo Martin, Josh Coefer, and Rachel Danford (joined at 8:58 PM).

Absent: n/a

Also Present: Michelle Moon (City of Watertown), Kevin McHugh (Coneco) and Nick Hebel (Coneco)

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent, and Susan Jenness, Administrative Specialist

Rose opened and chaired the online meeting which started at 7:02 PM. Rose took roll call of members at the beginning of the meeting with 6 members present. Note: Rachel Danford joined the meeting at 8:58 PM.

1. Wetland Decisions

A. 2026 Filing and Meeting dates

Commissioners reviewed the 2026 filing and meeting dates and confirmed moving the November filing deadline to the 12th.

Motion: O'Connell motioned to accept the meeting and filing dates for 2026. Towler seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Members present voted by roll call 6-0 to approve the motion.

Rose then determined to take the agenda items out of order with the public hearing moved to be last on the agenda.

2. Nomination and vote for new chair

Rose noted that she is transitioning from being the chair, and also reiterated that she was likely not renewing her term after 18 years on the Commission. She noted that her term expires February 15th, 2026.

Rose nominated Patrick Towler to be the new Chair. Rose noted that Jamie O'Connell would continue to be the Vice Chair and provide expert insights in regard to the Wetland Protection Act regulations. There was discussion and no objections from others, and Towler accepted the nomination.

Motion: Martin motioned for Patrick Towler to become the new Chair. Salvas seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Members present voted by roll call, 6-0 in the affirmative for Towler to become the new chair.

Rose noted that she could continue to chair the Commission through the end of the year and Towler could take over as Chair starting with the January meeting, but that they could discuss logistics after the meeting.

3. Updates

A. Chair updates:

- Rose noted that the second community meeting for Walker Pond was scheduled the next day, November 6, 2025, at 6 pm located the Jewish Community Day School.
- The Faces of the Forest event was held on October 25, 2025, at Whitney Hill Park. Rose noted she did not attend and asked if anyone on the Commission attended Salvas provided a summary as she attended with about 15 other people, enjoyed the art, walk, and learned a lot about the ecology of Whitney Hill Park from Patrick Fairbairn.

B. CPC Updates: O'Connell shared updates on projects being considered by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC):

- CPC voted to recommend Construction funds to build an affordable housing group home on Nichols Avenue. The CPC had previously funded design drawings for the project.

- There was a request for funding to make improvements to the Commander's Mansion based on a study to do an assessment of the structure.

C. Agent Report:

Ongoing site visits: Swan met with project and property managers who currently have an open order of conditions for fall walk through/winter preparation:

- **311 Arsenal (Arsenal on the Charles):** The area of the property that is within Conservation Commission jurisdiction is stabilized. There continue to be some issues with newly planted and older trees along North Beacon Street. The trees have been stressed by drought and some were impacted by a natural gas line leak along North Beacon Street (adjacent to 311 Arsenal).
- **99 Coolidge Avenue:** Overall, the site is stabilized with a few items flagged for follow up:
 1. Knotweed (towards the back of the property): there are areas of knotweed towards the rear near the DCR property that has been growing aggressively. An invasive management plan was not included in the approved Notice of Intent for 99 Coolidge Avenue (Mass DEP filing #: 321-0175). The O+M Plan did not include any use of herbicides for treatment of invasive plants. Swan talked with the property management team about the ongoing knotweed growth and suggested that a plan for managing the knotweed be provided to her for review. The Commission members voiced support of this approach and suggested that the management of invasive knotweed be limited to physical removal and limited herbicide use.
 2. Within the 200 foot Riverfront Area, several trees are struggling and ARE/National Development will investigate if there is need to replant any of the trees (about 15) in the spring of 2026.
- **580 Pleasant Street:** A Flared End Section stormwater BMP (FES) is being monitored for potential destabilization of the retention bowl. Swan met with the property manager at the site. The next steps for the site is to allow the removal of the siltation fence, while keeping the wattles in place to naturally degrade.
- **23 Elm Street:** Swan is meeting with the property management team to review the status of site.
- **100 Woodview Way (off Waltham Street) - Bell Watertown:** Possible Notice of Violation - An existing City of Waltham outfall from Waltham Street drains into Walker Pond. The drainpipe terminates at an undersized/unmaintained plunge pool where the overflow then runs along the ground into the pond. The plunge pool and outfall appears to be causing significant erosion and runoff on the previously approved stone dust path maintained by the property. Swan met with the property manager in August about a washout of the stone dust into the

resource area. A Possible Notice of Violation was sent by Swan to the property manager and the property manager followed up to confirm the stone dust was moved out of the resource area. Swan will continue to follow up to investigate the underlying issue causing the path erosion.

4. Acceptance of Minutes

A. October 8, 2025, Conservation Commission minutes were discussed and approved.

Motion: Martin made a motion to accept the minutes from the October 8, 2025 meeting. Salvas seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Members present voted by roll call, 5-0 to approve the minutes.

5. Public Hearing

A. **Notice of Intent: 114 Pleasant Street - Dealtry Memorial Pool (MassDEP #: 321-0190)**

Property Owner: Department of Conservation and Recreation

Representative: Coneco Engineering and Scientists .

Previous Hearing Date(s): September 3, October 8, 2025

Request: Notice of Intent for the portion of the renovation of the existing pool, concrete pool area, and the adjacent deck, within the Bordering Land Subject to Flooding and Riverfront Area.

Kevin McHugh and Nick Hebel from Coneco Engineering and Scientist presented updates. The project address is 114 Rear Pleasant Street, known as 138 Pleasant Street, by the Assessor's Office.

The proposed work includes:

- Required Mitigation Area Renovations to the existing pool area includes demolition of existing and new concrete decks, pool walls, and spray pad.
- Expansion of the pool to be a standard 50-meter regulation pool. The proposed expansion is on eastern side of pool would include a shade structure on the pool deck.
- There was also a new ramped emergency access proposed on the eastern side of the expanded pool deck now being reconsidered/moved.
- Fill and compensatory storage within the proposed area of the expansion of the pool concrete deck and walls.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

During the hearing on 10/8/2025, the Commission asked about additional changes which were considered and presented, including:

- The emergency access and ramp were removed from the eastern side of the pool and the access was relocated to the western side of pool adjacent to the spray pad.
 - The relocation and design of the emergency access was discussed by the members and is satisfactory.
 - A revised planting plan includes the 2:1 mitigation planting (4,795 SF) to meet the requirements under 10.58(5). The plantings will require 3-inch caliper minimum at time of planting for the trees and also includes a variety of perennials (min planting size are based on species) with plantings within a minimum of 6” of topsoil
 - An example of the design of the shade structure and size from other DCR pools were shown.
 - Compensatory storage (46 cubic feet.) and fill (215 cubic feet) calculations for the Bordering Land Subjected to Flooding within the updated 2025 FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas.
 - The FEMA special flood hazard areas were reduced in the 2025 revision and that changed where the special flood hazard area was located within the proposed work, how much fill and compensatory was required under the BLSF.
 - The fill within the BLSF of the location of the pool decking proposed and the compensatory storage was satisfactory.
 - There was a comment about the erosion control plans and what was proposed for type of materials for erosion controls.
 - The Commission requested that erosion controls (wattles) not be incased in plastic materials and that it be noted in the detail plan sheet.

Public Comments:

- Michelle Moon, Senior Planner – Open Space (City of Watertown)
 - Asked about the proposed planting plans, would there be a two-year warranty, and could there be more diversity of plants based on the revised 2:1 mitigation planting plan?
 - Asked about the circulation of the walkway where the splash pad is, could there be a flared end of the sidewalk?

O’Connell commented that if flared out the path, would increase the altered areas under the Wetlands Protection Act and would change the total SF for approved alterations in the Riverfront Area.

Motion: O’Connell made a motion to close the hearing for 138 Pleasant Street Dealtry Pool renovations. Towler seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present voted by roll-call, 7-0 to close the hearing.

Motion: Martin made a motion to approve 138 Pleasant Street Dealtry Pool renovations with the Special Order of Conditions for MassDEP filing #: 321-0190. O’Connell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present voted by roll-call 7-0 to approve the project.

The Commission then discussed the conditions to be finalized by the Conservation Agent, which included suggested language for the Agent to consider in finalizing the special conditions of the approval:

- Maintain mitigation area in perpetuity
- Applicant shall endeavor to diversify the (mitigation) planting plan with additional species.
- The planting plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Conservation Agent prior to installation. The proposed trees shall have a caliper of not less than 3” DBH at planting.
- Modify condition 23 - wattle tubing or similar sedimentation/erosion control devices shall be biodegradable. Plastic casing or netting is not permitted/prohibited.
- Include a construction management plan because of the demolition (staging of materials on pavement to extent possible versus in area it could wash out) but allow for potential staging within 100’.
- Include a staging plan for Conservation Agent review.
- Provide final construction plans to Agent.

6. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: O’Connell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM. Coefer seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Members present voted by roll call 7-0 to adjourn.