



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

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

MINUTES

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

Conservation Commission Members Present: Maria Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Patrick Towler, Marilyn Salvas, and Leo Martin.

Absent: Joshua Coefer and Rachel Danford

Also Present: Maxwell Shortsleeve (Eaglebrook Capital), Julian Lewis (Eaglebrook Capital), Erik Schoumaker (Mckenzie Engineering), Libby Shaw (Trees for Watertown), and Steve Magoon (City of Watertown)

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent and Hannah Jury, Administrative Specialist

Towler chaired the meeting and took roll call.

1. Informational Update

A. Arsenal Park Phase B (MassDEP filing #: 321-0181): proposed update to Amphitheater

Magoon (City of Watertown) discussed the proposed update to the amphitheater for Arsenal Park Phase B. The contractor installed gravel at the base of the former amphitheater. It was brought to Magoon's attention that the gravel as the base isn't ADA compliant. To make the base ADA compliant and reduce stormwater runoff, Magoon proposed to remove the larger gravel and replace with stone dust at the base.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- Rose commented that stone dust and gravel sound appropriate and is permeable.
- O'Connell asked about what the Commission allowed, what was approved, and does the area where the gravel was placed at the base of the amphitheater exceed

the approved total amount of degraded area (10%) within the Riverfront Area under 310 CMR 10.58(5)(f) or (g).

The Commission requested more information about the total gravel area and confirm the total amount of degraded area, and any other needed information on other materials and siting details for this area at the base of the former amphitheater. Magoon said he would follow up and provide the requested information to the Commission.

2. Public Hearings

A. Request for Determination of Applicability: 108 Water Street (WWO #: 25-11).

Property Owner: WSQ Development LLC

Representative: McKenzie Engineering Group, Inc.

Request: the Request for determination includes:

- If the boundaries of the resource area are accurately delineated;
- If the proposed work is subject to the State WPA;
- If the proposed work is subject to the Watertown Wetlands Ordinance.

Project: The Request for Determination of Applicability was submitted for a redevelopment of a commercial building to be replaced with a 4+ story multi-family residential building with asphalt parking area and basement level parking garage with approximately 20 SF of the site is located within the State and local jurisdictional 200-foot Riverfront Area.

Schoumaker (McKenzie Engineering), Shortsleeve and Lewis (Eaglebrook Capital) discussed the proposed work which involves improving water drainage and bringing the site into compliance with state and local stormwater standards. The entire site is currently impervious, and improvements to landscaping, pedestrian access, and reduction of pervious surfaces are proposed. The approximately 20 SF area within the Riverfront Area is proposed to be an impervious sidewalk.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- O'Connell asked when the delineation for 51 Water Street took place. The applicant responded that the wetland boundary was from a previous project located at 51 Water Street from 2005 and they used GIS to delineate the approximate 200 ft Riverfront Area. O'Connell stated that given that the delineation was from 2005, the wetland delineation used was outdated and there needs to be a more recent delineation to verify the limit of the riverfront buffer and/or wetland resource area.
- Martin requested a larger scale overview map to situate the site and property line in relation to the larger Riverfront Area.

- Rose asked for the percentage of the site that is within the resource area as the current calculation of impervious area was based on using the 2005 wetland delineation using GIS.
- Towler stated that the 2005 delineation was insufficient to issue a determination and they should return with a confirmed delineation.

Lewis formally requested a continuance to the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Towler confirmed with the Commission that a vote on the Request for Determination of Applicability will not take place at this time and the Commission accepted the request for continuance. The meeting will be continued to a date determined by the project team. All members present agreed.

3. Updates

A. Chair updates:

- Towler attended the meeting on 11/20/25 for the former General Service Administration (GSA) site held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) that is located between Arsenal Street and Greenough Boulevard. The site was owned by the GSA which was then used by the US Army until 2014. The site has been remediated with the installation of a soil cap on eastern side of the site and reconstructed wetland on the western side of the site. Towler liked the proposed plans that DCR presented which included three conceptual designs that incorporates passive recreation and site connections to Arsenal Street and Greenough Boulevard. Rose also attended the meeting and shared the procedure for submitting public comment in the DCR portal.
- Rose attended the third meeting on 11/19/25 for the Watertown Dam Removal Analysis Study held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Four design alternatives for the dam removal were presented and evaluated on the extent to which they meet conservation, sustainability, and safety goals. Partial Breach and Full Removal of the dam were evaluated most favorably.

B. CPC Updates:

- O'Connell discussed an affordable housing project requesting additional funding from the Community Preservation Committee due to unanticipated cuts in federal funding. A vote to allocate additional funding was passed.

C. Agent Report:

- **580 Pleasant Street: Hazard Tree**
 - Swan discussed a cleaving tree posing safety concerns at 580 Pleasant Street. The property owner submitted an assessment from an arborist deeming the tree to be high-risk. Rose stated the Tree Assessment Report may not have come from a certified arborist. Swan stated she requested that the 580 Pleasant Street Property Manager to get a letter from a certified arborist. Swan clarified

that she asked the property manager what their plan was for the tree: cut it down completely, leave it as a snag, or cut part of the side the is cleaving?

Public Comment:

- Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown, stated the tree at 580 Pleasant Street is a hazardous tree and raised a concern with the Tree Assessment, that an arborist should identify the specific species type. Shaw suggested to preserve the tree as a partial stump, or as much is possible. Shaw suggested Tree Warden Michael Micieli may provide valuable expertise, to which Swan responded that though she may reach out internally, he cannot perform a site visit as the tree is not located on public property.

The Commission granted Swan administrative approval to work with the Property Manager as the approval is conditional upon receipt of a certified arborist letter.

4. Acceptance of Minutes

A. November Conservation Commission minutes were tabled to the January meeting.

5. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 PM. Salvas seconded the motion.

Roll Call: All members present voted by roll call, 4-0 to adjourn.