



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, January 7, 2026, 7:00 PM, Remote Meeting on Zoom

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

Absent: n/a

Also Present: Eric Shoumaker (McKenzie Engineering Group, LLC), Maxwell Shortsleeve (Eaglebrook Capital) and Erica Holm (resident).

Staff Present: Katie Swan, Conservation Agent, and Susan Jenness, Administrative Specialist
Towler chaired the meeting and took roll call.

1. Public Hearing

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

Property Owner: WSQ Development LLC

Representative: McKenzie Engineering Group, Inc.

Previous Hearing Date: December 3, 2025

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 87 SF of the site located within the State and local jurisdictional 200-foot Riverfront Area.

Schoumaker (Mckenzie Engineering), Shortsleeve and Lewis (Eaglebrook Capital) presented revised plans which were updated in response to the Commissioners' comments from December 3, 2025. Shoumaker provided an overview of the plans and the Environmental

Consulting & Restoration LLC memo regarding the delineation of the inland bank and confirm the 200 foot Riverfront area jurisdictional line.

Comments and questions from members of the Commission:

- O'Connell inquired if Schoumaker identified the Riverfront Area for annual high water. The applicant responded that the only resource area on site in the Conservation Commission jurisdiction is the 200 foot Riverfront Area - there are no endangered species, no vernal pools, no FEMA Flood Zones, no ACEC's or areas with critical environmental concerns. The delineation was updated and moved slightly to the south and the area was adjusted by 87 SF, with the area now consisting of a driveway, adding 2 SF of landscape and 28 SF of crushed stone, with additional landscape plantings and improvements. Shoumaker summarized that all concerns raised by the Commissioners have been addressed - added the delineated line for wetlands and provided a Delineation Memo.
- Martin clarified the landscaping plan shows the 20 SF of the proposed work within the Riverfront Area and he pointed out it was not updated on the landscape plan.
- Rose commented they could ask to have the landscape plan updated.
- O'Connell noted that the only plan that did not have the updated line was the vegetation plan. The applicant confirmed that the rest of the site plans have the updated Riverfront Area boundary lines.
- Rose noted the parking. The applicant clarified parking is behind the building at grade near the front and below the building/grade in a garage on the front/side, so it varies by where you are looking at the structure.
- Rose inquired if they had done some test pits or soil boring. The applicant noted test pits were completed with Glode, the City's engineer, present, and they are listed in the appendix of the report. Shoumaker said the plans comply with the standards for the city stormwater management and Massachusetts Stormwater, and they exceed standards for TSS, groundwater recharge, peak rate reduction, at all design points. From existing conditions, they are also reducing phosphorous by 90%.
- O'Connell inquired about the transformer which appeared to be outside the riverfront area and asked if there would be any fuel that could leak. Martin added that an emergency generator was a concern on a previous project with a transformer. The applicant responded that they are working with Eversource on the specifics of the transformer.
- O'Connell pointed out that the resource area says that there is no buffer, so she asked Swan to record that in the conditions. This is the 200-foot riverfront area line, not a buffer.

Swan noted she had no comments or questions in addition to the Commission member's comments.

Towler stated that there would not be a need to file a notice of intent. He requested a motion that the Commission approve the conditional determinations:

1. If the boundaries of the resource area are accurately delineated: **Positive Condition 2a**
2. If the proposed work is subject to the State WPA: **Negative Condition 3**
3. If the proposed work is subject to the Watertown Wetlands Ordinance: **Positive Condition 5**

Special Condition: The developer must contact/coordinate with the Conservation Agent (Swan) prior to starting any site work.

Motion: Rose made a motion to approve the determinations. O’Connell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Members present voted by roll call, 7-0 to approve the motion.

2. Updates

A. Chair updates:

- Towler reported that he attended the training held in December for Board and Commission Chairs. He explained that City Manager, George Proakis, proposed to update the City Administrative Code which would require all City Board and Commissions to create a set of rules/policy for conducting meetings and to streamline meetings. Towler also that the City Council President and City Manager strongly recommend Board and Commissions should shift to Hybrid and/or In-Person meetings. Members briefly discussed the benefits of in person, hybrid and remote meetings. Towler closed by stating he would discuss this further at a future meeting.

B. CPC Updates: There were no CPC updates

C. Agent Report:

- Wetlands Protection Act, (WPA) regulations update letter of support: Swan reported that the Massachusetts Associate of Conservation Commissions (MACC) is encouraging Commissions to sign a letter in support of updating the WPA regulations. MACC sent a sample letter and Swan asked if the Commissioners agree to sending a letter of support to Healy. Members agreed it was a good idea to sign on.
- 2025 Whitney Hill Annual Report: Swan reported she will reach out to individual members to comment on the 2025 annual Whitney Hill Report, and review the draft at the February meeting. Jenness reminded Commissioners and staff that the window between the February meeting and the targeted date to send the report to the City Manager is short, and the City Manager also still would send the report to City Council before the annual Whitney Hill abutters meeting in March.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

- A. November 5, 2025 Conservation Commission minutes - tabled to the February meeting.

B. December 3, 2025 Conservation Commission minutes - tabled to the February meeting.

3. Meeting Adjournment

Motion: Salvas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. Rose seconded the motion.

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