



# Conservation Commission Meeting

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 7:00 PM  
Remote Participation Only

## Agenda

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, the meeting and public hearing will be conducted with remote opportunities for participation. Remote participation and access methods include:

### **ACCESS INFORMATION:**

- A. This meeting will be held on February 4, 2026 at 7 pm. Location: Remote Participation Only
- B. The in-person meeting will also be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television) on Comcast Channel 22 or RCN Channel 13 and can be streamed online at: <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/watch-now?site=3>
- C. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/99597080710>
- D. Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 995 9708 0710
- E. Public may comment through email: [sjenness@watertown-ma.gov](mailto:sjenness@watertown-ma.gov)
- F. Please Visit the Conservation Commission Website here: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/199/Conservation-Commission>

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1. Call to Order
  2. Roll Call
  3. Regular Business
    - A. Arsenal Park Amphitheater (MassDEP filing #: 321-0181)
      - i. Follow up on proposed minor changes to amphitheater base
    - B. Whitney Hill Park
      - i. Discussion about trees that were cut behind DPW
  4. 2025 Annual Whitney Hill Report
    - A. Discussion of draft report
    - B. Vote on draft report
  5. Updates
    - A. Chair updates
    - B. CPC updates
    - C. Agent's report
      - i. Event reminder: MACC Annual Environmental Conference on February 28, 2026

6. Acceptance of Minutes
  - A. Review of draft minutes for November 5, 2025
  - B. Review of draft minutes for December 3, 2025
  - C. Review of draft minutes for January 7, 2026
7. Adjourn



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

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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 12<sup>th</sup>.

**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 15<sup>th</sup>, 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.



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Maria Rose, Member  
Marilyn Salvas, Member  
Joshua Coefer, Member

### MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 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

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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.



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149 Main St.  
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Patrick Towler, Chair  
Jamie O'Connell, Vice Chair  
Leo Martin, Member  
Rachel Danford, Member  
Maria Rose, Member  
Marilyn Salvias, 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 Salvias, 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.