



TOWN OF
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MASSACHUSETTS

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MEETING MINUTES

Board/Committee: Conservation Commission

Meeting Date, Time: December 18th, 2025

Meeting Location: Zoom

Members in Attendance:

- Erik DeAvila, Chair
- Stephanie Radner, Vice Chair
- Elena Taurasi, Clerk
- Leigh Hafrey, Associate
- Nathan Gauthier, Associate
- Elizabeth Yntema, Associate
- Matthew Layne, Resource Associate Member
- Sophia MacKinnon, Resource Associate Member

Town Staff in Attendance:

- Meredith Confrey, Conservation Agent
- Leonel Lainez, Environmental Specialist

Minutes Prepared By: Leonel Lainez

Minutes Approved: January 22, 2026

Chair DeAvila called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm in accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40 and the Dedham Wetlands Bylaw.

1. Public Comment

Chair DeAvila opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public raised their hands for comment.

2. Continued Applications

2.1. 1 Storer Drive (Noble & Greenough School) – DEP 141-0654 – Omni Ice Rink Renovation

Applicant: Mike McHugh, Noble & Greenough School

Representative: Paul Avery, Oak Consulting Group, LLC Greenough School

Paul Avery from Oak Consulting Group introduced himself as the representative for Noble and Greenough School, accompanied by Mike McHugh and Landscape Architect Kaki Martin. Mr. Avery began by thanking the commission for the productive site visit that took place on

December 1st. Mr. Avery noted that he hoped to discuss the specifics of the restoration plan with the Commissioners following items that were discussed at the site visit.

After sharing his screen and presenting renderings of the existing and proposed conditions, Mr. Avery explained that the project involves removing an existing addition that wraps around the rink and constructing a larger addition that extends to the McLeod parking area. He highlighted improvements to walkway connectivity and accessibility from other parts of the campus.

Mr. Avery presented updated numbers for the development and restoration areas within the buffer zone. They are proposing to develop 2,221 square feet of the buffer zone and restore 3,733 square feet, with a replication ratio of approximately 1.68 to 1.

Ms. Martin then took over to explain the restoration approach. She described that their strategy is to use a native seed mix as a base beneath a mix of native shrubs and trees. Ms. Martin pointed out challenges with two existing Norway maples on the site, explaining that although these are quite large trees and contribute to the existing canopy, they are also invasive and therefore it is difficult to establish other natives in their proximity. She noted that areas within the dripline of the existing Norway Maples would likely need to be mulched rather than planted. The native planting plan included carex grass, Jersey tea, clethra (summer sweet), fothergilla, gray dogwood, comptonia, chokeberry, and witch hazel. In the rear restoration area, Ms. Martin proposed five multi-stem amelanchier trees along with a similar shrub mix.

Chair DeAvila raised his first concern about foot traffic, asking if they would incorporate any kind of boulders to prevent the foot traffic from trampling the restoration area. Mr. McHugh and Ms. Martin agreed with this suggestion and stated they would add boulders to the plan.

Mr. Avery also confirmed that the Stormwater Permit application was still pending as it is undergoing peer review.

Commissioner Radner expressed concern about the shaded planting area. Ms. Martin responded that while plants might not be as dense in shade, they had selected species that are very robust and respond well to many different conditions. Commissioner Radner also asked about the wall that might have vines, to which Mr. Avery responded they hadn't decided on anything yet but were looking into options. Mr. McHugh added they want to make sure they select a wall planting that is able to be successfully maintained.

Commissioner Hafrey inquired about the existing asphalt walkway that is on the Charles River side of the rink, since the applicants originally proposed reducing it by half. Mr. Avery confirmed that following the feedback from the Commission at the site visit that it may not be worthwhile to remove half of the pathway, they decided to leave it as is.

Commissioner Higleman asked about the southwest corner restoration area. Mr. Avery explained that currently this area is where ice shavings are dumped and has little to no vegetation, so revegetating this area will be a big improvement.

The Commissioners agreed to revisit the final plans once the stormwater peer review had been completed.

Motion by Commissioner Radner to continue the project to the next hearing on January 8th for DEP 141-0654. Second by Commissioner Gauthier. All Commissioners present voted “aye”, and the motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

3. Request for Amended Order of Conditions

3.1. 124 Quabish Road – DEP 141-0593 – Planned Multi-Family Development
Applicant: Route 1 Management Land Trust, LLC as Trustee of 200 Commercial Circle Realty
Representatives: Edward L. Pesce, P.E., Pesce Engineering & Associates, Inc. & Thomas Liddy, PWS, Lucas Environmental LLC

Tom Liddy, Professional Wetland Scientist from Lucas Environmental, introduced himself along with Ed Pesce of Pesce Engineering and Landscape Architect Spencer Beebe. Mr. Liddy explained they were requesting to amend an existing Order of Conditions for a project that had been previously permitted back in 2022.

Mr. Liddy provided an overview of the site at 124 Quabish Road, noting it has frontage on Legacy Boulevard with Costco to the south. He explained that the site is currently an aggregate facility, which is used for processing rocks and soils and stockpiling.

He detailed the site features, including wetlands to the south, Wigwam Brook flowing from south to north to the east, and an existing wetland replication area previously constructed to the east. Mr. Liddy reminded the Commission that the original project, approved in September 2022 after extensive peer review, consisted of three buildings with mixed residential and commercial use.

Mr. Liddy explained, instead of two buildings with mixed commercial and residential use, there would be one large residential building called building A, and Building B (formerly Building C) would remain essentially the same. The key modification was a new access and egress to an underground parking garage along the east side of the building.

Mr. Liddy noted that while some parking had expanded inward, the pavement has not encroached any further than what was originally approved. The dog park and community garden, and walking trail to Wigwam Pond all remain on this new rendition of the plan. Mr. Liddy added that they increased the previous restoration area by 200 additional square feet, totaling 9,000.

He provided updated impervious surface calculations, noting that while the original design achieved a 20,000 square foot reduction in degraded area, with the proposed modification the new design will result in about a 15,000 square foot reduction in degraded area.

When Chair DeAvila asked about the location of the stormwater outlet splash pads, Mr. Liddy stated that one of the splash pad locations has moved from near wetland flag 12 to in-between 14 and 15. Mr. Pesce then presented the stormwater approach, emphasizing they are still proposing deep sump catch basins followed by a water quality treatment unit, a swirl concentrator, and subsurface infiltration.

Regarding snow storage, Chair DeAvila noted there were no snow storage areas shown on the new plan. Mr. Pesce explained they had prepared an updated plan showing limited storage areas, adding these locations will be adequate for a small snow event but will need to be removed offsite during larger snowfalls. Commissioner Gauthier raised concerns about snow being pushed toward wetlands. After discussion about what Costco had done with "no snow storage" signs every 50 feet, Mr. Pesce agreed to implement similar signage along the eastern boundary.

Commissioner Gauthier also revisited the dog park area and inquired if the dog waste treatment system is the same from the original permitted design. Mr. Pesce confirmed the enhanced bioretention system with nitrogen uptake remained part of the project.

Commissioner Radner asked whether the previously granted waiver for wetland and Undisturbed Buffer Area (UBA) impacts still applied given the changes. Agent Confrey clarified that procedurally she would suggest that the Commission re-vote on waivers.

Commissioner Radner also expressed concern about the landscaping plan having a fair number of nonnatives and cultivars. Landscape Architect Spencer Beebe responded that the restoration area would be all native plantings and the rest of the property's plantings were about 96% native. Commissioner Radner specifically mentioned fountain grass as troubling, noting it was pretty aggressive in moving into natural areas. Mr. Beebe indicated they could look at a substitute. Mr. Liddy confirmed the restoration area had actually increased from 9,410 to 9,692 square feet, which Commissioner Radner appreciated.

Mr. Pesce requested a continuance to January 22nd to allow time for the stormwater peer review and any necessary revisions.

Motion by Commissioner Radner to continue the project to January 22nd for DEP 141-0593. Second by Commissioner Hafrey. All Commissioners present voted "aye", and the motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

4. New Applications

- 4.1.** 200 Legacy Boulevard – RDA 2025-17 – Con Pad Replacement
Applicant: Dedham LLC c/o/ Benderson Development Co.
Representative: Ryan Mackey, Associate, MG2 Engineering

Ryan Mackey from MG2 architecture firm introduced himself, representing Costco (200 Legacy Boulevard).

Mr. Mackey explained that just at the rear of the Costco building itself, there's some trash compactors and a concrete pad that's existing. He added that they are proposing to have the pad replaced, which will be the entire extent of the project.

Chair DeAvila confirmed with the applicant that they would have sediment controls in place for construction, and that there are no grade changes proposed. Mr. Mackey confirmed this was correct.

With no questions from commissioners or the public, the Commission moved to close the hearing.

Motion by Commissioner Radner to close the public hearing and issue Negative Determination for RDA 2025-17. Second by Commissioner Gauthier. All Commissioners present voted "aye", and the motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

- 4.2.** 185 Westfield Street – DEP 141-TBD– Beaver Pond Leveler Pipe System Installation
Applicant: Ed Anderson, Property Owner
Representative: Ryan Roseen, Lead Wildlife Biologist, Goddard Consulting

Ryan Roseen from Goddard Consulting introduced himself as representative for homeowner Ed Anderson. He noted they did not yet have a DEP file number, so a continuance would be necessary. Mr. Roseen shared his screen and explained the project location, which is a residential house surrounded by large grass fields and wetlands bordering the Charles River on the west. He explained that they are proposing to install a beaver pond leveler device within Rock Meadow Brook to control the amount of flooding on the property that it has experienced over the past few years.

Mr. Roseen detailed that beavers had constructed a dam right at the confluence of Rock Brook and the Charles River, causing increased flooding on the property. He clarified that there is currently no human health risk, property risk, or public safety risk, however, the homeowner would like to just alleviate some of the worry of the flooding on the property.

Mr. Roseen explained that Beaver Solutions LLC, a beaver dam management company based in Massachusetts, would install the flow device. He described the installation process, which involves installing a pipe along the bottom of the stream that gets inserted through the beaver dam at a pre-determined height so that the pond level is slightly reduced. He noted the system includes a domed mesh fence around the intake so that beavers can't plug the inlet, and is placed about 40 feet away from the beaver dam so that the beavers can't detect where the water's coming from. Mr. Roseen emphasized this method is all about coexistence, and the system basically creates a permanent leak in the dam. He added that beavers will still be able to inhabit the property.

Mr. Roseen added that based on a watershed analysis showing a drainage area of 2.68 square miles, Beaver Solutions determined a 12-inch pipe and a 15-inch pipe will be necessary to carry the volume of the stream. Regarding alternatives, Mr. Roseen noted they had considered leaving the dam as is (which wouldn't solve the flooding) or completely removing the dam. He added that completely removing the dam is not recommended by MassDEP or Fish and Wildlife because beavers will just move back in and create a new dam.

Mr. Roseen stated that as proposed mitigation for the project, they are proposing to plant 5 native trees and 9 native shrubs. He added that the shrub species were added to the plan in response to feedback from Agent Confrey that the Commission might want to see more plantings than originally proposed.

Chair DeAvila asked about inspection frequency of the device, to which Mr. Roseen responded that Beaver Solutions usually goes out once a year to inspect the flow device and clean out any material that has built up.

Commissioner Hilgeman inquired about the pipe elevation. Mr. Roseen explained it hadn't been determined yet but noted that Beaver Solutions will not put the outlet of the pipe any lower than what's necessary for beavers to survive. Beavers needs 3 feet of water to survive through the winter, so they will not drop the water level any lower than 3 feet.

Associate Member Layne asked whether the pipe could siphon and drain the stream. Mr. Roseen believed there were measures to prevent this but would get more information from Beaver Solutions. Agent Confrey noted she had found information that air holes were installed in the pipe to prevent siphoning, but it would be best to get confirmation from Beaver Solutions.

Commissioner Yntema asked if similar systems had been installed in Dedham. Chair DeAvila and Mr. Roseen confirmed installations behind BJ's in Dedham and at Hale Reservation in Westwood.

Commissioner Gauthier stated that this is the first application they've had for beaver related activity that does *not* impact public health, and raised a question about under what circumstances it is OK to impact a created resource area to reduce flooding on one's property. He asked if there were certain conditions or MassDEP guidance on such matters. Agent Confrey explained that typically beaver-related applications involve emergency permits due to critical threats to property or human health. In this case, with no such threat, the recommendation by the DEP is to have a full Notice of Intent filed. She added that the applicant's job is to explain to the Commission what the wetland impacts will be, and it's the Commission's job to determine if this work can be completed and conditioned in a way that will minimize impacts to wetlands.

Commissioner Gauthier asked the applicant to provide more quantitative details on the potential reduction to the resource area and impacts to the ecosystem. Mr. Roseen responded that there will be a reduction in flooding, the bordering wetlands themselves are not expected to change, and they expect the area to revert to the pre-existing conditions before the dam was installed.

Commissioner Radner offered to share a state guidance document for Conservation Commissions about beaver management decisions.

Commissioner Taurasi raised multiple concerns about water level monitoring, ecosystem impacts, and maintenance plans. She asked if there have ever been incidents where the installation of the flow device caused beavers to leave the site, build a new dam, and divert water in another direction. Mr. Roseen acknowledged beavers might move if water levels dropped too low but noted they would maintain at least 3 feet of water depth for beaver survival.

Chair DeAvila stated that he knew the property very well, and that beaver has built that dam over the past 8 years at least 6 feet high. He added that the water body was about 4 feet in depth, and now with the dam it's almost 8 feet. He noted this was the same brook causing flooding issues that had brought Dedham Country Club before the Commission for repairs to their green.

Agent Confrey suggested that they could add a condition for yearly reports with photos when Beaver Solutions conducts maintenance. She also requested that case studies of other projects would help the Commission understand the potential wetland impacts.

Motion by Commissioner Radner to continue the project to the next hearing January 8th for DEP 141-TBD. Second by Commissioner Gauthier. All Commissioners present voted "aye", and the motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

5. Minutes

Chair DeAvila noted one correction to the 12/4 minutes: that Associate Members Matthew Layne and Sophia Mackinnon were present.

Motion by Commissioner Hafrey to approve the minutes from December 4th, 2025. Second by Commissioner Gauthier. All Commissioners present voted "aye", and the motion passed by a 7-0 vote.

Motion by Commissioner Gauthier to approve the minutes from the site visit at 637 East St on December 18th 2025. Second by Commissioner Hafrey. All Commissioners present voted "aye", and the motion passed by a 6-0 vote and 1 Abstained Vote from Commissioner Yntema.

6. Agent's Report

Agent Confrey reported on two maintenance notifications filed by Eversource for in-kind gas main replacements in the roadway. One was on Cleveland Street, Harding Terrace, and Leonard Street by East Dedham off of Dedham Boulevard, and another on Colburn Street. She noted these were exempt under the Wetlands Protection Act and didn't need to come before the Commission, but wanted to make them aware.

Agent Confrey provided an update on the Motherbrook condos pedestrian bridge replacement, explaining that the condo association had decided to leave the existing sewer pipe under the bridge in place after determining it had "another 10 or 15 years left of life in it." They would submit an updated emergency action plan for construction to ensure the pipe wouldn't be impacted.

Environmental Specialist Lainez then shared drone footage of Wigwam Pond, where the Water & Wetland team had used a Marshmaster (amphibious cutting machine) had recently cut down the invasive phragmites (work permitted under DEP 141-0638). The footage showed before and after shots of the phragmites removal. Mr. Lainez noted that unfortunately they weren't able to go around the entire pond just because of the ice, tree logs, and just too many obstacles in the way of the machine.

When Commissioner Yntema asked about the purpose of the project, Chair DeAvila explained that the invasive phragmites creates dense stands of vegetation along the pond, choking out native plants, and ultimately contributing to filling in the waterbody of the years with its biomass as the plant dies off each year. Discussion continued about whether the vegetation was cut or crimped, with Chair DeAvila explaining the crimping process. Agent Confrey noted that according to the contractor, there might be about 10 percent regrowth in this area, and then they'll have to go back subsequent times to get full removal.

When asked about the timeline for completion, Agent Confrey explained there wasn't a specific timeline due to the extensive nature of the phragmites growth but noted it was good timing with upcoming development at Stergis Way and potentially at Quabish Road, which have extensive planting plans and shoreline restoration as part of their proposals.

Chair DeAvila concluded the meeting by wishing everyone happy holidays.

Adjournment: Ended: 9:00pm

Motion by Commissioner Radner to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Hafrey. Vote: All in favor by 7-0 vote. Meeting adjourned.