

Acton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2025
7:15 PM
Hybrid Meeting (Room 204 & Zoom)

Present: Terry Maitland (Chair), James Colman (Vice-Chair), Zywia Chadzynska, Peter Hocknell, Kate Warwick, Amy Green

Absent: Jillian Peters

Conservation Agent: Olivia Barksdale

Public Concerns and Regular Business

7:19 Public Concerns:

7:19 Town Staff Presentation, Chapter X

Town staff presented a discussion on Chapter X, a stormwater regulation adopted in 2017 and amended in 2019. The regulation is stricter than the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook and is referenced in the local bylaw. The goal is to have the local bylaw reference Chapter X as the stormwater design standard for projects reviewed by the Commission. The current land disturbance permit rules and regulations exempt projects from filing if they are part of the NOI process. However, there have been recent projects where this has caused confusion, and the default has been to the Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook. The aim is to close this loophole and ensure future projects are designed according to Chapter X standards. Amy moved, and Jim seconded the motion to have Olivia Barksdale draft language for incorporating Chapter X stormwater standards into Conservation Commission wetland regulations and present at next meeting. All were in favor (6-0).

Alyssa Nicol commented that this will smooth out the process to make it less confusing to the applicant, and make less work for the Commission in the long run.

Terra Fredricks asked what would happen if there is not a NOI because there are no wetlands on the lot but there are wetlands on the adjacent lot. The stormwater could impact a wetland that's across the boundary.

The Town Engineer responded that the current rules and regulations do not allow increased runoff from site, post development and pre-development, and there is a requirement on water quality. Direct runoff of untreated water flowing off of a development is not allowed. She also added that it needs to be considered case by case and any questions engineering might have would be brought to the commission.

7:51 Town Staff Presentation, DPW Building

Dean Charter, Chair of DPW Building Committee Select Board Vice Chair, presented on this project. It will be presented at Town Meeting in May.

8:20 Amended Order of Conditions Public Hearing – 358 Great Road DEP #85-1368

Paul Kirshner from Stamski and McNary presented on behalf of the applicant to request an amended order to formally incorporate the gravel area, shown in the plans, into the stormwater management system. Site has a single-family dwelling and commercial space. Part of the single-family dwelling, the majority of the commercial space, most of the pavement, and the entire gravel area to the rear of the house is within the riverfront area. In addition to the work already approved by the commission, the applicant is proposing very minor regrading in order to increase the time storm water runoff would flow over the area. This would allow additional sediment removal and infiltration. The stormwater management system would require that it be maintained through general removal of sediment and reseeding of any bare spots. This area would be considered a vegetative filter strip rather than just a planting area. There is no expected increase in stormwater that would flow through this area. Amy Green moved to amend The Order of Conditions that references the February 3rd, 2025 revised plans. Peter Hocknell seconded the motion, all were in favor (6-0).

8:29 Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation –Public Hearing –42 Taylor Road

Applicant requested a continuance. Continued until April 2nd, 2025 at 7:30pm

8:29 Red Line Change – Order of Conditions – 484 Great Rd DEP #85-1257

Bruce Ringwall on behalf of the applicant presented updates to this project. The commission met with the applicant on site to review the trail in question. It was decided that the wood chips should be removed, fabric pulled back, leave the stone that's underneath in place, put in clean loam, and seed it with a New England wetland mix. The boardwalk will be constructed with the bases, sitting on that gravel base. An area of loam would be dug out for the boardwalk bases. An 8-inch diameter pipe is recommended to use as beams, joists would run across the top of that, and then decking would be installed on top. This would allow 4 inches of clear space. It is not expected that water would flow more than an inch or 2 over that because of the width of the area. The travel path is expected to be 4 feet wide. The applicant has agreed to the outlined change in construction of the trail and boardwalk. Applicant and the Commission agreed that the boardwalk would be in place

The applicant is also requesting that the order of conditions be modified to allow the order of condition to be recorded at the state prior to the last occupancy permit rather than the first occupancy permit.

James Coleman moved that:

1. The conservation restriction shall be approved by the state prior to the last unit (4th unit) issuance of the occupancy permit.
2. The Boardwalk shall be constructed prior to July 1st, 2026 or the issuance of the last occupancy permit, whichever occurs first.

3. The Conservation Restriction shall be approved by the state prior to the last unit (4th unit) issuance of the occupancy permit.

Amy Green seconded the motion, and all were in favor (6-0)

8:54 Enforcement Order – 43 Kinsley Rd.

Armand Parrazzo appeared to discuss the violations on his property. He stated that he and his family have always had agricultural practices on their lot and nothing has changed on his property since he was a child. The commission stated that they have had many calls and complaints related to his property and they will need a site visit. They have requested site visits many times and have not been able to arrange a meeting with Armand. They stated they would not lift any fines without the opportunity to complete a site visit. The commission is concerned about the Japanese Knotweed that has contaminated the compost pile. The fines are on hold until April 2nd. If a site visit cannot be conducted prior to April 2nd the commission moved to go to the district court. Armand agreed to contact Olivia March 24th, 2025 to set a date for the site visit prior to April 2nd, 2025.

Terra Fredricks commented and requested clarification as to whether it was up to the accused to prove his innocence, and if fines could be imposed just because of an accusation. The commission clarified that complaints and accusations have been made by multiple parties, multiple conservation agents have observed the violations, and aerial views confirm the violations as well. A site visit is needed to determine all facts involved in the case.

Administrative Updates

9:12 Review and Approve Meeting Minutes

James Colman moved to approve the meeting minutes for 2/19/25, Amy Green seconded, all in favor (6-0)

Peter Hocknell moved to approve the meeting minutes for 3/5/25 with the edits as described, Amy Green seconded, and all were in favor (6-0)

Olivia Barksdale commented that she and Terry Maitland received notifications of the following:

1. Mass DOT is redoing the intersection of Route 2A and 119. They are asking the Commission to give any comments to that project
2. National Grid will be doing a project near Main Street and Conant Street, to replace a gas pipe within 100 foot of the buffer zone and 200 feet of the river. They are exempt, but sent a letter.

Commission recommend that the agent look at the early coordination for the DOT project, and let Mass DOT know if they are going to need to file. They also commented that they'll need a plan in order to provide comment so they will expect to see one if it's determined that comment is needed.

9:12 Staff Presentation – Tree Protection Bylaw

Olivia Barksdale presented the changes to the bylaw from the last meeting.

9:25 The meeting closed at 9:25PM

Peter Hocknell moved to close the hearing at 9:25pm and Amy Green seconded. Roll call vote all in favor (6-0).

Documents and exhibits used at this meeting:

 03-19-2025 Meeting Information

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Type	Title	Owner	Modified Date	Size	Actions
 PDF	2025-03-11 - MassDOT - Great Road (Harris, Davis, Concord Rd) - Early Environmental Coordination.pdf	obarksdale	03/14/25	801 KB	   
 PDF	3-19-2025.pdf	obarksdale	03/14/25	229 KB	   
 DOC	Article - Tree Preservation Bylaw - Warrant DRAFT 3-19-25.docx	obarksdale	03/19/25	31 KB	   
 PDF	ConCom Minutes 3.5.25 DRAFT V031425.pdf	jschmidt	03/14/25	206 KB	   
 DOC	Minutes 2.19.25 DRAFT Draft.docx	obarksdale	03/13/25	109 KB	   
 PDF	National Grid 3-31 Main Street Gas Main Replacment.pdf	obarksdale	03/17/25	408 KB	   
 DOC	358 Great Road AOOC	obarksdale	03/12/25	0	   
 DOC	42 Taylor Road ANRAD	obarksdale	03/12/25	0	   
 DOC	43 Kinsley Road EO	obarksdale	03/14/25	0	   
 DOC	484 Great Road Redline	obarksdale	03/12/25	0	   

Town of Acton

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All Documents can be found at:
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