

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of a Meeting – April 2, 2026

The City of Methuen Conservation Commission held a hybrid meeting via in-person and Zoom video conferencing (VC) on April 2, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Searles Building, 2nd floor Conference Room, 41 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA 01844. Present at this meeting were Dave Di Zazzo, Vice Chair; Kenneth Sateriale, Secretary; and Commissioners Sandra Boulay, Rachel Lecher, and Patrice Friant. Also present were Conservation Officer Christopher Parsons and Conservation Clerk Amy Priante-Walkowicz. Absent was Matthew Davidson, Chair

Vice Chairman, Dave Di Zazzo, announced that, Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the public body, as well as members of the public, may access the meeting via virtual means. The meeting may be accessed remotely via Zoom video conferencing (VC) by contacting the Conservation Office. When required by law or allowed by the Chair, persons wishing to provide public comment or otherwise participate in the meeting may do so by in-person attendance, or by accessing the meeting remotely, as noted above. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen/watch the meeting may do so in the following manner: to be contacted by phone or by VC, please contact the Commission Office. In the event that access and participation are not achieved, then the Commission will post, on the City of Methuen website, an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. The following are actions, comments, and concerns regarding the information submitted for the Commission's meeting of April 2, 2026.

I. NOTICES OF INTENT:

**A. Amendment to Order of Conditions – DEP File #219-1274, MCC File # 22-007 –
9 River Street – Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) – Anthony Ngethe**

The Commission opened the hearing on the proposed amendment to the Order of Conditions.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to OPEN the hearing.

Sarah Schactman, Project Engineer with Greenman Pedersen-Inc., stated that the requested Amendment is for the proposed relocation of an ADA-accessible parking space and striped access aisle from the right side of the building to the left side. This change is associated with a minor modification to the building footprint, including a new garage opening. The relocation results in approximately 600 square feet of additional paved area and associated grading. Mrs. Schactman stated that she had provided revised plans, stormwater management report, and operations and maintenance plans to the Commission and to Maria Johnsenberg of Tighe & Bond for her peer review.

Mr. Sateriale asks for the reason for moving the access area.

Mrs. Shachtman stated that the building footprint plan has been slightly changed to include a new garage opening.

Mr. Sateriale asked if the new plan offers the same level of ADA accessibility, and Mrs. Schactman confirmed that the amended plan does offer the same ADA accessibility.

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Mr. Di Zazzo asked if there had been any changes to snow storage, to which Mrs. Shachtman replied that the snow storage will be roughly in the same area and will remain outside the 50-foot buffer zone of the wetlands.

A resident, David St. Laurent of 94 Bridle Path Lane, stated that he abuts the property 49A Union Street, and asked for clarification on the building layout and its proximity to his property. The Commission reviewed the site plan and explained the project boundaries and planned changes. Mr. St. Laurent indicated his concerns were addressed. No further public comments were made at that time.

Maria Johnsenberg, from Tighe & Bond, was present as a peer reviewer for the Commission and did not have any comments other than to confirm that a continuance to the April 16, 2026, meeting should give her enough time to complete her review.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the April 16, 2026, meeting.

NOTE: Mrs. Boulay entered the meeting at 7:05 pm.

II. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:08 pm

III. **ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA / AMENDMENTS (IF ANY):**

Motion made by Mr. Sateriale, **Seconded** by Mrs. Seaman, so voted UNANIMOUS to ACCEPT the 4/2/2026 agenda as posted.

IV. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:** None

V. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **Stormwater Permit Application** – 11 Cross Street – CROSSL D QOZB, LLC – Dresser, Williams & Way, Inc. (Continued from 3/19/2026)

Maureen Herald, from Norse Environmental, on behalf of the applicant, requested a continuance of the hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

B. **Request for Determination of Applicability #26-004** – Preserve at Emerald Pines – Gene Joly

Mrs. Seaman recused herself from any discussion or motion on this item due to her residency within the Emerald Pines Community to avoid a conflict of interest.

Mr. Parsons presented a request to address a series of potentially hazardous trees located along a tree line. Approximately 8–10 trees were identified, with several posing an immediate risk to nearby property and structures.

Mrs. Katherine Wharton was present on behalf of the applicant Gene Joly, and she stated that the tree management was proposed in two phases – with higher priority to cut/trim trees that pose more of an immediate danger to properties, and the second phase to happen next year for trees that pose less immediate hazard but still need to be addressed.

Mr. Parsons stated that the proposed work will occur in two phases under the proposed Request for Determination:

- **Phase 1:** Removal of trees identified as an immediate threat (priority level 1), to be undertaken as soon as possible.
- **Phase 2:** Additional tree work to address remaining concerns, anticipated to occur during the next winter season.

Mr. Parsons stated that trees will be cut to a height that mitigates risk to personal property, brush will remain on-site, and larger limbs will be managed appropriately. He further stated that the contractor will primarily climb trees rather than use heavy machinery, minimizing site disturbance. Mr. Parsons noted that special conditions within the Determination of Applicability will be implemented to protect resource areas, such as a 48-hour notice before work begins, and that he will be on-site as much as his schedule allows for inspections as the work progresses.

Mr. Sateriale asked whether Mrs. Seaman's recusal would result in a lack of a quorum. Mr. Di Zazzo confirmed that a quorum was still present, allowing the Commission to proceed.

Attendance for Mrs. Boulay was clarified, confirming her presence at the meeting starting at 7:05 pm when the first hearing was opened.

Motion made by Mr. Sateriale, **Seconded** by Mrs. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS, to ISSUE a Negative 2 Determination under the State and a Negative 3 Determination under the Local, with Special Conditions 1 – 6.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Emergency Certification #26-001 – 60 Cornelia Rd. – Tree removal – Yandi's Tree Service

Mr. Parsons reported receiving a call from a resident regarding a fallen tree resting on a fence and concerns about an additional nearby tree posing a similar risk.

Mr. Parsons stated that upon inspection, it was determined that another tree near the fence line presented a potential hazard, and he therefore issued an Emergency Certification to allow the homeowner to manage the trees.

Mr. Parsons stated that tree work was completed as follows:

- The hazardous tree was cut in a manner to avoid further damage to the fence.
- Limbs and brush were placed within the resource area.
- Work was conducted in accordance with the Emergency Certification's conditions.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to RATIFY this Emergency Certification.

B. Enforcement Order #25-006 – 2 Muirfield Lane – Aniberquiz Baez (Continued from 1/8/2026)

Mrs. Priante-Walkowicz stated that the applicant's representative, Mareen Herald from Norse Environmental, sent an email requesting additional time to prepare a restoration proposal. The proposal is expected to outline options for restoring the impacted area and address questions regarding the extent of restoration required.

Mr. Parsons presented site photos and explained the violation, which includes:

- The original approved layout with a 15-foot buffer from the wetland
- Portions of the 15-foot buffer and the wetlands have since been filled up to 1-2 feet deep, and a Gazebo and an additional structure have been installed.
- Trees were cut down and lumber and cement placed in the wetland area.
- The fence, which was in violation, has already been removed.
- The arborvitae shrub line, which is in violation, will be moved as the shrubs are in jurisdictional areas.

Mr. Parsons stated that the homeowner wants to keep his gazebo if possible, and it will be up to the Commission to decide.

Mr. Di Zazzo stated that the homeowner should be required to remove all fill and debris from the 15-foot buffer zone and wetland area, restore both areas fully, and move the arborvitae shrub line back to the 15-foot buffer boundary and install Conservation markers along that line.

Mr. Parsons stated that the homeowner will need to remove all fill and debris from the buffer zone and wetland area. Mr. Parsons stated that he would work with Mrs. Herald to get the homeowner into compliance and avoid the expense of an engineered plan for the homeowner, if possible.

Mrs. Boulay and Mr. Sateriale stated that they agreed with the proposed steps required for the restoration of this property, as discussed by Mr. Di Zazzo and Mr. Parsons.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

C. Notice of Violation #25-006 – Enforcement Order #25-004 – 15 Ayers Village Road – Elicer Gomez (Continued from 11/20/2025 to loam and seed in Spring)

Mr. Parsons stated that last fall, Mr. Gomez removed all the unpermitted fill from his site and that Mr. Gomez expressed concern that when trucks try to pull into the backyard to service the propane tanks. Discussion focused on site conditions and compliance with the enforcement order. The Commission had previously agreed to wait until spring conditions to determine the appropriate placement of wetland boundary markers. Consideration is being given to maintaining access for a propane delivery truck to service the rear of the property. There was also discussion of an existing paved/concrete area near the property boundary, which appears to be within or near the buffer zone, but is pre-existing. Once

marker locations are finalized, the applicant will proceed with loaming and seeding of disturbed areas.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

D. Notice of Violation #25-014 – 134 Meriline Ave. – C & A Enterprises, LLC (Continued from 3/5/2026)

Mr. Parsons reviewed the status of the violation, which involves improper placement of a dumpster and materials within or near a sewer easement/private property area. The property owner has since relocated the dumpster and adjusted a fence; however, the dumpster remains full, and additional construction debris (including dirt, concrete, and other materials) has been stockpiled along the fence line.

Mr. Parsons reported that, following snowmelt, conditions now allow for site cleanup. Communication has been made with the property owner and a contractor acting on their behalf, but no follow-up response or corrective action has been confirmed to date.

The Commission discussed next steps, indicating that if compliance is not achieved, escalation to a formal Enforcement Order may be necessary.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 5/7/2026 meeting.

E. Notice of Violation #25-015 – 44 Ayer Street – Christopher Hall (Continued from 11/20/2025 to allow area to revegetate)

Mr. Parsons reviewed ongoing compliance related to prior unauthorized work near a stream located behind the property. The matter had previously been continued to allow the disturbed area to revegetate.

The site includes a stream and an associated resource area, and debris removal and restoration are still in progress. The Commission is working with the property owner to establish an appropriate buffer boundary and determine the placement of markers or other demarcation.

A representative of the property owner requested that the Commission allow compliance without installation of boundary markers, citing aesthetic concerns and use of the yard by their family. The Commission discussed the importance of clearly delineating the protected area, particularly given the presence of a stream and prior violation.

The Commission agreed to allow a minimal number of markers (approximately two to three posts) to establish a clear boundary, rather than a full line of markers or fencing. The use of an approved wetland seed mix (e.g., New England Wet Mix) for revegetation was also discussed.

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The applicant was advised that the area must be allowed to grow naturally and cannot be further altered or maintained beyond the approved limits.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mrs. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

F. Notice of Violation #25-016 – 46 Ayer Street – Ahsan Saysourivong (Continued from 12/4/2025 for marker installation)

Mr. Parsons reviewed the status of the violation, which involves prior dumping of construction debris and disturbance within a protected area. The matter had previously been continued to allow for the installation of conservation markers.

Mr. Parsons discussed scheduling a site visit to determine the appropriate placement of conservation markers to clearly define the limit of allowable activity. The property owner confirmed availability for a site visit, and staff will coordinate a time to meet on-site.

The owner was reminded that the markers will establish the boundary beyond which no dumping or disturbance may occur.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 4/16/2026 meeting.

G. Notice of Violation – #24-005 – 5 Riverview Cir. – Barry Thornton (Continued from 1/8/2026 to monitor revegetation of resource area)

Mr. Parsons reviewed the status of ongoing revegetation efforts associated with prior violations. The matter involves previous storage of materials within a protected easement area, as well as potential disturbance to the riverbank. Conservation markers have since been installed to delineate the protected area.

No representative was present at the meeting. Due to seasonal conditions, site conditions could not yet be evaluated for revegetation success.

The Commission agreed to continue the matter to allow additional time for vegetation to establish and for future inspection.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 6/4/2026 meeting.

H. Notice of Violation #23-013 (DEP File #219-873, MCC File #03-029) – 52 Linwood Ave. – Ana Diaz (Continued from 12/4/2025 marker installation/revegetation check)

The Commission discussed the continued matter related to marker installation and revegetation monitoring for the property at 52 Lynwood Ave. Mr. Parsons confirmed that site markers have now been placed in the correct positions and that ongoing monitoring of vegetation growth will proceed.

There was discussion regarding maintenance responsibilities and expectations for the site, including concerns raised about mowing and property upkeep. The Commission acknowledged prior history related to the property, noting that the current owner purchased the lot under the assumption it was buildable based on representations made during the prior sale. It was noted that any dispute regarding misrepresentation is between the property owner and the real estate broker, not the Commission.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Mr. Sateriale, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 6/4/2026 meeting.

I. Notice of Violation #24-008/Enforcement Order #25-001 – 25 Thayer Street – Moskal and Cavarallo (Continued from 1/8/2026)

Mr. Parsons is in communication with the property owners to set up a time to inspect where the posts were installed.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, **Seconded** by Ms. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 5/4/2026 meeting.

J. Certificate of Compliance – DEP File #219-1242, MCC File #20-002 – 394/397 Transmission Lines Geotechnical Soil Borings Project (Phase I ONLY) – BSC Group, Inc. – New England Power Company

Mr. Parsons reviewed a request for a Certificate of Compliance for geotechnical soil borings associated with transmission line work. Hanna Raddatz, BSC Group, Inc confirmed that Phase 1 (soil borings) was completed in accordance with the approved plans. Site inspection verified that all borings were properly filled and the area was left in compliance.

The original Order of Conditions included two phases. However, Phase 2 (structure replacement work) was not undertaken and will not proceed under the original approval due to changes in project scope. Ms. Raddatz indicated that a separate filing has been made for revised work under a different project scope.

The Commission determined that a Certificate of Compliance may be issued for the completed portion of the work, with appropriate notation regarding the uncompleted phase.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman **Second** by Ms. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS to issue a Certificate of Compliance for Phase 1 (completed as permitted), with the notation that Phase 2 was not commenced and will not be completed under this approval.

K. Notice of Violation #26-001 –1 Riverdale Street – Ladistone Coelho

The Commission took this item out of order after determining it had been inadvertently omitted from the agenda.

Mr. Parsons presented a Notice of Violation for unauthorized alteration of jurisdictional areas associated with the Merrimack River, including impacts to the riverfront area and floodplain due to the clearing of vegetation. Photographs were provided showing the removal of vegetation and small trees extending from the rear of the property toward the riverbank.

The property owner was present, with translation assistance provided by a family member. The Commission explained that the affected area is within a protected riverbank and includes a City-

owned easement. The owner was informed that no clearing, cutting, or placement of materials is permitted in this area.

The Commission determined that the extent of disturbance was relatively limited and that natural regeneration is likely. No replanting was required at this time. The owner was instructed to cease all activity beyond the fence line and allow the area to revegetate naturally.

It was further clarified that the area is maintained by the City, and any future work must be conducted only by the City.

The Commission will monitor the site to ensure adequate regrowth.

Motion made by Mrs. Seaman, seconded by Ms. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS to CONTINUE this hearing to the 9/17/2026 meeting.

VII. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT:

- 15 Myrtle Street occupancy permit - site conditions stable, other items to consider

Mr. Parsons reviewed updates related to ongoing construction activities in the River Street area, including work associated with two residential dwellings being constructed by a father and son. Discussion focused primarily on the status of "Lot/House #1" (referred to as the Parents' house).

Construction of the first dwelling is approximately 90% complete. Remaining work includes erosion and sediment control measures, installation of conservation markers, and completion of site work such as grading, paving, loaming, seeding, and general stabilization activities.

A request was presented by the applicant seeking an early certificate of occupancy due to the family's current living situation. It was noted that the applicant is currently residing with family and is seeking to move into the completed structure. It was further noted that the second dwelling on the site has not yet been constructed.

Commission discussion emphasized the importance of ensuring that required conservation and site stabilization measures are completed prior to full approval, particularly grading, soil stabilization, seeding, and erosion control measures (including hay or mulch application). Members noted that completion of these elements is a priority condition of compliance.

The Commission indicated general willingness to consider occupancy-related relief once critical stabilization work is completed, while maintaining that conservation conditions must be satisfied prior to final sign-off.

- 134 Meriline Ave. update

Mr. Parsons provided his observations from a recent site visit to 134 Maryland Street, which was already listed on the agenda. Staff reported visual observations from the field inspection and noted intent to follow up with a contractor associated with the project to determine whether they are still representing the property owner.

Mr. Parsons indicated they plan to contact a contractor this week to confirm representation status, noting that prior communication has been inconsistent.

A brief discussion followed regarding potential conflicts of interest. It was noted that the contractor in question may also be involved in unrelated private work connected to a family member of a Commission member. The Commission member clarified the relationship and stated that the work is unrelated to the project before the Commission.

The Commission briefly discussed whether any conflict-of-interest concerns existed and did not identify any immediate issue requiring recusal or formal action.

- 35 Partridge water issues

Mr. Parsons discussed a complaint received via the sewer department regarding reported water flow from adjacent conservation wetlands onto a private property identified as 35 Partridge. Mr. Parsons conducted a site visit and reviewed conditions on the property, which is located behind a residential area near Mann Orchards.

The property is situated at a low point in the neighborhood, directly adjacent to wetlands, and that historic drainage patterns appear to influence periodic water accumulation. It was noted that the site conditions observed are long-standing and likely predate modern development regulations. Photographs were taken during the inspection to document existing conditions.

Based on the field review, staff indicated that the drainage appears to be natural and consistent with existing wetland hydrology, with no clear evidence of a new or actionable disturbance within the Commission's jurisdiction. It was further noted that existing structures, including a culvert providing access to the rear of the property, were previously permitted.

The Commission concluded that the matter does not appear to constitute a current conservation violation requiring enforcement action.

- Hampstead Street – citizen complaint to City Councilor

Mr. Parsons reported receiving a complaint relayed through municipal channels regarding a residential property owner who rents rooms in her home. The complaint was reportedly raised in connection with a local official inquiry and subsequent communication with staff.

The matter was reviewed informally and involved long-standing neighborhood conditions, including access through an existing culvert that was previously permitted through conservation review. Mr. Parsons indicated that the culvert and associated access have been in place for an extended period and are legally permitted.

Based on staff review and historical knowledge of the site, no new violations or changes in conditions were identified that would require enforcement action by the Commission.

The discussion included general comments regarding the history of the area and prior interactions with the property, but no formal findings or determinations were made beyond staff assessment.

- Upcoming NOI for 68 Lowell Blvd.

Mr. Parsons provided a brief update regarding a forthcoming Notice of Intent associated with redevelopment activities at a commercial/industrial property (referred to as Lowell Boulevard area). The property owner intends to modify the grading in front of the garage areas to address persistent flooding issues affecting the building.

Staff noted that the proposed work will require formal review through the Commission's standard permitting process and will be referred to the Commission's consulting engineer for technical review, as is standard practice for complex projects.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Election of new Chair of the Commission, and discussion about discontinuing the position of Conservation Commission Financial Secretary

The Commission conducted its annual election of officers.

Mr. Sateriale nominated Dave Di Zazzo to the position of Chair. The nomination was seconded by Mrs. Seaman, and no additional nominations were brought forward.

Motion made to appoint the nominated candidate as Chair of the Conservation Commission, seconded by Mrs. Boulay, so voted UNANIMOUS (5-0).

The Commission appointed Dave Di Zazzo as Chair of the Conservation Commission.

Dave Di Zazzo nominated Cara Seaman for the position of Vice Chair. Ms. Seaman accepted the nomination; Mrs. Boulay seconded the nomination. No additional nominations were brought forward.

Motion made to appoint the Cara Seaman as Vice Chair of the Conservation Commission, so voted UNANIMOUS (5-0).

The Commission appointed Cara Seaman as Vice Chair of the Conservation Commission.

The Commission confirmed that the current Secretary may remain in that position.

The Commission discussed the role of financial administration within the Commission. It was noted that because financial responsibilities, including the handling of payments and records, are currently managed by City staff (Clerk), that

maintaining a position of Conservation Commission Financial Secretary structure is not required.

Discussion followed regarding the formal elimination of the Financial Secretary position as a Commission role, with all financial responsibilities to remain under the administration of City personnel.

Motion made by Mr. Sateriale, seconded by Mrs. Boulay, voted UNANIMOUS to eliminate the position of Financial Secretary as a Commission role, with all financial responsibilities to remain with City staff.

The Commission further noted that appropriate City staff should be informed of this action to ensure clarity regarding financial responsibility and administrative procedures.

The Commission directed the Conservation Commission Clerk to notify appropriate City personnel of the Commission's action regarding financial administration.

- Discussion of the die-off of Birds of Prey due to anticoagulant rodenticides

The Commission discussed concerns regarding the increasing impact of anticoagulant rodenticides on wildlife, particularly birds of prey. Mr. Parsons reported observations of deceased and impaired raptors, including owls, believed to be affected by these substances entering the food chain.

Mr. Sateriale noted that this issue extends beyond local conditions and represents a broader regional, national, and international concern affecting multiple species, including birds and mammals. Mr. Sateriale provided additional context regarding ongoing efforts in other municipalities, including draft regulatory approaches under review elsewhere, and confirmed that the matter has been referred to City legal counsel and the Health Department for consideration.

The Commission discussed its limited regulatory authority but acknowledged its ability to make formal recommendations to municipal leadership.

A motion was made to formally express the Commission's concern and request action from City officials.

Motion made by Mr. Sateriale: That the Conservation Commission formally request that the City Council and Mayor:

Prohibit the use of anticoagulant rodenticides by City departments; and pursue action through the Commonwealth (including a Home Rule Petition) to restrict or ban such substances more broadly, consistent with draft language under consideration in other municipalities.

Seconded by Mrs. Seaman. **Vote:** Approved UNANIMOUS

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Additional Discussion – Wildlife Rehabilitation Example

Mr. Parsons provided an example involving an injured owl that required rehabilitation and tested positive for anticoagulant exposure. He described the significant time and cost associated with treatment and noted broader ecological impacts, including effects on reproduction and survival rates of wildlife.

IX. ADJOURN: 8:24 pm

Motion made by Mr. Di Zazzo, seconded by Ms. Lecher, so voted UNANIMOUS to ADJOURN at 8:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Dave Di Zazzo, Vice Chairman

Respectfully submitted by:

Reviewed by:

Approved on:

Amy Priante-Walkowicz
Clerk III

Kenneth Sateriale,
Secretary

Date Approved