



CITY OF SALEM CONSERVATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Salem Conservation Commission will be held on August 18, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. **via remote participation in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Act of 2025.**

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was opened at 6:30 pm.

I. ROLL CALL

- In attendance:* Tom Campbell, Emmet Costen, Graeme Marcoux, Dayton Marchese, and Bart Hoskins

City Staff: Rachel Vresilovic

II. REGULAR AGENDA

A. 54-56 Margin Street, 5 High Street, 20-24 Endicott Street #64-832 – Continuance of Public Hearing - Notice of Intent for Harborlight Homes, for a redevelopment of multiple parcels into affordable housing and shelter beds with service. The site is located at 54-56 Margin Street, 7 High Street & 20-24 Endicott Street (Map 25, Lots 595 & 597) within an area subject to protection under the Wetlands Protection Act MGL c.131§40 and Salem Wetlands Protection and Conservation Ordinance. *Applicant Requests to continue to September 15, 2026 meeting

A motion to continue the hearing until the September 15, 2026 meeting was made by Graeme Marcoux, seconded by Dayton Marchese, and passes 5-0.

B. 73 Lafayette St, 89 Lafayette St, 315 Derby St #64-833– Public Hearing- Notice of Intent for Jay Carroll, City of Salem Engineering Department, for the South River culvert rehabilitation project. The site is located at 73 Lafayette St, 89 Lafayette St & 315 Derby St (Map 34 Lot, 43, 444, 433) within an area subject to protection under the Wetlands Protection Act MGL c.131§40 and Salem Wetlands Protection and Conservation Ordinance.

Jay Carroll, City of Salem Engineer, Greg St. Louis from Bobrick Engineering, and Evin Guvendiren from Derosa Environmental were present to discuss the proposal:

- Mr. Carroll introduced the project.
- Ms. Guvendiren shared a map showing the property downtown on the South River. The property currently includes a bank with a lot of paved areas. There is no natural areas of vegetation. She noted that the South River was culverted in the early 1900s. Because the project is longer than 200 linear feet

it is not within the riverfront area. The riverfront area starts where the river daylights again on the oceanside.

- She reviewed the resource areas. The project is within the floodplain at elevation 10. The land is subject to coastal storm flowage.
- The site plan was shown showing the limit of the culvert. There is coastal bank with an engineered structure.
- Following the Order of Conditions, the applicant will need to get a minor project permit from Chapter 91.
- The project will be completed in sections so that there is no long term exposure to the whole culvert as the project takes place.
- The project will replace the culvert and repair any stonework as needed on the inside.
- Mr. St. Louis reviewed the site plan which includes two proposed construction entrances.
- Perimeter fencing will be installed around the entire site while maintaining Chapter 91 access.
- A turbidity curtain is planned for the outfall.
- The culvert roof is down three or four feet. Once exposed, it will be assessed and repaired or replaced. A poured in place product is expected to be used due to the timing necessary for the project. Once the roof has cured, the site will be restored to its gravel grid and formwork from the inside removed.
- Currently, only work on the roof of the culvert is anticipated. An elevation plan was shared.
- Mean high water is at elevation four or five. The top of the culvert is at elevation seven or eight.
- A structural engineer has made recommendations for repairs.
- The culvert does not have a floor. The granite blocks are sitting on submerged wooden piles.
- The City is rushing to complete the project by mid-September. The CDC is similarly racing to complete their funding. The City is hoping to work with the CDC on the culvert while they are building out their foundation. The entire existing building is being demolished.
- In response to Mr. Marchese's question, Mr. St. Louis said the culvert would remain hydraulically functional through and that they would keep an eye on extreme lunar cycles and storm events.
- The request for the Order of Conditions includes the new culvert roof and any needed masonry work.
- In response to Mr. Campbell's question regarding the soil that is excavated and stockpiling, Mr. St. Louis said there will be some structural soil under the slab. There will be erosion controls installed at the chain link fence around the whole site and an additional layer of erosion controls around any active stockpile. He said they will know quickly if they need to truck any soil offsite or are able to reuse it.
- Mr. Costen confirmed the order of operations which includes digging down, removing the existing top of the culvert, installing formwork, then pouring in a new top and that any debris will be caught at the end of the river before it goes into the coastal bank. Mr. St. Louis confirmed.

The meeting was open for public comment. There were no comments or questions.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Graeme Marcoux, seconded by Tom Campbell, and passes 5-0.

A motion to issue an Order of Conditions with the standard conditions was made by Dayton Marchese, seconded by Graeme Marcoux, and passes 5-0.

3. 6 Lawrence Street – Public Hearing – Request for Determination of Applicability for Stephen P. Lovely, Lawrence Street Salm LLC. The project consists of repaving existing paved area, removing a shed, and

removing an existing tree. The work is located at 6 Lawrence St (Map 24, Lot 173) within an area subject to protection under the Wetlands Protection Act and the Salem Wetlands Protection and Conservation Ordinance.

Mr. Lovely was present to discuss the proposal:

- Mr. Lovely noted that they are quite a distance from the South River Flood Control Area and would like to repave, remove a shed, and an existing tree that is in bad condition.
- There is no change in impervious surface.
- Mr. Lovely thought there may be some sections of the project that may be located within the wetland vegetative border.
- Ms. Vresilovic confirmed that the floodplain is the resource area.
- Mr. Lovely noted the tree is in unsightly and in poor condition.

The meeting was open for public comment. There were no comments or questions.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Tom Campbell, seconded by Graeme Marcoux, and passes 5-0.

A motion to issue a negative two and negative six determination was made by Tom Campbell, seconded by Dayton Marchese, and passes 5-0.

III. OLD | NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

1. Kernwood St - #64-800- Request for minor modification

Stuart O'Connor from Fernwood County Club and Emily Anderson from Bowler Engineering were present to discuss the proposal:

- Mr. O'Connor noted that the project consists of renovating the pool on the west side of the property. New impervious surfaces are proposed and a civil plan was submitted showing how the impervious surfaces would be addressed.
- The proposal includes using trenches and area drains.
- The site plan was shared.
- There is an existing, open Order of Conditions. Nothing in this proposal is contrary to what was originally proposed.
- Ms. Vresilovic noted that the Order of Conditions was issued in October 2024. There were only two additional special conditions regarding the pool maintenance plan being submitted at the conclusion of the project and the details on how to drain down the pool.
- The applicant did not have the total net SF change between the original Order and the new request.
- Ms. Anderson noted that a new infiltration system underneath the pool is planned in order to manage the new impervious surface. It will have two manholes and six chambers. This will be in addition to the previously proposed infiltration system.
- Ms. Anderson said the soils on site are decent and should be able to infiltrate.

There were no comments or questions from members of the public.

- Ms. Vresilovic noted that it was up to the Commission to decide if this was a minor modification versus an amendment.

- Mr. Hoskins said an amendment would give the Commission an opportunity to investigate the capacity of the amended storm drain system.
- Ms. Anderson said the entire impervious surface is 5400 SF.
- Mr. Marchese ran the calculations and noted that the proposal is more than adequate to manage peak flows.

A motion to have this be a minor modification to the existing Order of Conditions was made by Dayton Marchese, seconded by Graeme Marcoux, and passes 5-0.

- Ms. Vresilovic requested that Ms. Anderson send her the final calculations on the drain system.

2. 17-27 First St- Salem Housing Authority project discussion

Ann Marton from LEC Environmental, Courtney Koslow and Calvin Anton from Beacon Communities, Zac Richards from Bohler Engineering and Michelle Apigian from Icon Architects were present to discuss the proposal:

- Ms. Vresilovic noted that she has had conversations with the project team. The project is in the very early stages but they would like to begin having discussions with the Commission in the early planning stages.
- Ms. Marton reviewed the project and the location. The goal is to provide more affordable housing with the Salem Housing Authority.
- Ms. Marton said they intend to file an ANRAD. She reviewed the existing conditions and resource areas. There is one vernal pool on site and two isolated wetlands.
- Ms. Marton reviewed the concept plan which includes a centrally located building. She reviewed the site constraints which include steep slopes/ledge, wraparound road requirement, mitigation buffers and vernal pool buffers.
- Ms., Marton said she believes the project could be permitted under 40B or a PUD with the special permit from the Planning Board.
- Ms. Marton reviewed the potential mitigation which includes invasive species management, on-site wetland replication, a conservation restriction on the remaining undeveloped land, trails, trailhead parking, information kiosk, and off-site wetlands restoration or clean-up.
- Next steps include an ANRAD, update on mitigation possibilities, and feedback from the Commission.
- Mr. Hoskins inquired about the intersection with Salem Woods and some nice habitat in the area. Ms. Vresilovic noted that the Highland Street Trail Study looked at a potential trail connection through Salem Woods in the area. Ms. Marton noted the area was very rocky and steep. She said would review the study and could speak with Chris Burke about his thoughts. Ms. Vresilovic said she could speak with Mr. Burke as well.
- Mr. Marcoux noted that the site has been a topic of conversation with local environmental groups and that he would expect they would hear from the public as the project moves forward.
- Mr. Hoskins notes that Mr. Burke has expressed concern regarding forest cutting adjacent to Salem Woods. He said it would be good to get public input on this. He anticipated that the project would require blasting of ledge and serious wetland impacts. Ms. Marton said these were the reasons they wanted to talk to the Commission.
- The vernal pools is certifiable.
- Mr. Hoskins discussed the wetland replication and the functions and values of the two isolated wetlands and that replication doesn't always work and could be impacted by invasive species.

- Ms. Vresilovic noted that this property was flagged in the trail study that a potential future development on the property could create an opportunity to make a trail connection from First Street to Highland Ave. She will circulate the study to the Commission and the applicant.
- Mr. Hoskins noted that the proposal would require the Commission to essentially wipe out the no-build area of the isolated wetland and that they would need to weigh whether the mitigated values would be worth the loss. He suggested a site visit would be helpful when the ANRAD is complete.
- Ms. Koslow said she appreciated the conversation and that they really want to do right by the property. She hopes the Commission will be open to moving the project forward with mitigation. She is hoping to understand whether the Commission would be supportive before spending more funding. She said that they could pursue 40B but would prefer not to go that route.
- Mr. Marcoux inquired about offsite wetland remediation and if any locations had been identified. Ms. Marton said no locations had been identified yet.
- Mr. Richards said the topography and severe slope limit the location of the roadway.
- Mr. Marcoux inquired about the roadway space near the impacted wetland whether the entire parking lot could be shifted northeast of the wetland. Mr. Richards said the further they move the roadway north, the more grade change would be required for the road and reasonable turning radius for emergency vehicles.
- Mr. Marchese said that of the mitigation measures proposed, he likes the idea of the on site wetland creation and asked if a feasibility study had been conducted. Ms. Marton said that evaluation is in progress.
- Mr. Marcoux said he was concerned about wetland replication as it could put new wetland into a space that could impact an abutters property, who may then find themselves now within wetland buffer areas.
- Salem Woods is held by the Parks and Recreation Department, not Conservation.
- Mr. Marcoux noted that the public will be aware of the ecologically important and diverse areas within the property and may have concerns about creating a new wetland in those areas. There could also be issues with ledge. He added that there may be issues with the parking lot being sited in a wetland area and it continuing to act as a wetland.
- Mr. Hoskins noted that he can see standing water on MassMapper.
- Ms. Vresilovic reviewed the aerial on NearMap, highlighting the vernal pool, bodies of water and abutters. The isolated wetland was not readily visible.
- Mr. Hoskins noted that there are Commission members not in attendance who will have input and is unable to make a pronouncement of how the review will proceed.
- Ms. Marton said she could do a function and values assessment of the wetland.
- The review and approval of the ANRAD is a different track/approval than what would be reviewed for the project.
- Ms. Marton said she would like to pursue the ANRAD approval first but does not believe they will have the submittal ready in time.
- Mr. Marcoux recommended providing opportunities for public comments.
- The Commission could accept some public comments under Old/New Business.

3. Forest River Conservation Area Volunteer Footbridge feasibility study request

- Ms. Vresilovic noted that following the Salem State South Campus project, the City has recommitted to doing work on the volunteer bridge and Forest River Conservation Area.
- Photos of the existing conditions were shared. The footbridge timeline was shared. Construction on the trail began in 2017. In 2022, Salem Sound Coast Watch applied for CPA funds for the bridge repair in the amount of \$66,000, but it was clear that more work was needed than what could be completed by a volunteer group and the cost ballooned. In 2023-2024, the CPA funding was returned.

- Ms. Vresilovic envisions moving the project forward in three phases; Phase I Feasibility, Phase II Design, Permitting and Construction Documents, and Phase III Construction.
- Ms. Vresilovic noted that if a full rebuild is needed, it may not be feasible due to all the permitting.
- She shared a potential timeline for the project. She would like to move forward quickly so as not to need to wait until the winter of 2027 to request CPA funds.
- Ms. Vresilovic sent out scopes of work to the City's on-call engineers. She is estimating the study to cost between \$10-15,000.
- She suggested that the Conservation Commission consider paying for the feasibility study so that the first phase of the project could be completed more quickly in order to be ready to request CPA funds in 2027 for Phases II and III. Other grant and city funding would be pursued as well. This approach would allow the project to be complete in the fall/winter 2027.
- The current Commission budget is \$37,692. There is significant public support in moving this project forward.
- Ms. DelNegro voiced her support via email to Ms. Vresilovic.
- Ms. Vresilovic said she would have clear quotes in time for the September meeting.
- Mr. Hoskins noted that Commission's budget always seems to hover around \$30-40,000. Ms. Vresilovic noted that \$40,000 was used for the Highland Street Trail Study two years ago. Other costs have been MACC dues. Application fees range between \$200-\$600. She said she would review historical budget averages.
- Mr. Hoskins said he would be comfortable using Commission funding for the study. He added that he expects the CPC would be supportive of the project as well.
- Mr. Hoskins acknowledged the potential high cost if the trail is going to be need to fully handicap accessible. Ms. Vresilovic suggested the trail may require a guard rail and railing which may not be cost prohibitive. She believes the cost of the project hinges on the existing Sono-tubes and whether they can be used and only the top part of the boardwalk replaced.
- The original CPA funds were returned because they were not being used and the project had stalled.
- Mr. Marcoux echoed the sentiment that there would be public support for the project. He thought the feasibility study would be very helpful in understanding best practices on future volunteer projects.
- Ms. Vresilovic hopes that by the September meeting she'll have a scope and cost estimate ready for consideration.

IV. MEETING MINUTES

1. July 21, 2026 meeting minutes

A motion to approve the meeting minutes for the March 17th meeting minutes was made by Graeme Marcoux, seconded by Tom Campbell, and passes 5-0.

An update on the Swampscott Road project will be presented at the September meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Graeme Marcoux, seconded by Dayton Marchese, and passes 5-0.