



**Waltham Conservation Commission
January 22, 2026
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting took place via public Zoom call with participation information posted at City Hall, Government Center, and on the Commission's page of the city web site. Zoom information was circulated directly to all applicants and others on the public agenda.

Meeting called to order at 7:01 PM.

Attendees: Chair Alexander Sbordone, Gerard Dufromont, Michael Donovan, Anja Shafer, Frank Fitzgerald. Conservation agent Julia Abbott. Vice Chair Bill Doyle joined the meeting approximately 7:03.

Absent: Lisa Limonciello.

Development Prospectus

- 100 First Ave. Bill Proia presented. This property is not within commission jurisdiction; Mr. Proia was present to inform the commission and receive sign-off, as required by city council for special permits. He briefly described the proposed work, which includes a shelter for drywall and a reduction in the number of existing parking spaces. Mr. Doyle moved to authorize the chair to sign-off; seconded by Mr. Dufromont and amended to authorize the conservation agent to sign on behalf of the commission. In favor: Sbordone, Doyle, Donovan, Shafer, Fitzgerald, Dufromont. **Motion passed.**

Public Hearing

Notice of Intent (DEP File # 316-0845) (Continued from 1/8/2026)

Applicant: Thomas Valton – Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Property Location: Waverley Oaks Road (Beaver Brook Reservation).

Project Description: Construct a stone wall along a portion of Beaver Brook where the asphalt walkway has been eroded and continues to erode along the bank. This wall will support preservation and maintenance of the walkway and pedestrian stream crossing and will prevent future erosion of the walkway. Following completion of the wall construction, repave the impacted portion of the walkway. The goal is to repair and stabilize the eroding section at the pedestrian bridge crossing.

The commission previously closed the public hearing and delayed the vote to issue an order of conditions, pending completion of DCR's legal review. Ms. Abbott confirmed that DCR had approved the special conditions issued for previous DCR projects in Waltham, with no changes. Mr. Doyle moved to issue a positive order of conditions with the modified DCR special conditions. Seconded by Ms. Shafer. In favor: Sbordone, Doyle, Donovan, Shafer, Fitzgerald, Dufromont. **Motion passed.**

Public Meeting

Request for Determination of Applicability

Applicant: Michael Garvin – City of Waltham.

Property Location: Beaver Street between Waverley Oaks Road and Clematis Avenue.

Project Description: Roadway milling and overlay of approximately 1165 feet of Beaver Street as well as reconstruction of sidewalk on the south side, adding a 10' shared use path to the north side, and MBTA rail crossing improvements. Includes minor utility work, including drainage improvements, and reconstructing existing driveways within project limits. A portion of the activities will occur in the 25-foot Buffer Zone to BVW.

Kim Miller of Nitsch Engineering presented for the applicant. She described the project, which is centered on upgrading the MBTA signal crossing by adding a gate and removing the traffic control islands. The project will include milling and resurfacing of the roadway in this area, as well as upgrading the sidewalks to a shared-use path and improving the connection to the Mass Central Rail Trail at this location. Mr. Donovan and Mr. Sbordone both had witnessed trucks getting stuck on the islands and recognized the need for this improvement. Ms. Miller showed the plan and described the limits of the resource area. Areas where the roadway will be narrowed, sidewalks widened, and new grass planted were highlighted. The project will reduce impervious area by approximately 360 sq.ft. Pedestrian curb ramps will be added on each side of the culvert. Mr. Donovan asked about the adjacent Duffy Properties driveway access. [This is known as "117 Beaver Street" but is correctly "307-09 Waverley Oaks Road."] Ms. Miller highlighted that area and noted minor pavement removal and revegetation areas. For the benefit of new commission members, Mr. Doyle walked through what an RDA means and what the commission should consider, and referenced how certain WPA exemptions or qualification as a limited project could apply in this case. He noted that when this bridge collapsed and was replaced several years ago, he had called on the city to reconstruct this area properly and he is pleased to see it happening now. Mr. Dufromont asked if the milling tailings would be stored; Ms. Miller said this will be up to the contractor, but it is typically removed immediately (same day). Mr. Dufromont asked for confirmation of erosion control installation, which Ms. Miller pointed out on the plan. Resident John Allen was allowed to address the commission. He commented on traffic safety concerns in this area, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, and suggested modification. Mr. Doyle appreciated Mr. Allen's concerns, but noted this review is strictly for WPA regulatory compliance and cannot involve traffic engineering issues. He asked Ms. Miller for the status there; she stated that it has been before two meetings of the traffic commission but has not yet been closed or received final approval. Mr. Doyle noted that if the project is changed there, it might come back to this commission if the WPA concerns change. Mr. Allen understood this and was pleased at the conservation commission's attention to its responsibilities and thanked them for allowing him to speak. He will pursue this with the traffic commission. Mr. Donovan moved to issue a negative determination. Discussion of the specific determination type [Positive 2B / Negative 2], and whether any special conditions would be needed. Seconded by Mr. Doyle. In favor: Sbordone, Doyle, Donovan, Shafer, Fitzgerald, Dufromont. **Motion passed.**

Commission Business

- Approval of meeting minutes from 1-8-2026. Motion to approve by Mr. Donovan; seconded by Mr. Doyle. In favor: Sbordone, Doyle, Donovan, Fitzgerald, Dufromont. **Motion passed.**

Correspondence

- NOTED: MA DEP has set drought status to "Level 2 – Significant Drought" as of 1/12/2026 and reminds conservation commissions that photos of streams taken after 8/1/2025 cannot be used to overcome the perennial presumption.
- NOTED: DCR submission of the 2025 year-end report for the Charles River Aquatic Invasive Species Management Project (316-0803 in Waltham).

New Business

- Ms. Abbot noted that the 245-265 Winter Street project will return for the next meeting.

- There will be two new NOIs on the next agenda, for the Algonquin J-1 pipeline relocation at Tower Road and a project at 241 Crescent Street (Watch Factory).

Committee Reports

- **CPC:** Mr. Doyle asked what happened to Committee Reports? Mr. Daly explained that he decided to pull these from the agenda except when there is a CPC meeting upcoming or recently concluded, since CPC now only meets 4 times annually. Mr. Doyle noted the next meeting scheduled for February 10.

New Business

- Ms. Shafer asked, as a new member, what commission practice is for remote vs. in-person meetings. Discussion of remote meeting history and status for the commission. Mr. Sbordone noted that at city council's urging the commission worked with the library to make laptops available for residents but to his knowledge no resident has ever taken advantage of this. Zoom seems to improve public participation. Commissioners touched on advantages of remote meetings (improved visibility of plans and presentations; better recordings). Mr. Daly noted that WCAC have suggested they do not have the resources at this time to cover all city meetings. All ConCom Zoom meetings are recorded and posted for the public. Mr. Doyle compared Waltham to other communities and noted that in-person ConCom meetings are becoming preferred and are very effective. Commissioners felt in-person meetings might resume at some point, or a hybrid method might be used, or some meetings might be in-person (once per quarter, etc.).

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Doyle, seconded by Mr. Donovan. All present in favor. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.