



**Waltham Conservation Commission**  
**July 16, 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 7:02 PM.

**Attendees:** Chair Bill Doyle, Vice Chair Lisa Limonciello, Michael Donovan, Anja Shafer, Frank Fitzgerald. Conservation Agent Julia Abbott.

**Absent:** Gerard Dufromont. (Ms. Limonciello acted as secretary/clerk.)

**Development Prospectus Sign Off**

- 96 Tower Road within the 1265 Main Street development. Michael Connors of Connors & Connors, 689 Main Street, Waltham, appeared for the property owner and tenant. This is a new commercial building. The proposed fast-food use (Sweetgreen) requires a city special permit (under sections 3.512, 3.229, and 3.620 of the city zoning code). The area is not in WPA jurisdiction. Ms. Limonciello moved to authorize the Conservation Agent to sign-off on behalf of the commission. Mr. Donovan seconded. In favor: Donovan, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Doyle, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

**Public Meeting**

**Request for Determination of Applicability** (Continued from 6/18/2026)

**Applicant:** Aaron Hall

**Property Location:** 153 Second Ave

**Project Description:** Installation of an underground stormwater management system and associated structures and piping within the buffer zone. The work also includes minor grading and repaving of a portion of the existing parking area. All work will take place within impervious and previously disturbed area. No increase in impervious area or vegetation removal is proposed.

The applicant has requested a continuance, as they are still working out the details of the Zone A restrictions with Cambridge Water Department. Ms. Shafer moved to continue to the 8/13 meeting; seconded by Mr. Donovan. In favor: Donovan, Fitzgerald, Doyle, Shafer, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

**Public Meeting**

**Request for Certificate of Compliance** (DEP File # 316-0818)

**Applicant:** Gerald Autler

**Property Location:** Within MBTA right-of-way near Jones Road (at and adjacent to R056 003 001A)

**Project Description:** Construction of 10-foot wide shared-use path within the previously disturbed rail bed. A portion of the activities are located within the 100-foot Buffer Zone.

Mr. Autler clarified that DCR has several open filings in Waltham, including the Charles River Greenway rehabilitation [316-0813], which is complete except for some additional invasive species removal and plantings. He expects to request a COC for that project in the fall. He briefly summarized the MCRT-related projects. The Weston-Wayland section, approximately 5 miles, built in 2019, ended at the rail bridge and left a major temptation for people to continue over the bridge into Waltham. The connection from there to the main Waltham section (3.5 miles, completed in 2023), is still in the planning stage and includes a lot of complexity because of expected work at Green Street and the future Route 128/95 crossing. DCR moved ahead with this 1/3-mile section to provide a safe crossing of the Weston bridge and safe public access at Jones Road. DCR does not yet know what route the Jones Road connection to the main Waltham segment will use, but completing the work to Jones Road makes an official connection and allows options, including the old rail bridge or Route 117. This segment is now complete, and they are requesting a COC. Ms. Abbott visited in December and again recently and recommends issuing the COC. Mr. Doyle asked if this project is under the superseding order of conditions. [This is a reference to DEP #316-0744.] Mr. Daly from the commission office clarified that that is a completely separate project, covering the main MCRT from Hillside Road (Market Basket area) to Beaver Street. As an SOOC, that is entirely under DEP and will not come before Waltham ConCom for a COC. [That project is still open and has extensions to April 2027.] Ms. Limonciello moved to issue a COC. Ms. Shafer seconded. In favor: Donovan, Doyle, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

## **Public Hearing**

### **Notice of Intent** (DEP File # 316-0854)

**Applicant:** Kimberly Hebert – City of Waltham Recreation Department.

**Property Location:** 200 Trapelo Road.

**Project Description:** Installation of a 9-hole golf course in the 100' buffer zone to BVW.

David LaPointe of Beals & Thomas was present for the applicant. The 9-hole/par-3 pitch-and putt golf course is proposed as part of the overall redevelopment of the former Fernald School parcel. A previous proposal for a driving range was approved but did not proceed. A COC was issued for the previous project recently. This is a replacement project with reduced space needs. Mr. LaPointe presented the plans. He noted reduced work for the entry drive/parking area relative to the previous proposal. Grading requirements and retaining wall needs have been reduced. Parking is about half of previous, with less impervious area. The city plans to manage tee times, so reservations will be needed and use will be controlled. He walked through the course, stressing that the idea is to minimize the amount of work on the overall site. This proposal works with the topography and minimizes grading except at tee and green areas. He noted the storm water management, which is similar to the previous design. He noted the proposed removal of 7 trees, to be replaced with 15, as well as additional new trees. Overall, the project attempts to be consistent with the previous proposal but uses shorter holes to bring more control over where balls will be hit. Mr. Doyle noted the recent site visit he and Ms. Abbott attended. Ms. Abbott stated that most issues had been addressed. Vegetation was a big point. The need for less grading and the reduced impervious area are big improvements over the previous proposal. Mr. Doyle also noted the previous proposal had “massive” grading and would have wiped out most of the existing vegetation. This works with the topography and keeps a large portion of the existing vegetation. This is an improvement to the course and to the access driveway. He highlighted an area the commission had asked the applicant to clean up, which had previously been used for dumping. The applicant has agreed to clean this up. Mr. Doyle feels this project meets standards. Ms. Shafer asked about why the conservation restriction [CR] has been delayed. Mr. LaPointe was aware of the CR being in the works but did not have other details. He believes the mayor is handling this. His impression is that the idea is to get the facilities at the parcel in place and establish their limits, then create the CR on areas outside this. Mr. Doyle also believes the CR is in the works, but he does not know how far along it is. Ms. Shafer wondered if the CR delay

is intentional and if there are legal or other issues which would affect the commission's responsibilities. Mr. Doyle explained that this came up with the previous proposal and it was determined that the CR needs to happen, but the ConCom does not have the ability to hold up its decision over the CR. Discussion of the CR issues. The CR was required by the Community Preservation Act when the Community Preservation Committee approved the grant of CPA funds for the city to buy the former Fernald property in 2014. It was supposed to have been put in place at that time. Ms. Shafer noted she is in favor of this project, but wants to make sure approvals are done correctly. Mr. Doyle suggested asking for the status from the applicant (Rec Department and Mayor). This should be put into the project file. He asked Mr. LaPointe to pass this request on. Ms. Limonciello noted that the city has already completed other projects on this parcel, and asked how this was done and what the CR looks like for those. Mr. Doyle noted that there should be one CR on the entire parcel (it is not project-specific). The CR is meant to put the "guard rails" on what can be developed; this is not limited to Conservation Commission jurisdiction, but the entire site. WPA and CPA restrictions exist to make sure things are done correctly. Mr. Doyle wondered how the city could do any work at this site without the CR, but assumed there must be some allowance, since the city has not yet created the CR. Discussion of previous project's conditions. Mr. Doyle believes the city had a legal justification for appealing the requirement of a CR. Mr. Donovan noted that the city pulled the project; the issue of whether the CR could be required was ultimately not resolved because the appeal was never completed. Mr. Daly clarified the sequence of events: the city appealed the conditions to DEP, but the city cancelled the project and abandoned the appeal before any decision was made by DEP; the city also filed the OOC with the Registry of Deeds as issued, which kept the issued conditions in place, including the CR requirement. The CR is a condition of the CPA/CPC, and it has been outstanding for approximately 12 years. This situation has not stopped the city from undertaking other projects at the site. Mr. Donovan asked into the status of the stream daylighting project [DEP 316-0748], also on this parcel. Mr. Doyle noted that this project has been complete for some time, but a COC has not been issued pending replacement of plantings that died in the drought; it should probably come before the commission again this fall. Mr. Donovan's point was that this project was approved and executed without the CR. Mr. Doyle believes a similar discussion came up around that project. He believes the CR issue is a state requirement under the CPA, and the city must have a legal or regulatory justification for the work that has been done. Mr. Donovan asked for some clarifications regarding the storm water drainage toward the wetland/pond area [Girl Scout property, 265 Beaver Street]. Mr. LaPointe provided details, especially for the driveway and parking areas. Mr. Donovan asked about some old concrete pads and concrete-filled drainage structures. Mr. LaPointe responded that these will be removed or covered. Mr. Donovan asked about artificial turf use. Mr. LaPointe clarified that synthetic turf will only be used for tee boxes and greens, much less than the previous proposal. He said that maintaining real grass in these areas requires specialty maintenance that the city Rec Department does not have the ability to perform, so this is the practical solution. The fairway areas will be natural. Mr. Donovan noted no structure for an attendant [the previous proposal included one]. Mr. LaPointe said that the Rec Department has indicated they plan to add something later, but it will be at the far end of the driveway (well out of WPA jurisdiction). Mr. Fitzgerald asked for more information on the tree removals; some are large mature trees. Mr. LaPointe showed the 7 trees on the plan and explained the reasoning for their removal. He noted 15 proposed replacements, as well as 23 new trees. Mr. Doyle asked about a timeline for the project. Mr. LaPointe believes the Rec Department wants to put this out for bid soon, and is hoping that the existing contractor, already on site and familiar with the property, will be able to bid. Mr. Doyle noted the CR as the only major issue. Discussion by the commission regarding how to approach the CR and whether to continue the hearing or vote to issue. Mr. Doyle proposed voting, with a condition asking the applicant to provide the justification for previous and planned work without the CR. He also noted that other than the question of the CR, this project meets standards.

Mr. Donovan motioned to close the public hearing. Seconded by Ms. Shafer. In favor: Donovan, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Doyle, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

Mr. Donovan moved to issue a positive order of conditions, including the standard special conditions, with an additional condition that the applicant provide the commission with documentation of the legal guidance they are following that allows the project to move forward without a conservation restriction.

Ms. Shafer seconded. Discussion, particularly on the wording of the special condition. Mr. Doyle wondered if it were possible to condition this in a way that would rescind or nullify the order if the documentation isn't provided. Mr. Daly suggested this DEP would probably not allow this. Mr. Donovan noted at least two other projects begun and completed on this parcel without a CR.

Discussion turned toward permitting the project, but including the condition only as a documentation requirement: the condition would accept the city's justification, but would require it in writing.

In favor: Donovan, Doyle, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

Mr. Doyle asked that Mr. LaPointe notify the commission of the timeline as this project moves forward.

## **Public Meeting**

### **Request for Determination of Applicability**

**Applicant:** Brandeis University

**Property Location:** 415 South Street

**Project Description:** Walkway and landscaping improvements within the 100-foot Buffer Zone at Massell Quad at Brandeis University. Includes removal of existing paved pedestrian walkways, construction of new paved pedestrian walkways, new site furnishings, landscape improvements including new and relocated plantings.

Dan Tress, Associate Director of Capital Programs at Brandeis, introduced the project. He noted "wear and tear" on the existing conditions of this residential quad; this plan will improve safety and beautification. Zach Kalette of Ryan Associates and David Conway of Nitsch Engineering were also present. Mr. Conway showed photos and plans to locate the site and resource areas. He noted the recent wetlands delineation and flagging. He showed the drainage and erosion control plans. All work is in buffer zone, and there will be a decrease to impervious area. Mr. Kalette walked through specific details. He noted disrepair and degradation of the current site and historical vegetation and tree removals. The goal is to "reactivate" the site and make it attractive for use. All existing paving will be removed and realigned. Impervious area will be decreased. There will be new plantings and new light fixtures. Granite step benches and native plantings will be added. They presented a slide comparing existing and planned impervious, with a net reduction of 2,550 sq.ft.

Mr. Doyle asked if much of this project would qualify as maintenance. Mr. Conway stated that a large portion of the work is exempt under the WPA, including removal of pavement and adding plantings. They have looked at this and consulted with Ms. Abbott and are hoping to receive a negative determination, confirming no impact on the resource area. He noted they are hoping to complete some of the work before students return (mid-late August). Mr. Doyle noted that Brandeis had done work on this pond in the recent past and recalled that the commission included conditions which allowed for certain maintenance in perpetuity. He did not think that applied, but this proposed work is likely exempt. Ms. Abbott noted visiting the site and agreed with the claims for exemption. She noted the quantification of the impervious reduction. She has also reviewed this with Cambridge Water Department [the area is Zone A for the Stony Brook Basin] and they have no concerns with the project. She recommends a Positive 2A/Negative 3 determination (confirm delineation/work in buffer zone only, with no alteration). The commission had no additional questions or concerns.

Motion to issue Positive 2A/Negative 3 determination by Mr. Donovan, seconded by Limonciello. In favor: Donovan, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Limonciello. Mr. Doyle abstained. **Motion passed.**

## **Commission Business**

- Approval of meeting minutes from 06-18-2025. Motion to approve by Ms. Shafer, seconded by Mr. Donovan. In favor: Donovan, Doyle, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**
- Certified Copy of Certificate of Compliance for 554 Lexington Street (DEP File #316-0770). Ms. Abbott and Mr. Daly explained the technical issue with the Registry of Deeds. This is an administrative process but requires a certifying vote by the commission. Motion to issue by Ms. Shafer, seconded by Mr. Donovan. In favor: Donovan, Doyle, Fitzgerald, Shafer, Limonciello. **Motion passed.**

### **Correspondence**

- NOTED: DCR planned invasive management work in Beaver Brook Reservation the week of 7/6.
- NOTED: MWRA test borings behind Stanley School planned to begin the week of 7/13 for approximately one week.
- NOTED: National Grid planning replacement of existing gas main within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to Bank and Bordering Vegetated Wetland at 153 Second Avenue. Work will be confined to the roadway and qualifies as exempt activity.

### **Old Business**

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### **Site Visit Reports**

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### **New Business**

- Ms. Abbott noted that David Loutzenheiser of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council has reached out to the commission to discuss the potential alignments of the MCRT, from Beaver Street to the Belmont line. One potential alignment involves wetlands. He'll be visiting the commission office on July 23 if any commission members want to be present.

### **Committee Reports**

- Paine Estate Forest Management Plan subcommittee. Mr. Donovan reported that Mr. Dufromont is setting up a meeting with the Waltham Land Trust. Details to come.
- **CPC:** Next meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2026.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Limonciello. seconded by Ms. Shafer. All present in favor. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.