

Report of the Conservation Commission

2013

The Commission continued to administer the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Town Wetland Protection Bylaw, issuing 25 Orders of Conditions (including 5 Amended Orders) and 8 Determinations of Applicability. No projects were denied by the Commission in 2013. Regular public meetings were generally conducted bi-weekly and numerous site inspections were held during the year. Many sites were reviewed and approved for building permit application sign-offs by the Conservation Commission Agent. Among the major projects monitored in 2013 were the Crosswinds subdivision site work located between Plain and Station Streets, the Maple Avenue Landfill Closure, and many Town roadway re-paving filings. The Commission also informally resolved several other minor violations of the Wetland Protection Act. Certificates of Compliance were issued for 8 completed projects.

The Stormwater Bylaw regulations were prepared by the Stormwater Bylaw Committee and approved by the Commission. This bylaw is administered by the Commission.

The Commission approved a Forest Management Policy for town conservation land and other properties managed by the Land Stewardship Committee. The policy can be viewed on the Town website.

The Commission provided several comment letters to the Planning Board regarding applications for Large Lot Subdivisions and other development proposals.

The Commission and the Board of Health administer town funds allocated for beaver control. Funds were expended to maintain fencing and pond levelers installed at the Southboro Road bogs. Trapping was authorized at Fowler Street, but beaver abandoned the site and no trapping was required.

The Commission opposed a town meeting article that would have enrolled the Town in the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Program (CMMCP). The article failed. The Commission is continuing to research the issue and wrote letters on mosquito control policy to the Board of Health and CMMCP.

The Commission has been monitoring Pratt Pond Ice-Out as an indicator of climate change since 2010. Pratt Pond Ice out is defined as first day in spring when no ice is visible in the pond from a vantage point near the intersection of School Street and North Main Street. In 2013 the pond was ice free on March 29th.

Respectfully Submitted,

Conservation Commission

Christine Scott, Chairperson
Mike Penko, Vice-Chairperson
Sandra Lajoie, Treasurer

Scott Heim, Member
Thomas Jango, Member
Alan Miano, Member
Marcella Stasa, Member
Mary Overholt, Associate member
Denise Smith, Administrative Assistant
Mathew Selby, Conservation Agent