

Report of the Conservation Commission

The Commission administered the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, the Town Wetland Protection Bylaw and the Town Stormwater Bylaw. One project was denied by the Commission in 2017. 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. The Intermunicipal Agreement with Northbridge to share the agent's position was renewed. The following major projects were monitored in 2017: Crosswinds subdivision site work located between Plain and Station Streets, Rockwood Meadows on East Street, NEXAMP solar facility on Milford St and many Town roadway re-paving filings. The Commission also informally resolved several other minor violations of the Wetland Protection Act. Major enforcement actions included the Fox 4 Paintball Facility on Milford St and violations on West River Road, William Street and Barbara's Path. Conservation Restrictions held by the Commission at Kenneth Village and Five Fork Farm (formerly known as Sweet William Farm) were monitored.

Applications/Requests received:

- Notice of Intent (NOI) = 17 (including 2 withdrawn & 3 amended)
- Requests for Determination (RDA) = 5
- Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation (ANRAD) = 0
- Request for Certificate of Compliance (COC) = 12
- Order of Conditions (OOC) Extensions = 0

Decisions/Actions issued by the Commission:

- Order of Conditions (OOC) issued = 17
- Determinations = 5
- Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) = 0
- Certificate of Compliance = 11 (including one partial)
- Order of Conditions Extension = 0
- Enforcement Orders = 3

Revolving Accounts	Start Balance 7/1/2016	Receipts	Expenditures	End Balance 6/30/2017
Wetlands By-Law	\$ 364.44	\$11,290.00	\$ 244.76	\$11,409.68
Storm Water By-Law	\$1,700.00	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,700.00
Community Garden	\$ 120.00	\$ 105.00	\$ 0	\$ 225.00
Land Stewardship	\$ 682.50	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 682.50

Other Accounts	Start Balance 7/1/2016	Revenue	Expenditures	End Balance 6/30/2017
Wetland Protection	\$ 3,619.36	\$14,241.78	\$15,163.32	\$ 2,697.82
Conservation Fund	\$ 8,661.48	\$ 2,886.11	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 7,047.59

The Commission with the Board of Health administered town funds allocated for beaver control. Funds were expended to maintain existing pond levelers to regulate the water levels at several locations. The Board of Health authorized trapping at several locations.

The Commission hired a consultant to develop a plan for turtle habitat enhancement at Stefans Farm using funds set aside for turtle projects. These funds were a result of the state levying a monetary penalty against a developer. The draft plan is under review by the Commission and the Massachusetts Natural Heritage program.

The Conservation developed a draft land stewardship plan for town owned properties off North Street, including the Warren Brook Watershed, Howarth Glen, Whitney Conservation areas, and two other town owned parcels managed by the Commission through its Land Stewardship Committee. A site walk with the Wampanoag Tribal Historic Preservation Officer was held to identify cultural resources which could be impacted by logging activities.

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 2017, the pond was ice free on January 25th and refroze and thawed several times after January 25th, and was entirely ice free after 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
David Pickart, Conservation Agent