

MEETING MINUTES
Waterford Conservation Commission
May 8, 2025, 6:30 p.m.
Auditorium, Waterford Town Hall

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ATTEST: *David L. Lyons*
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Richard Muckle, Geneva Renegar, and Wade Thomas
Members Absent: Keith Kriet, David Lersch, Tali Maidelis, and Ivy Plis
Alternates Present: David DeNoia
Alternates Absent: Matthew Shea
Staff Present: Maureen FitzGerald, Environmental Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Muckle at 6:34 p.m.
D. DeNoia was seated for D. Lersch.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Made by W. Thomas, seconded by D. DeNoia to approve the April 24, 2025 meeting minutes.

Vote: 3-0-1 [G. Renegar abstaining]

3. NEW APPLICATIONS

C-25-05: 18 Cinderella Lane – Single Family House Construction; Owner/Applicant – Heather Randazzo

Kyle Haubert, PE., CLA Engineers, Inc. presented the application. The proposal involves clearing and grading within the 100 ft. upland review area of a forested wetland for construction of a septic system and grading associated with a new single family house. The house is located in the eastern end of the parcel to minimize disturbance to the upland review area. Silt fence is shown at the limit of grading to control sediment. He stated that staff comments have been received and will be addressed.

W. Thomas questioned if the existing gravel driveway east of the wetland will be used or will it be seeded. K. Haubert replied he will coordinate with the owner and respond. The Commission accepted the application.

C-25-07: 51 Daniels Avenue – Pickleball Courts, Request for Determination of No Regulated Wetland Activity; Applicant – Katherine Ericson, LEARN & Town of Waterford, Owner – Town of Waterford, Agent – Atty. Matt Ranelli, Shipman & Goodwin LLP

Attorney Ranelli, Shipman & Goodwin, LLP and Dean Gustafson, Professional Soil Scientist presented the application. Atty. Ranelli noted members from LEARN, Langdan Engineering and Newman Architects were in attendance. He reviewed that Learn is in an agreement to purchase the Southwest School from the Town to construct a new school facility subject to approval by the Town's land use agencies. The Town wants to retain approximately 4 acres of the site for open space and pickleball courts. The projects are submitted as two separate applications.

Atty. Ranelli noted there are no direct wetland impacts proposed and no disturbance of the 100 ft. vernal pool envelope associated with Wetland #1 in the northeast corner. The proposed pickleball courts are submitted as a request for a determination of a non-regulated use, under Section 4.2.b of the Inland Wetland & Watercourses regulations as outdoor recreation. Should the Commission find that the proposed activity has the potential for wetland impact, the application includes a request for a finding of no regulated activity due to the minimal disturbance of the upland review area for site grading.

Dean Gustafson, wetland scientist/professional soil scientist with All-Points Technology Corporation reviewed the location of the three wetland areas. Wetland #1 extends slightly onto the subject site and contains vernal pool breeding habitat for spotted salamanders and wood frogs. Field surveys conducted in April 2025 confirmed the presence of egg masses in Wetland #1. Wetland #2 and #3 occur off the property and do not support vernal pool breeding habitat. A wetland function and value assessment was completed for each wetland area and the report is included in the application materials. He reviewed the location of the 100 ft. vernal pool envelope and the upland review area boundary in the northeast corner of the subject property. He stated he does not feel the pickleball courts will impact important non-wetland habitat or disrupt migratory corridors of the vernal pool species as no migratory corridor habitat occurs west of Wetland #1. The proposed location of the pickleball courts is currently maintained as lawn.

He noted the construction of the parking area will include @ 4,000 sq. ft. of disturbance in the upland review area. A planting plan for the area east of the courts and parking area includes enhancement of 8,000 sq. ft. of upland area planted with native shrubs and trees and seeded with a conservation seed mixture to provide enhanced wildlife habitat. The parking area is curbless to support sheetflow into adjacent upland. A stormwater basin is not proposed in order to avoid creating a decoy vernal pool. D. Gustafson reviewed the proposed wetland and vernal pool protection measures including education of site contractors, installation of barriers to deter wetland and vernal pool species from entering the construction area and monitoring of the construction site.

Staff noted the discussion is pertaining to Application #C 25-07 rather than #C 25-06, not in order of the agenda items.

Motion: Made by W. Thomas, second by G. Renegar to modify the agenda to continue discussion on Application #C-25-07 before #C-25-06.

Vote: 4 - 0

Chairman Muckle questioned how site contractors would be trained in the vernal pool species protection measures. D. Gustafson explained a training packet is provided to the general contractor, signage is placed at the limits of disturbance and their company's contact information is provided if there are any questions.

Motion: Made by D. DeNoia, second by G. Renegar to accept the application for review and continue the discussion at the next scheduled meeting.

Vote: 4 - 0

C-25-06: 51 Daniels Avenue – LEARN Regional Service Education Center, Request for Determination of No Regulated Wetland Activity; Applicant – Katherine Ericson, LEARN, Owner – Town of Waterford, Agent – Atty. Matt Ranelli, Shipman & Goodwin LLP

Attorney Matt Ranelli, Shipman & Goodwin, LLP, Dean Gustafson, Professional Soil Scientist, and Bill Willsey PE, Langan Engineers presented the application. Atty. Ranelli noted members from LEARN, Langan Engineering and Newman Architects were in attendance. He explained that upland review areas associated with 3 off-site wetlands extend onto the project site. The new school project will involve disturbance to a small area of the Wetland #2 upland review area for construction of a walking path.

Dean Gustafson, wetland scientist/professional soil scientist with All-Points Technology Corporation presented the three wetland areas as discussed for the record in the prior application. He reviewed the plan sheet showing the sidewalk construction at the southeast end of the parcel adjacent to the cell tower, noting it involves 165 sq. ft. of permanent disturbance of the upland review area. The existing gravel access road to the cell tower also occurs in the upland review area to the east of the proposed sidewalk. He noted the sidewalk would have a de minimis impact on the upland review area.

Bill Willsey, PE of Langan Engineers presented the proposed stormwater management system. He reviewed the locations of two sub-surface detention/infiltration systems with pre-treatment components to achieve 80% total suspended solid removal and treat the water quality from the project. The northern system discharges to the Daniels Avenue stormwater system, the southern system discharges to the vegetated slope in the southwest portion of the project area. A vegetated infiltration pond will be constructed in the lawn area west of the school facility and discharge to a vegetated swale that connects to the Daniels Avenue system. B. Willsey noted the design provides a 50% reduction in the 2-year storm peak discharge, a 44% reduction for the 10-year storm and a 23% reduction for the 100-year storm event.

Staff requested the opportunity to review the outlet location at the southwestern slope with the project wetland scientist. The Commission accepted the application for review and will continue the discussion at the next scheduled meeting.

4. APPLICATION REVIEW

No discussion.

5. VIOLATIONS

12 Perkins Farm Road: Unauthorized Mowing and Lawn Encroachment in a Conservation Easement Area – Complaint Received April 30, 2025

The Commission reviewed a complaint and photographs received on April 30, 2025 showing mowing has been conducted in a portion of the conservation easement area, a copy of the signed consent order and the November 8, 2025 letter to the owners from the Environmental Planner requesting the unauthorized mowing cease.

Motion: Made by R. Muckle, second by W. Thomas to refer the matter to Town counsel for legal action and enforcement.

Vote: 4 -0.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

No discussion.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None received.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Maureen FitzGerald,
Environmental Planner