



CONSERVATION
TOWN of FRANKLIN

Conservation Commission

**March 26, 2026
Meeting Minutes**

As stated on the agenda, this meeting is available to be attended in person and via the Zoom platform. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda. This meeting will be held in the Town Council Chambers on the Second Floor of the Municipal Building for citizens wishing to attend in person.

Commencement

Chair Mark LePage called the above-captioned meeting to order this date at 7:00 PM as a remote/virtual/in-person meeting. Members in attendance: Mark LePage, Lui Puga, Michael Rein, Richard Johnson, Roger Trahan, Nicole Chiamonte (via Zoom), Matthew Stoltz (via Zoom). Absent: None. Also present: Breeka Li Goodlander, Director of Conservation (via Zoom); Tyler Paslaski, Administrative Staff.

Note: Documents presented to the Conservation Commission are on file.

SCHEDULING

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing – NOI – Nicholas Drive/Prospect Street Culvert Repair

Chair LePage said there was a request for a continuance.

There was a motion made by Roger Trahan to continue the NOI for Nicholas Drive/Prospect Street Culvert Repair to April 9, 2026, at 7:01 PM. The motion was

seconded by Richard Johnson and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – Symphony Drive/Tanglewood Estates

Mr. Bill Buckley of Bay Colony Group representing the applicants Cypress Real Estate Development said from the meeting two weeks ago we took away the issues the Commission wanted addressed. He said on sheet 2.1 they added a transect that includes the whole wetland from the wetland line to the 100 ft. buffer line, and we included 3 in. trees or above within about 5 ft. of that line. That starts at flag A11. He said on sheet 4 they took the backyard and removed that out of the buffer zone and the limit of clearing and grading at the 50 ft. buffer zone. The house is out of the 100 ft. buffer zone, and the house was moved forward. He said they met with BETA and the town engineer and went over other items they were asked to do. They picked up the basin and the house a bit. They had to work with the grade. On sheet 4 in the backyard, they added three monuments where the yard is going to be along the 50 ft. buffer zone. They will get the wording for the plaques from the staff. Along the south side of the basin, they had a line of arborvitae and the request was to change them to natives, so they went with red cedars, native hollies, or dogwoods. The density is the same, and there are nine of them. He said they also got letter today from BETA. He said he went through it and there were only a few issues, and he would like to finish up tonight.

Chair LePage said he has not seen that review yet. He would like to hear Mr. Buckley's input.

Mr. Buckley said several times it was listed that the limit of clearing and work was not clear to BETA. He said on sheet 4 in red and on sheet 7 we give the limit of clearing on the entire project with a dashed line and the areas of silt sock with the solid line. The limit of work and the silt sock are the new tree line. He said there was a comment about weekly inspections of stone pads, silt socks, and that was already included in the initial submittal on sheet C-2 of the appendix of the stormwater report operation and maintenance plan for the construction period. He said BETA was questioning that we did not give seed types. On sheet 4 on the upper left corner the applicant talks about the area in the buffer zone and the seed mix is listed. He said outside of the buffer zone areas it is regular seed mix.

Ms. Goodlander said Jonathan Green Black Beauty seed mix is not like the conservation wildlife seed mix; it is grass and not a native mix. Mr. Buckley said just tell him what mix to use, and they will use it. He said there was talk from BETA about the Latin wording of the shrubs and trees, and he could add it in if wanted. He said the same thing was said multiple times in the letter.

Ms. Goodlander said the Latin wording is because historically when the contractor brings the list to the nursery and it says, for instance, oak, it could be any type of oak instead of the specific type that you would want. So, there is a benefit to delineating exactly the species you want. Mr. Buckley said they can add that.

Mr. Rein said regarding the row of plantings to block the view of the drainage basin that dogwoods will not do a good job of blocking the view. Mr. Buckley said they originally wanted arborvitae. Mr. Johnson said it seems like the applicant did everything we asked him to. Ms. Chiaramonte asked about the riprap outlet and if it is treated water in the outflow or water coming from the basin. Mr. Buckley explained it is treated water and reviewed the process and flow of the water; the water is treated before discharge. Mr. Rein said he thought they had talked about plantings downgrade from the riprap. Mr. Buckley said he did not have a note on that. He asked what are they looking for. Mr. Rein said sedges or something that would help slow down the flow. Mr. Buckley said he would add that. He said they can put it in the order. Ms. Goodlander confirmed.

Chair LePage said they can condition that the silt socks and fencing represent the limits of work and condition something downgrade from the riprap, and Mr. Buckley will provide the Latin wording for the species designation. We will look at the weekly inspection notes in the appendix of the stormwater report, and the signs. He confirmed this sounds amenable to what was talked about. He confirmed the house is outside of the 100 ft. buffer.

Mr. Rein said an abutter had spoken about a concern about once the house is sold that the drainage basin will not be maintained. He asked what can be done about that. Mr. Buckley said when he met with the town engineer and BETA a lot of the discussion was stormwater. He said the people downstream are concerned about runoff. One item that was brought up was that this driveway, a private roadway, will be under a homeowner's association or something similar to that. He said he thinks the recommendation was that the Planning Board would review the homeowner association document, or town counsel would, to make sure it addressed the issues talked about like plowing the road and maintaining the stormwater system. He said with an HOA it is a more likely chance it will be taken care of.

Chair LePage talked about the vegetation regarding at least doing what we can with the right seed mix and the downstream sedges and making sure they are grown. Mr. Johnson noted that stormwater basins turn into wetlands over the years. Mr. Buckley said they talked a lot about phasing the project so they do not cut everything down at once. He noted there is a significant drop from the top to bottom. He said he, the town engineer, and BETA broke it down into different phases of how they are going to do this which he reviewed. He said the phases will hopefully mitigate the sediment migrating from the site or into the wetland.

Chair LePage said they will look at the BETA report and put together conditions based on that and see if they can have something prepared for the next meeting on April 9 unless they run into something unforeseen in the BETA report.

Mr. Buckley said he has to go back to the Planning Board in two weeks, and they will not close their hearing until they have heard from the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Goodlander said if the Commission is amenable, she can let Planning Board Chair Greg Rondeau and Town Planner Amy Love know that the Commission is gearing to approve. Sometimes knowing this the Planning Board will approve at their meeting before Conservation Commission. Commission members said they are good with that.

There was a motion made by Michael Rein to continue the NOI for Symphony Drive/Tanglewood Estates to April 9, 2026, at 7:02 PM. The motion was seconded by Roger Trahan and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – 670 King Street

Mr. Michael Davis confirmed the Commission has the DEP number and there were no comments.

Chair LePage said they wrote up some conditions. He asked the status of any water in the pool. Mr. Davis said he was going to slowly let the water out. It should not have any chemicals in it any more. Chair LePage said to be sure, they would like it to sit in the sun uncovered for 5 to 10 days. Mr. Davis said it has been uncovered for one year. He said he would poke a hole in the bottom and let the water out.

Ms. Goodlander said she would recommend permit approval with standard special conditions 20-22, 24-44 (33 deals with clean fill), 46-51, and special conditions 52, 52.1, 52.2, 52.3, 52.4, 52.5 which she read aloud.

52. If the pool wastewater has not been appropriately disposed of when this Order is issued, the Applicant shall follow these steps:

52.1 Dechlorination: Let water sit in the sun for 5-10 days without adding chemicals, or use a chemical dechlorinator.

52.2 Method: Discharge slowly to turf or vegetated areas to prevent erosion. Do not drain directly to wetlands, streams, or into the street.

52.3 Subsurface Disposal: Directing to a septic system is generally prohibited unless specifically designed and approved.

52.4 Storm Drains: It is a violation to discharge chlorinated water into municipal storm drains, as it can harm fish and wildlife.

52.5 Timing: Drain slowly (approx. per 24 hours) to prevent flooding.

There was a motion made by Michael Rein to close the public hearing for the NOI for 670 King Street. The motion was seconded by Lui Puga and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

There was a motion made by Michael Rein to approve the NOI for 670 King Street, with the conditions. The motion was seconded by Lui Puga and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Ms. Goodlander said she has Mr. Davis's building permit pulled up in front of her and it looks like everyone else has signed off except herself and the building commissioner. She is going to write in a comment that the applicant needs to install the erosion controls, and they need to be inspected. Once they are inspected, she can sign off on the building permit, and the applicant can move forward. She said he can email her about the erosion controls.

Public Hearing – NOI – Lewis Street

Chair LePage said they received a request for continuance.

There was a motion made by Matthew Stoltz to continue the NOI for Lewis Street to April 9, 2026, at 7:03 PM. The motion was seconded by Richard Johnson and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – 47 Patridge Street

Chair LePage said they are still waiting for the BETA review on this.

Mr. Danny Lewis (via Zoom) said Mr. Goodreau of United Consultants was going to try to join tonight. He said they are trying to get an idea of where the review is. He said the notice of

intent was filed on February 12. The scope for peer review was received on February 26, and the fees have been paid since the beginning of March. He said the Planning Board had their items resolved as of March 4. We have some contractual obligations, and we have not heard anything back from BETA. DEP completed their review by March 12.

Ms. Goodlander said Planning Board approved and then this was filed with the Commission. So, typically projects are filed concurrently, so we are not stuck in this waiting. She said DEP did file comments, but they are still in BETA review. Due to the weather, they are now catching up in field work, and there was a backlog. She said they are waiting for BETA's review, and DEP just provided comments within the last two weeks. She said she can give BETA a call tomorrow to see where they were at. This is not outside the normal trajectory of where a project is.

Chair LePage said that is the situation. Mr. Lewis said he understands. Chair LePage said they will get an update for Mr. Lewis.

There was a motion made by Nicole Chiaramonte to continue the NOI for 47 Patridge Street to April 9, 2026, at 7:04 PM. The motion was seconded by Michael Rein and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Friendly 40B Local Initiative Program (LIP): None.

Minor Buffer Zone Activities: 561 Lincoln Street

Margaret said she recently purchased the property in October. She said when she moved in there were some trees in the front of the house that she had questions about. She got a tree removal person from the area and he recommended that they be removed because of falling on her property as it was a hazard. She said she then received something in the mail that she did not follow the proper steps. She said she cut down two trees, and there is a little stump left. She said there was no vegetation on them.

Chair LePage said she got a recommendation from a tree service and typically they will catch this and let you know you need to talk to the Conservation Commission. He said Ms. Goodlander gave administrative approval after the fact.

Mr. Rein said maybe the tree company needs some education. Chair LePage said that is a good idea. They could send the tree company a little note that this is something they should be aware of.

There was a motion made by Richard Johnson to approve the minor buffer zone activity for 561 Lincoln Street. The motion was seconded by Michael Rein and accepted with a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Rein-Yes; Johnson-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Request for Determination of Applicability: None.

Permit Modifications/Extensions: 160 Maple Street – Maplegate South CE159-1287

Mr. Andrew Kerble (via Zoom) representing Helios Energy said they will be the general contractor on the Maplegate solar project. He said the logistics and layout of the site, specific for Maple 3 which is the southern part of the site, is that it is cut off by the wetlands. He shared his screen and showed a view of 160 Maple Street–Temp Road Overview pointing out the location of proposed MegaDeck installation. He said everywhere in the yellow area is the zone of limitation, and the solar array is within the zone. He pointed out the wetlands area and said you cannot get through there with any construction vehicles. He said on the current golf course there were some wooden bridges meant for the golf carts. He said when they get to tree removal and the bigger pieces of equipment, there is no way. He discussed the proposed to make minimal impact to the environment in order to gain access to this side of the property while they are onsite and doing construction work. He pointed out an existing 8 ft. cart path. He showed on the screen the area highlighted in blue on the last page. He pointed out the 8 ft. cart path and the 12 in. concrete culvert that is helping with water mitigation from the wetlands. He said they are proposing to install MegaDecks which he explained can be put together to drive heavy equipment over to minimize impacts to wetland areas. It is made of an HDPE material. He said they are going to do the least amount of impact. He said they will have to do some minimal grading and structural back filling and laying out some steel plates and putting the MegaDecks on top of it. They would maintain the culvert and install an additional one if needed. He said this is a temporary feature to use only during construction. The final proposed access road will include a structural culvert.

In response to questions, Mr. Kerble said they were going to reuse as much of the cart path as they can. Mr. Rein asked what changed from the original project approval. Mr. Kerble reviewed the final culvert to be installed as part of the final project. He explained they are trying to mitigate this and impact this wetland area, which he pointed out, to use as a

means and methods to get to this side of the property while this is all being engineered and structurally being built and developed. He said it is intended to be a pre-cast culvert.

Ms. Chiaramonte asked about the current culvert. Mr. Kerble said the existing is a 12 in. concrete culvert. He said he would make the proposed one whatever size the Commission would like. He said he does not know if they need to make it bigger than 12 in. He said he can take photos of the existing conditions.

Ms. Goodlander said most of this should have been included in the original permit. She said Mr. Kerble was not doing the original permit either. She said before we start changing designs during this meeting, we can review what was originally permitted and the conditions. She said we should focus on the temporary access map. Mr. Kerble said they are not making any modifications to what was previously approved and being engineered. This is a new temporary road that they are proposing. He said the intent is to ultimately remove this.

Ms. Goodlander said this is pretty standard to utilize this or timber mats or composite material. The wetland does rebound. This helps to stabilize weight of heavy machinery. She said wetland plants rebound pretty well under these mats. If not, you could have the applicant fix any ruts. Mr. Kerble said after they remove this, they will mitigate to bring the wetlands back to the exact state it was before. Ms. Goodlander said with this permit modification, she would recommend the Commission condition any ruts are fixed, weeding, things of that nature.

Commission members asked questions. It was requested that Mr. Kerble provide what it looks like right now so they can see that it is replicated the same way. Mr. Kerble showed the total disturbance diagram and said the proposed size of the temporary road will be about 20 ft. wide. We would try to use as much of the existing cart path as well which is about 8 to 10 ft. wide. So, realistically, we are going to be going in to the wetlands between 10 to 12 ft. He said it is about 40 to 50 ft. long. He said about 20 ft. x 40 ft. for a secure temporary road. He was asked to put dimensions and more definition on the plan. He said he is happy to go out and document the conditions as of today. He said it is difficult to determine the exact amount required, but it will be as minimal as possible as they know they will have to bring it back to its original state.

Mr. Johnson questioned that they need this because they are not ready to put in the permanent one, and they need three months of work in this area to excavate and haul dirt. Mr. Kerble discussed the set scope of work that needs to take place on this side of the property. He said that is where the bulk part of the project will be. There is a solar farm on

that side of the road. That is where our directional boring will take place. That is where all of our construction mechanical pads will be and all of our underground electric, and point of interconnection to the utility lines are on that side. He showed a diagram illustrating his discussion. He said that point, which he highlighted on the screen, is the least amount of impact to wetlands. This is the smallest and least impactful pinch point between the whole area.

Chair LePage said it would be good to see a blowout box or plan of that area, the resource, the buffer zones, the exact dimensions of the bridge, and grading and erosion control as you will be hauling dirt. It is going to be pretty significant impact to the buffer zones and potentially the resource. We need a more exacting look of what is being planned, where the impacts are.

Mr. Kerble explained why they cannot come in off of Maple. He said they looked at the utility road which is also in wetlands. They are trying to stay away from that road, and they do not want to impact those wetlands. The proposed is less.

Chair LePage said the follow up is can you give us a detailed plan on paper just as we described so we can see what is proposed with what the impacts are, where the buffer zones are, erosion controls, dimensions of the mat, and proposed excavation. We would like to see the details on that. Mr. Puga said added how it is going to be replicated and mitigated and put back together in the notes. Mr. Kerble said he can put a more detailed plan together.

Ms. Goodlander said she has familiarity with matting and has no concerns. She noted that Franklin Heights has matting. She said she has conditions ruminating in her head. Mr. Trahan said he thought this was all approved. Ms. Goodlander said the project as a whole has been approved, but not the matting.

Chair LePage said there are two things. That southern part of the site is where the culvert is being engineered that was the original access. So, they have not accomplished that yet, but they want to get to the other parts of the site. That culvert will ultimately give them access, but that is going to be three or four months off. This is Plan B that was not discussed as part of the original thing that would allow them to do some work on the solar field while they are designing the culvert that was approved down south. Mr. Trahan said he would like to go back and read what was approved.

Ms. Goodlander said she is not arguing starting construction in an appropriate amount of time. She noted that only last year the purchase and sale went through even though it was permitted two years ago. She said she wanted to mention, while we definitely hope construction phasing and sequencing stays similar to what is permitted, in large scale

projects like this, it is common that once you find a contractor and you determine exactly how they are going to work, that changes. So, there is a margin of flexibility that she expects in a project which is why we have permit modification avenues.

Mr. Kerble confirmed he would get a new plan for the Commission. Chair LePage said he should provide the plans and materials to the Commission by noon on April 2 which is the cutoff for the Commission to have new materials for the meeting on April 9. Mr. Kerble said he does not mind coming in for the meeting.

Chair LePage confirmed they do not have to vote to continue this item. Ms. Goodlander noted the applicant will not have to pay another filing fee.

Certificates of Compliance: None.

Violations/Enforcement: None.

Minutes: March 12, 2026

There was a motion made by Lui Puga to approve the meeting minutes for March 12, 2026. No second made. There was a voice vote aye; no roll call taken.

Discussion:

Ms. Goodlander noted she had interviews for the admin position this week. She provided an update on Earth Day and said she was working with Native Plant Trust to find plants for the event. She is still coordinating with the Agricultural Commission for the bee boxes. She said she has been playing phone tag with Tom Ashton, the consulting forester, all week to work on a schedule for scope of work for Riverbend. She will need to have that for the Commission by the next meeting. She said BETA was out last week for a site visit regarding the bridges.

Ms. Goodlander said regarding the Stobbart's appeal, and this is not necessarily a discussion item, on the appeal for 444 East Central Street, DEP has tentatively scheduled a site visit on Thursday, April 9. She will attend as will the Commission leadership. It is not a platform for us to opine. It is DEP's site visit, and they will ask us qualifying questions potentially. We are there just to bear witness. Mr. Rein confirmed the Town Council voted to revoke the LIP. He asked does that mean they do not get all those waivers from our bylaws. Ms. Goodlander said she does not believe so, but she is not entirely certain on that. She said she does know they are appealing ZBA's decision. She said she does not know if Town Council's revocation of the LIP bolsters the appellants appeal of the ZBA, but at this time, ZBA's decision has not been overturned. We are still operating that the bylaw has been

waived. Discussion commenced on the 40B classification and the Town's Council's revocation of the LIP.

Chair and Commission Member Comments

None.

There was a motion made by Richard Johnson to adjourn the meeting. No second made. There was a voice vote aye.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi

Recording Secretary

–Conservation Commission approved Minutes at the April 9, 2026 meeting.