

Town of Franklin



Conservation Commission

**February 26, 2026
Meeting Minutes**

As stated on the agenda, this meeting is only available to be attended 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 (cell phone or landline required) or citizens can participate by copying the provided link (phone, computer, or tablet required). This meeting will not be available for in-person attendance and can only be participated in using the Zoom platform.

Commencement

Chair Mark LePage called the above-captioned meeting to order this date at 7:00 PM as a remote meeting. Members in attendance: Mark LePage, Lui Puga, Michael Rein, Richard Johnson, Roger Trahan, Nicole Chiaramonte, Matthew Stoltz. Absent: None. Also present: Breeka Li Goodlander, Director of Conservation; 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 continuance.

There was a motion made by Richard Johnson to continue the NOI for Nicholas Drive/Prospect Street Culvert Repair to March 12, 2026, at 7:01 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – Symphony Drive/Tanglewood Estates

Chair LePage said there was a request for continuance.

There was a motion made by Nicole Chiaramonte to continue the NOI for Symphony Drive/Tanglewood Estates to March 12, 2026, at 7:02 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – 670 King Street

Mr. Russell Waldron, attending on behalf of the applicant, apologized for not attending the initial meeting. He said he checked with Ms. Goodlander who said the Commission reviewed the project and was generally in favor of it. He explained they still do not have a DEP file number.

Chair LePage said they had talked about and checked on the plans to demolish the concrete patio around the pool and use the remnants of the demolition to fill the pool. Mr. Waldron said he does not know if they are going to do that. He said the pool and everything associated with it is coming out. Chair LePage said that practice is generally frowned upon. It is possible if the applicant is willing to break up the pieces of concrete into no larger than 4 in. by 4 in. squares. He said we worry about settling. He said the preference would be to not do that and come back with a plan for an alternative fill. Mr. Waldron said absolutely. Chair LePage said an updated plan with erosion controls was submitted. He said they want to confirm that it is for personal use or is this an intended business. Mr. Waldron said personal use as far as he knows.

Chair LePage said the applicant needs the DEP number, updated plans regarding the fill of the pool, and confirm this will be for personal use. He said updated materials need to be received one week before the next meeting.

Ms. Chiamonte asked where the entrance is for the cars going into the garage; she said it is not shown on the plan. Mr. Waldron said along the construction access would be his guess, straight in along the porch. He asked if a construction note on the plan is needed. Chair LePage said yes.

Mr. Michael Davis said it will have two garage doors facing the house and an access door. He said he works on cars as a hobby. He said he does not understand why he cannot use the cement to go into the hole as everyone he has talked to says it is common practice, and it will cost a lot of money to get rid of the whole thing.

Ms. Goodlander said she spoke to Building Commissioner Gus Brown who said you can use it, but it has to be 4 in. diameter and you have to bring in a crusher; he will not sign off on a building permit otherwise. She said Mr. Brown also wanted to know if the applicant is not using that, what are they using. Mr. Davis said gravel.

Chair LePage requested a note in the construction sequence that the concrete remnants of the pool demolition will be removed, and the pool fill will be 100% gravel, or something to that effect. Mr. Waldron said not a problem. Mr. Davis said it will be tailings from screened loam. Mr. Puga confirmed that if fill is going to be brought it, it would have to be suitable fill. Ms. Goodlander said that can be conditioned.

There was a motion made by Michael Rein to continue the NOI for 670 King Street to March 12, 2026, at 7:03 PM. No second made. Roll call vote of 7-0-0 (7-Yes; 0-No; 0-Absent). Roll Call Vote: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiamonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – Lewis Street

Mr. Stephen Balcewicz of Land Planning, Inc. on behalf of the applicant and owner, Lewis Street Realty, stated the peer review was conducted by BETA. He said they issued a new set of plans/revised set of plans, including an existing conditions plan, per the peer review, and also submitted a response letter to some of those comments. He shared his screen and reviewed the plan.

Chair LePage asked if the applicant confirmed with the other departments in the town the viability of this with the involvement with the roadway and everything. Mr. Balcewicz said he believes the applicant has actively worked with the DPW, and they are okay with the pavement extension. He said after the last meeting, the applicant is seeking a water connection permit and has been working with other boards and departments.

Mr. Balcewicz confirmed they provided an existing conditions sheet. He said it was required, and a few of the comments from the peer reviewer were regarding an existing conditions plan stamped by a PLS. He said it shows the big point from the peer review which is the tree line. He said there was a little discrepancy as to what was getting cleared, and at the time, we had not submitted an existing conditions plan, so it was

difficult to understand. But you can see the existing tree line is here. So, it is actually going to take place; the pavement extension and driveway apron are going to be within an existing tree clearing. He said with the letter, he also submitted the image shown on the screen. He said it is just a Google Street image that shows the existing edge of the pavement and then the tree clearing up to the head wall which he pointed out. He noted on the plan their delineated line and said we have not revised it. He pointed out the drainage channel with the head wall. He noted the jurisdictional buffer zones are indicated on the plan. Regarding the site plan, he discussed the wetland lines and said there was some discussion after a review from the peer reviewer that they believe the line was more or less in a location which he pointed out. He said the applicant informed him that no additional revised flags were hung. He requested clarification as to how the Commission would like to proceed; he asked is this something we would have to flag and then have re-reviewed, and what is the timeline of that, or should we utilize the overlay from the peer reviewer that was submitted.

Ms. Goodlander said she can speak to that. She said typically, BETA is not going to delineate on behalf of the applicant since they are peer reviewing for the Commission, so you, or whoever you had go out, will have to reevaluate, and then those flags will have to be reconfirmed.

Mr. Balcewicz said alright, and he will take a look at that. He discussed that he did a quick overlay of the flagging and everywhere else it was pretty much in agreement. He explained the offset does not really impact our lot; the deviation would be off of our property. He asked does the Commission feel that it would be necessary to really delineate this because any deviations in this area are still not going to impact the project.

Chair LePage said his preference would be to have the plan be accurate. Mr. Johnson asked about the delineation and asked if they have to go back out to the field. Chair LePage explained the delineation and where BETA feels the edge of the wetland feature is. He said it is better to have an accurate site plan. He said he thinks it is germane as part of what we are looking at with the road extension that there is a place to plow snow and what we are looking at is a buildup of snow and potentially snowmelt chemicals that drain into that culvert and feed into an enormous wetland complex. He said there is a lot going on right there.

Mr. Johnson asked how BETA established it. Mr. Balcewicz said on the site plan the blue line represents the on-the-ground, field-delineated and field-located line as we saw it the day of the field work. BETA went out and reviewed our delineation and believes there is a small area that may have been excluded, and that is what we are discussing. They believe it is a little higher up than what we delineated and field located. He said we actually did on-the-ground field work and delineation.

Mr. Johnson said we have a line drawn by BETA and their suggestion of where it might be. He asked how are you going to confirm that. Mr. Balcewicz said based on the Commission and chair, I believe they are recommending we delineate what we believe the line is. He explained BETA would go out and re-review the area.

Ms. Goodlander said yes. She said this is very common. She said as with Populatic Street, lines have to be revised all the time. BETA cannot say, hey, applicant, you need to put your line here. The applicant needs to demonstrate that they are doing the work first because BETA does not delineate on behalf of whoever the client is. They review on our end. She said the comment specifically being referred to is W1 in the peer review. BETA noticed hydric soils in this area and significant vegetation/dominant vegetation within this area that made them believe this is where the wetland line is. It is difficult for them to confirm as well what Mr. Balcewicz was thinking on the ground because we do not have the data sheets, which is a separate issue. So, BETA is asking they go back out, reevaluate. It is common practice and happens with almost every project. It happened with Stobbarts; it happened with 121 Grove Street.

Chair LePage said the applicant would reanalyze based on BETA's input. He explained understanding where the wetlands are is critical. Ms. Goodlander shared her screen and pointed out the two lots and the well. Discussion commenced on the location of the town's well and wellhead protection. Mr. Balcewicz noted the

maximum impervious threshold and said they are under that. He explained they are not extending or touching anything in the 25 ft. no disturb. He reviewed the existing conditions plan shown on the screen which shows this. He explained there was a dead-end street bylaw, and with the 40 ft. extension being proposed, we do not go past that. He said so, we are under the threshold for requiring the development of James Street. He said we are not going there, nor would we be able to, because we would be impacting the resource areas, drainage ditches, and all that.

Ms. Chiaramonte asked about impervious structures and if there is a plan to reduce that. She asked is there a way to move the driveway or lessen it. Mr. Balcewicz said regarding the pavement road extension, we have to construct that and propose that per DPW specification, so it has to be a certain width. And the reason for that length is to provide the roundings of the driveway. He said with that, also, is the zoning setback footprint for the house. The dwelling had to be situated on the lot as shown because it was the furthest away from the resource area. He said we were able to actually have a straight run of driveway to it. If we had to do the driveway at an angle, we would end up with a longer driveway, and it would have been basically more pavement than current. He said as far as mitigation, we tried to push as much pavement and minimize as much impervious as we could. We are proposing recharge of the volume of water from the increase in pavement. So, we are going to recharge groundwater. He said regarding the BETA review, we have also put on the plan, six blueberry bushes, high bush blueberry. They are right at the tree clearing outside of the 25 ft.; they have been marked on the plan as well. He talked about the soil test. It is sandy and high recharge infiltration capacity. He pointed out the area that will be lawn. Discussion commenced on the amount of impervious. Mr. Balcewicz said it was under the 30 percent threshold. He noted the lot is only 10,000 sq. ft. and is more than 50% buffer zone.

Mr. Johnson asked if the responses to BETA's letter were positive. Mr. Balcewicz reviewed items from BETA's review comments and noted their responses and said their letter will be available for the next meeting.

Ms. Chiaramonte asked about James Street, snow removal, and where it would be. Ms. Goodlander said it would be at the terminus of the road, Lewis Street.

Chair LePage said we are looking to have the recommended delineation, re-delineation from BETA. Then the applicant will submit a response, and we will get their comments back. He said those would be the next steps that I see or can think of here.

There was a motion made by Matthew Stoltz to continue the NOI for Lewis Street to March 12, 2026, at 7:04 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Public Hearing – NOI – 47 Patridge Street

Mr. Jacob Crosson of Goddard Consulting, on behalf of the applicant Donovan Family Realty Trust, and Mr. Rick Goodreau of United Consultants addressed the Commission. Mr. Crosson shared his screened and reviewed the existing conditions. He said currently, it consists of a single-family house with a driveway and lawn. The entire site is currently undeveloped and consists of manicured meadow at approximately 11.6 acres. Looking at the proposed conditions, the applicant is proposing an eight-lot subdivision. One of these lots will contain the existing single-family house, with seven other single-family houses proposed for construction, with a ninth lot for the construction of structural stormwater management in the form of an infiltration basin. Only one of these proposed houses is within jurisdiction, so the vast majority of the proposed work is outside of jurisdiction, with the majority of work inside jurisdiction related to simply grading. He reviewed resource areas. He said for buffer zone to BVW, no work is proposed within the BVW or the notice DERB zone itself. Within the no-build zone, approximately 5,961 sq. ft. of grading is proposed. This is in the form of grading for the infiltration basin, shown in green, as well as grading to create

compensatory flood storage. Between the 50 ft. and 100 ft., approximately 30,339 sq. ft. of primarily grading is proposed for the stormwater basin. The only impervious surface proposed to be constructed within the buffer zone is a tiny sliver of the single-family house at approximately 257 sq. ft. All the other houses are outside of jurisdiction. He said next, looking at riverfront area, no work is proposed on the bank or in the inner riparian zone. Within the 200-riverfront area, alteration is limited to grading for the stormwater basin. However, this is technically exempt under the Wetlands Protection Act, excluding areas for structural stormwater management from alteration calculations. And, for work within BLSF, the applicant is proposing the filling of approximately 2,848 sq. ft. of BLSF at 570 cu. ft. And this is between the 168.4- and 168.8-ft. contour. To provide compensatory storage for this, the applicant is proposing the grading at approximately 4,811 sq. ft. or 962 cu. ft. This is approximately a 2 to 1 ratio between created flood storage and that which is being filled. In response to Mr. Johnson's question, Mr. Crosson said this shows the whole infiltration basin, and I believe that it is a sediment forebay to try to capture any sediment before it runs off into the basin.

Mr. Goodreau said the RCP pipe from the roadway will be directed to the sediment forebay for additional TSS removal, and then that will be directed to the infiltration basin. The front section, approximately 100 ft. of the road, will be directed to that wet water quality swale. The reason for that was the depth of groundwater out on this site is very minimal. And the road is being elevated upwards of 5 ft., maybe 6 ft. in the worst-case scenario, and the reason for that was the Planning Board had asked us to actually further elevate the road such that we would be able to provide additional cover over the drain pipes and increase the pipe slope. He said we had designed the pipe slopes at approximately 0.004%. They asked us to increase those slopes. They were worried about the flushing velocity within the pipes. He explained that to accomplish that at the first two catch basins at approximately station 100, we had to elevate the roadway in that area. That carried through to allow for that pipe running from the road to the sediment forebay, and then from the sediment forebay to the infiltration basin to be increased in slope as well. He reviewed stockpile locations and erosion controls.

In response to questions, Mr. Goodreau discussed the locations of the five catch basins in the roadway, the drain manholes, and the flow. He explained TSS removal in excess of 80% will be captured. He said this roadway will become a public way.

Regarding the flood areas Zone A, Zone B, and Zone X, Mr. Goodreau reviewed Zone A is the 100-year flood zone. Zone AE indicates that is a Zone A flood zone, and the E designation means that an elevation has been assigned. He reviewed that FEMA was in the process of possibly making revisions to the flood maps, and we were looking for confirmation of all the wetland resource areas, inclusive of bordering land subject to flooding. He explained he thinks we have the most up-to-date data from July 2025 represented on the plan. He explained Zone B is referred to as the 500-year flood area.

Chair LePage said they will get BETA's eyes on this, and he thanked the presenters for the initial presentation.

There was a motion made by Nicole Chiaramonte to continue the NOI for 47 Patridge Street to March 12, 2026, at 7:05 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

GENERAL BUSINESS

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

Minor Buffer Zone Activities: 76 Plain Street

Mr. Gerard Rogers said they want to take down four extremely large pine trees that are overhanging his structure. He said Charron Tree came out and said they would not give an estimate until they went to Conservation.

Ms. Goodlander said the applicant is within the 50 ft. to 100 ft., so she would absolutely recommend an approval.

Chair LePage said the Commission's preference is to leave the stumps. Mr. Rogers noted agreement.

There was a motion made by Matthew Stoltz to approve the minor buffer zone activity for 76 Plain Street, with stumps being left in place. 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Minor Buffer Zone Activities: Elm Street-National Grid Pole Project

Ms. Emma Verville with SWCA Environmental Consultants, along with Elizabeth Martin representing National Grid, addressed the Commission. Ms. Verville said we potentially also have Matthew Todd from National Grid here as well. She said the project would involve the installation of Pole 250, a new mid-span pole between Pole 2 and Pole 3 along Elm Street, along with a recloser bypass switch and communication unit. Chair LePage asked what is driving the need for the new pole. Ms. Verville said the new mid-span pole will help to prevent any sagging of the lines and also the communication unit and the purpose of that is to ensure that the available supply of electricity is equal to the demand that is needed to ensure the reliability and safety of the electrical grid.

Ms. Nicole Chiaramonte asked about erosion controls and said the Commission does not allow straw wattles. Ms. Verville agreed to compostable socks.

There was a motion made by Roger Trahan to approve the minor buffer zone activity for Elm Street-National Grid Pole Project with the condition that compost socks be used for erosion control. 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Request for Determination of Applicability: None.

Permit Modifications/Extensions: Southgate Road MBZA

Ms. Goodlander said this is an MBZA and work just has not been done yet. She said MBZAs, while they take place of an RDA, for example, typically are not extended. Typically, work is conducted within the three years. She said an applicant emails me and says I completed the work and here are photos, or I do a site visit. There is no mechanism right now for an extension of an MBZA. She said this applicant is here to say that the work has not been completed, and you are here to facilitate a discussion to design that mechanism for an extension or what have you. She said I think because this is your own local permit, you can definitely vote to extend it, and we could just reissue. The applicant would not need to repay a filing fee, for example. You waive filing fees. We have done that before. And then you could just sign a new MBZA and reissue the same thing, so long as the scope of work has not changed.

Mr. Brian Thayer said he is looking for an extension so they can finish the project. He said he is looking to start with putting in approximately 96 ft. of fence. He has 12 steel fence posts going in and 12 in. by 10 in. wide concrete to hold the posts up. To the right of the property line, and 70 feet from the no-touch zone, our fence posts will need to be installed around. He said they are also looking for an extension on the swimming pool and 4 fence posts will need to be installed around the pool ladder. He said then the final would be grass,

pool liner, a bed of sand would be laid to protect the liner, and plant a minimum of 10 plantings along the fence line.

Chair LePage confirmed the work was supposed to happen in 2023, but due to health reasons, it is going to happen now. He confirmed the pool will be inside the fence, and the ground has been cleared based on the pictures. They are 95 ft. from the resource. Mr. Johnson said we already approved this in 2023. Chair LePage said he feels this is a reasonable request.

Chair LePage said the proposal that we would essentially vote on is an extension for the MBZA, which is not something that we have officially done before, but as Ms. Goodlander described, the mechanism would be is we would approve that, and then we would just reissue a new MBZA, same as the other one, and sign off on it. He asked if everybody was good with that as a move forward. He said if you have a different idea, he is certainly open to it, but that seems pretty simple.

There was a motion made by Lui Puga to extend the permit modification/extension for Southgate Road MBZA. 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Certificates of Compliance: 38 Pond Street CE159-1201

Chair LePage said this is to close out for work that was never completed.

Mr. Morgan Gager said he was representing the owner and an employee of Eastport Real Estate. He said the owner has hired us to manage the property. He said the attorney sent in paperwork said he should be on the call. He said the the owners never did the work.

Ms. Goodlander confirmed this is the correct language to approve the COC if work was never completed.

There was a motion made by Michael Rein to issue the Certificate of Compliance for 38 Pond Street CE159-1201. 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: Johnson-Yes; Rein-Yes; Trahan-Yes; Chiaramonte-Yes; Puga-Yes; Stoltz-Yes; LePage-Yes.

Minutes: February 12, 2026

Ms. Goodlander and Commission members expressed appreciation for having the meeting minutes available quickly after each meeting.

There was a motion made by Roger Trahan to approve the meeting minutes for February 12, 2026. No second made. There was a voice vote aye.

Violations/Enforcement: None.

Discussion: 444 East Central Street Appeal

Chair LePage said a number of resident abutters filed an appeal with the Department of Environmental Protection for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts against the Commission's order of conditions. He said he will read the appeal for the Commission members; this way we get it into the public record and see what questions you might have. He explained if the appeal is successful, the DEP would issue a superseding order of conditions, which would overrule the Commission's ruling. He explained that when the Commission added in the standard and the special conditions, it was about 60 conditions. It is probably not likely that they are going to get into the level that we did.

Ms. Goodlander gave examples of items that are not under the Wetlands Protection Act. Ms. Chiaramonte expressed that she voted the way she did because the Commission had more control over it. Chair LePage said we have not been overturned at this time. Ms. Goodlander confirmed the appeal is to completely deny the project. She explained that the DEP does not try to overturn Commissions as much anymore as they used to decades ago.

Chair LePage said the appeal is focused on three key areas. He said he thinks the Commission did their diligence on this project. He said this was a permissible project. He said he would be surprised if this gets completely overturned because he thinks we did a great deal of due diligence, compelled a lot of changes to the project over the amount of time we worked on it, and got a strong number of conditions to help protect the resources there. He said but maybe DEP sees it differently, and I respect and understand that, but I feel like this group really did a great job in its diligence in terms of resolving the conflict points that were brought to us by BETA in a way that is going to have a positive impact on how the wetland resources are impacted in this project and on this property, and that is what we are here to do for the town and citizens and residents of Franklin. He said he is proud of the work we did, and would be shocked if it gets overturned, but you never know. He said but it certainly does not mean that it is going to be overturned just because it has been appealed.

Mr. Johnson noted that by the time we got through with all the things that we wanted to have done, we did not have any reason to deny it. Chair LePage discussed that he understands how the popularity of this project sits, but taking that aside, unfortunately that is not a basis of decision or a basis that we can use to make a decision from a Conservation Commission standpoint. He said he feels like the applicant did work well with the Commission to address the concerns that were brought up by the Commission and BETA. He said so, at the end of the day, we were able to work through to a project that was permissible. Discussion commenced on the possibility of DEP overturning the Commission's order of conditions.

Chair LePage read aloud from the document provided in the online meeting packet titled *2026-02-25 444 East Central Street OOC Appeal copy CE159-1320.pdf* the names of the Persons and Parties Making Request and the Appeal Notice and Summary of Appellants' Objections.

Ms. Goodlander explained that the OOC was originally signed on February 4, 2026, and was later amended and corrected on February 6, 2026, as the applicant's attorneys wanted language in the OOC that the local bylaw was waived.

After reading aloud the letter, Chair LePage reviewed that he respects the residents' approach providing anecdotal evidence of where they live and what they see, and they presented a lot of that information to us. He said in his opinion, that had a very large impact on the Commission in that we share jurisdiction over stormwater with ZBA. He said if you recall the applicant asked us to waive our jurisdiction because they were afraid they were going to have to go through the same process twice and be charged twice. He said reasonable requests, but based on what we all heard were enhanced resident concerns, the Commission declined to waive our responsibility in stormwater to keep our eyes on it. We wanted to maintain our jurisdiction. He said I think we dug into it very thoroughly, and I think when you look at the math, the science, and the data that was presented, which is what is widely accepted in the industry, and I think by DEP, the applicant made a good case that the stormwater would be managed effectively, and then we took it a step further to have them bring in their stormwater expert and give us a good summary overview. He said that he recalls at that meeting that we had some specific concerns communicated to us by certain residents, and we were able to address those and show how those concerns were a misinterpretation of the data that was presented in the stormwater report, and correct those misinterpretations. He said he feels like the two areas that are germane to us, which is stormwater and chloride, we addressed.

Ms. Goodlander explained appeals happen quite frequently and gave an example of one she is currently managing. She explained that for an appeal to be viable, the postmark date has to happen, or be postmarked;

the date of the mailing has to be postmarked before the end of the appeal. She said the document that she received is one day before the appeal end date, so it is a valid document. However, DEP has not received theirs, and the applicant has not received theirs. She will provide more details on that to see if this is even a viable appeal. She reviewed procedurally, moving forward, the DEP will have up to a year to provide feedback. She noted this appeal does not really outline where we violated the Wetlands Protection Act. It does not acknowledge specific language. It does not acknowledge other case law. She said she feels it is deficient. She further explained the process and said DEP will essentially either uphold the Commission's decision or not. After that, if the abutters would like to take this to court, that is their purview.

Discussion commenced that this may delay the project. Ms. Goodlander noted the group is also appealing ZBA. She will report back to the Commission as she receives more information. Discussion commenced on another project and Ms. Goodlander reviewed on the Bellingham side Conservation Commission denied the project. It was appealed by the applicant. DEP supported the Conservation Commission and now the person is fighting DEP in Superior Court. She also reviewed Madeline Village and noted the Commission denied the project and the applicant appealed to DEP. Regarding the current item, she said this is an interesting one because it is the entire order of conditions, and it is not really a site plan change. She said she does not know if DEP would change the site plans of this project; it is a permissible project. She discussed they have to determine if it was filed correctly.

Regarding her assistant, Ms. Goodlander said she is not sure if she has received any applications. If so, interviews will be scheduled for the end of March.

Discussion: BETA Agent Services

Ms. Goodlander reviewed there is an invoice that needs to be approved for \$170.20 for Anna for when Ms. Goodlander was coming back and Anna did some site investigations.

Chair LePage said all in favor of making that payment. No motion, no second. There was a voice vote aye.

Chair and Commission Member Comments

Ms. Chiaramonte discussed she returned to school and must do an internship. She would like to do a project with the Commission and came up with a couple of ideas she would like to share. She shared her screen and discussed Floating Wetland in Del Carte and materials and installation. She said there are mats that are in the river, and they help with water quality, habitat for pollinators, for aquatic species, and whatnot. She showed what they would look like and said the plants are planted in the mats. She said the organization brings them in to the docks in the winter to protect them from the ice. She talked about native plants and said the organization had picked the ones shown on the screen to put into the mats. She said then we would have to put a maintenance plan together, such as inspecting the mats to make sure they are still intact, and making sure that invasive species have not encroached onto the floating devices, and that is pretty much it. She said it can be expensive, but she has not looked at the pricing because she wanted to get everyone's ideas. She said we can also do a community event where people come together and we can make them and put them out, or they can be purchased. She said she can get all of the information, and she would lead the project. Discussion commenced on the mats. Ms. Chiaramonte said it lasts many years. She asked about water quality checks. Ms. Goodlander said water quality is not done at Del Carte as it is not required. Ms. Chiaramonte said if it costs too much, she can find another project, and she would like suggestions. She said that all she has to do is propose it for her seven weeks, and then present it, and then when we finish it, we finish it. She said the class ends in April. She said she would continue to work on it.

Ms. Goodlander said it would need permitting. She said that is time and money. She asked who would be maintaining it. Ms. Chiaramonte said if she were not there, it would be the Commission. Ms. Goodlander noted that Del Carte is already being treated for invasive species, and they have climbing invasive species. She noted if the permitting, installation, and purchasing goes over \$10,000, it has to go out to bid. She

encouraged educational signage to be included in the cost. She said she does not know if there is a need at DelCarte. She said she thinks it is a great idea as a proposal. She noted some of the other projects she is working on already.

Chair LePage said in general anything we can do to enhance conservation land is a good move. He said he thinks this is interesting and worth investigating more and provided some ideas. He recommended having a management plan in writing. Mr. Trahan suggested partnering with one of the schools as well. Ms. Chiamonte suggested to Mr. Puga some volunteers from the VFW. She said she will call the company to get some pricing. Ms. Goodlander requested having a plan in place before asking people to help; design the project first and then move forward.

Chair LePage said he, Mr. Trahan, and Ms. Goodlander attended the agricultural meeting last Monday. He said we have all agreed we are going to do the Earth Day event together. We will have a booth there. We are going to work on the bee project again and then look at doing a walk at Riverbend.

Ms. Goodlander reminded members to come in and sign documents.

Executive Session: None.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary

--Conservation Commission approved minutes at March 12, 2026 Meeting