



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING MINUTES
ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
February 13, 2023

1
2 Present: Catherine Van Lancker (Chair)
3 Owen Ackerman
4 Preston Crow
5 Carl Hakansson
6 William Moulton

7
8 Absent: Greg Wands (Vice Chair)
9 Gene Crouch

10
11
12 Agent: Becca Solomon

13
14 Meeting held by Zoom
15 Call to order: 7:10 P.M.

16
17 **Acting Chair William Moulton read the Ashland Conservation Commission virtual meeting protocols, and**
18 **meeting recording announcement**

19
20 **Ms. Van Lancker was not present at this time**

21
22 **Notice of Intent, 7 Bresnick Lane, Karon Skinner Catrone, Porch Pool and Patio Construction, DEP File No.**
23 **95-980**

24
25 Ms. Skinner Catrone summarized the revisions to the plans as the addition of a dewatering area, notation
26 that the trees will be left as at least 5-foot stumps, elevation markings, change of wetland flag 5, and the
27 conservation bound locations.

28
29 Mr. Moulton asked if the bounds were new or existing. Ms. Skinner Catrone stated that they were existing
30 bounds.

31
32 **Ms. Van Lancker joined the meeting at this time and took over as Chair.**

33
34 Ms. Skinner Catrone restated the summary of revisions.

35
36 Ms. Van Lancker asked if additional bounds were needed. Mr. Moulton stated that additional bounds may
37 not be necessary as there is an existing fence and retaining wall. Mr. Crow noted that the plan states that
38 the tree should be left at 5-feet tall; however, taller than 5-feet would be acceptable.

39
40 Ms. Heringer asked if the tree should be cut so that the crown falls into the woods or if they should be
41 removed. Ms. Van Lancker stated that it should be up to Ms. Heringer to decide. Mr. Moulton added that at
42 least some of the trees should be left fallen into the woods.

43

44 **Motion:** Mr. Moulton moved to close the hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crow

45 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)

46
47 The Commission reviewed and amended draft conditions for the Order of Conditions.

48
49 **Motion:** Mr. Moulton moved to issue the Order of Conditions with conditions as discussed. The motion was
50 seconded by Mr. Crow.

51 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)

52
53
54 **Notice of Intent, 299 Howe Street, Peter Bemis, Drainage Improvements, DEP File No. 95-924**

55 **Mr. Moulton recused himself from the hearing.**

56
57 Mr. Hakansson noted he had not watched the meeting recording for the previous hearing date and could
58 not deliberate on the topic.

59
60 Mr. Bemis stated that due to the concern for a lack of quorum and needing more time to respond to the
61 peer review comments he was requesting a continuance to February 27th, 2023.

62
63 Ms. Van Lancker asked if the peer review was shared with the Hopkinton Conservation Commission. Ms.
64 Solomon confirmed.

65
66 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson moved to continue the hearing to February 27th, 2023 at 7:05pm. The motion was
67 seconded by Mr. Crow.

68 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 4-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, CVL)

69
70 **Emergency Certification, 1 Sandstone Way, John O’Gara, Hazard Tree Removals**

71 Ms. Solomon summarized the request to remove two trees on the property that have several cavities, rot,
72 and falling off bark. An arborist letter was provided.

73
74 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson moved to issue the Emergency Certification. The motion was seconded by Mr.
75 Crow.

76 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)

77
78 **Review minutes 1/23/2023**

79 **1/23/2023 Meeting Minutes:**

80 Commission Members reviewed and edited the January 23, 2023 meeting minutes.

81
82 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson motioned to approve the January 23, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. The
83 motion was seconded by Mr. Crow.

84 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)

85
86 **Discussion and Vote, Appointment to Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee**

87 Ms. Van Lancker stated that Mr. Hakansson was interested in the position. Mr. Hakansson summarized what
88 the position entailed.

89
90 **Motion:** Mr. Moulton motioned to appoint Mr. Hakansson to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.
91 The motion was seconded by Mr. Crow.

92 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)

93
94

95 **Member Prerogative**
96 Mr. Moulton noted that Emergency Order allowing remote meetings was ending in March and asked if the
97 Commission would be holding hybrid or fully in-person meetings. Mr. Moulton added that he would not be
98 available for in-person meetings in March. Mr. Ackerman stated that he would also be unavailable for any
99 in-person meetings in March. Ms. Solomon stated that it appeared the Select Board had accepted the pre-
100 COVID regulations for remote participation, but that she would check that all necessary recordings and
101 votes had occurred. If the regulations had been accepted, then the commission could hold a hybrid meeting
102 with Commission member remote as long as a quorum of the members were in-person.
103

104 Ms. Van Lancker asked if there had been any movement in the decision on making a permanent allowance
105 of remote meetings. Ms. Solomon stated it was still under review by the State. Mr. Hakansson asked how
106 the rest of the commission felt on the remote meeting format, and if the rest of the commission would
107 prefer to stay remote if allowed to do so. Ms. Van Lancker stated she preferred remote. Mr. Crow
108 responded that each option had their own pros and cons. Ms. Solomon stated she would add the discussion
109 to the next meeting for review.
110

111 The Commission discussed the process for closing a Notice of Intent hearing and issuing an Order of
112 Conditions. They determined to close the hearing first, then review the conditions, before voting to issue
113 the Order of Conditions, except for large or complicated projects which may require deliberation during the
114 review of the special conditions. Ms. Solomon added that any conditions the Commission felt needed to be
115 included in the conditions which were not part of the standard conditions, should be discussed prior to
116 closing the hearing.
117

118 **Meeting Adjournment:**

119 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crow.

120 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 5-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, PC, CH, WM, CVL)
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122

123 The meeting was adjourned at 8:06p.m.
124

125 **Documents reviewed by the Conservation Commission on 2/13/2022**

- 126 ● Document entitled, *Agenda, dated 2/13/2022*
- 127 ● Document entitled, *Meeting Minutes, dated 1/23/2023*
- 128 ● Plans entitled, *Proposed Pool Plan of Land, dated 2/3/2023*
- 129 ● Email correspondence entitled, *Trails-Wilson Street Improvements, dated 2/9/2023*
- 130 ● Document entitled, *RE Notice of Intent for Offsite Stormwater Improvements, Wilson Street – Howe*
131 *Street Peer Review, dated 2/8/2023*
- 132 ● Document entitled, *RE Site Modifications Exhibit for The Trails at Legacy Farms, dated 2/8/2023*
- 133 ● Email correspondence entitled, *RE: Tree Removal – 1 Sandstone Way Ashland, dated 1/17/2023*
- 134 ● Email correspondence entitled, *Invitation to Be A Part of Ashland’s Comprehensive Plan Steering*
135 *Committee, dated 1/30/2023*
- 136 ● Document entitled, *Steering Committee Member Role Description*
- 137 ● Document entitled, *RE: Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee- Invitation*