



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

MEETING MINUTES
ASHLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
July 24, 2023

1
2 Present: Catherine Van Lancker (Chair)
3 Greg Wands (Vice Chair)
4 Owen Ackerman
5 Carl Hakansson
6
7
8 Absent: Preston Crow
9 Gene Crouch
10 William Moulton
11
12 Agent: Becca Solomon

13
14 **Meeting held by Zoom**
15 **Call to order: 7:00 P.M.**
16

17 **Chair Catherine Van Lancker read the Ashland Conservation Commission virtual meeting protocols, and**
18 **meeting recording announcement**
19

20 **Extension Request, 81 West Union Street, William Rodenhiser, DEP File No. 95-929**

21 Ms. Solomon summarized that the applicant was requested an extension of the Order of Conditions
22 originally issued in 2019 for Phase 2 of 81 West Union Street, which was amended in 2020 for two mixed use
23 buildings and associated parking, grading, and utilities. Ms. Solomon continued that the site was in good
24 condition, with temporary surcharge drainage basins around the perimeter which have effectively keep
25 stormwater held on site. The applicant intends to clean up sediment from the basins once the water dries
26 enough to do so. The rest of the area has a combination of wood shavings and crushed stone as temporary
27 stabilization, with the crushed stone sections acting as extended track pads to further mitigate potential
28 track-out. Ms. Solomon added that the applicant was asking for a 3-year extension as work on the building
29 itself had not begun yet, and the Order of Conditions expires in January.
30

31 **Motion:** Mr. Wands moved to issue a 3-year extension on the Order of Conditions. The motion was
32 seconded by Mr. Hakansson.

33 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 4-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, CH, GW, CVL)
34
35

36 **Certificate of Compliance, 45 shore Road, Anurag Sureka, DEP File No. 95-652**

37 Ms. Solomon stated that the original Order of Conditions was issued 20 years prior and never closed out.
38 The Order was recorded on the Registry of Deeds. The approved work was for removal of soil, debris, and
39 branches that had fallen down the bank of a wetland area, and to restore the bank. A note was made on
40 meeting minutes at the time that a fence was proposed but could not be installed until the OOC was
41 received by the property owner. During the site visit it did not appear that a fence had been installed
42 excepting one installed by a neighboring property. The wetlands were clean of debris, the bank was

43 vegetated with a mix of native and invasives. Water level was higher than normal due to a beaver dam
44 further downstream, but overall the site was in good condition, and was stable.

45
46 **Motion:** Mr. Wands moved to issue a complete Certificate of Compliance. The motion was seconded by Mr.
47 Hakansson.

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

49
50
51 **Wetlands Violations, 220 Oregon Road, No Associated DEP File Number**

52 Mr. Cai stated that he spoke with his wetlands scientist, Ms. Skinner Catrone, and the wetlands have been
53 delineated but the engineer is still making the plans. Ms. Van Lancker asked for Ms. Solomon to get the
54 information for the next meeting.

55
56 **No motion was made and no vote taken.**

57
58 **Wetlands Violations, 65 Concord Street, DEP File Number 95-967**

59 Ms. Solomon stated that at the previous meeting DPW volunteered to provide translation services. Ms.
60 Solomon continued that hers and DPW's schedules have not yet matched up to meet with the property
61 owner, but were scheduled to try and meet with the homeowner the following day.

62
63 **No motion was made and no vote taken.**

64
65
66 **Review minutes 6/12/2023**

67 **6/12/2023 Meeting Minutes:**

68 Commission Members reviewed and edited the June 12, 2023 meeting minutes.

69
70 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson moved to approve the June 12, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. The motion
71 was seconded by Mr. Wands.

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

73
74 **Review minutes 6/26/2023**

75 **6/26/2023 Meeting Minutes:**

76 Commission Members reviewed and edited the June 26, 2023 meeting minutes.

77
78 **Motion:** Mr. Hakansson moved to approve the June 26, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. The motion
79 was seconded by Mr. Wands.

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

81
82 **Review minutes 7/10/2023**

83 **7/10/2023 Meeting Minutes:**

84 Commission Members reviewed and edited the July 10, 2023 meeting minutes.

85
86 **Motion:** Mr. Wands moved to approve the July 10, 2023 meeting minutes as amended. The motion was
87 seconded by Mr. Hakansson.

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

89
90 **Review and Vote, Order of Conditions, 0 Myrtle Street, Ashland DPW, Pedestrian Pathway, DEP File No.**
91 **95-986**

92 The Commission reviewed and edited draft conditions for 0 Myrtle Street.

93

94 **Motion:** Mr. Wands moved to approve the Order of Conditions as amended. The motion was seconded by
95 Mr. Hakansson.

96 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 4-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, CH, GW, CVL)
97

98 **Member Prerogative**

99 Mr. Hakansson stated that he was meeting with Evan White, Town Engineer, and Beaver Solutions to discuss
100 alternatives to trapping the beavers at Spring Street, such as a beaver deceiver or flow-control device. Ms.
101 Solomon clarified that a flow-control device creates a cage that beavers can continue damming, with a pipe
102 cutting through the dam that allows water through.

103
104 Mr. Hakansson asked if there has been progress with getting an executive session scheduled for an update
105 on the Burnham Circle litigation. Ms. Solomon stated that Mr. Winner was unavailable for the month of July,
106 but she would reach out about scheduling a meeting in August.

107
108 Mr. Dassoni, 49 Hawthorne Road, asked the Commission to explain their role in the town. Mr. Hakansson
109 responded that the Conservation Commission is given statutory authority from the Conservation
110 Commission Act (MGL Chapter 40 Section 8C), and charges the Commission with enforcing the
111 Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, the local Wetlands Protection Bylaw, and local Stormwater
112 Management Bylaw, as well as stewardship of property under care and custody of the Commission. Mr.
113 Hakansson continued that anything outside that jurisdiction is outside the jurisdiction of the Commission.
114 Mr. Dassoni further asked what each member of the Commission and their agent aimed to achieve with
115 their position. Mr. Hakansson reiterated that each member is only able to do what they are allowed
116 statutorily, and continued, their role is to protect the wetlands, and each member brings a different
117 background and perspective on that. Ms. Van Lancker agreed and added that managing stormwater permits
118 was also a large part of the position, to keep stormwater systems functioning as well. Ms. Solomon clarified
119 that other board and commissions in town have a more ability to bring their own perspective and the
120 opinions of their constituents into the interpretation of our bylaws and permitting of new developments;
121 Site Plan Review for example has a lot of influence in what is and isn't allowed. In comparison, the
122 Conservation Commission is a very technical board. What can and can't be approved is strictly written out in
123 the law, and there is little to no opportunity for the Commission to stray from that, regardless of their
124 personal opinions. Mr. Wands added that with the Wetlands Protection Act in Massachusetts, the
125 Conservation Commission administers the Wetlands Protection Act, even though it is a state law. Mr.
126 Ackerman agreed with the previous comments and added that sometimes the Commission would like to
127 have more authority over projects in Town, but ultimately they are constrained by their statutory authority.
128

129 **Meeting Adjournment:**

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

131 **Vote:** The motion passed with a 4-0-0 vote. (Rollcall vote: OA, CH, GW, CVL)
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133 The meeting was adjourned at 7:48p.m.
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135 **Documents reviewed by the Conservation Commission on 7/24/2023**

- 136 ● Document entitled, *Agenda, dated 7/24/2023*
- 137 ● Document entitled, *Meeting Minutes, dated 6/12/2023*
- 138 ● Document entitled, *Meeting Minutes, dated 6/26/2023*
- 139 ● Document entitled, *Meeting Minutes, dated 7/10/2023*
- 140 ● Document entitled, *81 West Union Street OOC Extension Request, dated 7/6/2023*
- 141 ● Document entitled, *WPA Form 8A-Request for Certificate of Compliance, dated 7/18/2023*
- 142 ● Document entitled, *Draft Conditions 0 Myrtle Street*
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