

Acton Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

July 16th, 2025

6:15 PM

Hybrid Meeting (Room 9 & Zoom)

Present: Terry Maitland (Chair), James Colman (Vice-Chair) - Virtual, Peter Hocknell, , Zywia Chadzynska Amy Green. Zywia Chadzynska

Absent: Kate Warwick, and Jillian Peters

Conservation Agent: Olivia Barksdale

Public Concerns and Regular Business

6:20PM Public Concerns

6:23PM Notice of Intent- Public Hearing – 45 Nagog Park

Brian Butler from Oxbow Associates and Frank McPartland from Willis and Wright presented their project for developing a sports facility on a 10-acre property, which includes a 50,000 sq. ft. building used by River Life Christian Church. The project would create tennis and pickleball courts with a fabric tension structure and a 4,000 sq. ft. clubhouse, located outside the wetland jurisdiction. The site contains a retention basin presumed to be a vernal pool, an isolated vegetative wetland, and a detention basin classified as a BVW under both the Wetlands Act and the bylaw. They plan to replace asphalt parking lots near wetlands with native plantings. Amy Green confirmed there'd be a net decrease in impervious surfaces in the buffer zones. James Colman asked them to flag trees over 6 inches in diameter for removal. As the DEP file number was pending and the stormwater peer review incomplete, Chair Maitland continued the hearing to August 6th at 6:15 PM, requesting the applicants do the following: document the ILSF number for the front basin, provide a note about no new flow dissipation at the pipe ends, ensure no stockpiling within the buffer zone, and identify trees for removal in the buffer zone.

6:52PM Notice of Intent- Public Hearing – 72 Strawberry Hill Road – DEP # 085 - 1393

Property owner Alex Lasco presented his project, entailing the excavation of about 2 cubic yards of sod and topsoil by hand, to lay a concrete sand foundation for an above-ground pool at a former pool site. The excavated soil was for re-use along the driveway and mailbox. Commissioners Jim Coleman and Zywia Chadzynska reported that while visiting the site, they observed it appeared to be for a pool installation, with leveling adjustments being made in a lawn area just outside the buffer zone. Commissioner Coleman noted uncertainty in the exact boundary, but deemed it a benign project since it lays within a previously used pool area. Mr. Lasco confirmed the site's location as 50 feet from property lines. Commissioner Amy Green highlighted a discrepancy in the DEP form about BVW impact, which Mr. Lasco corrected as relating to the pool site's square footage. Commissioner James Colman moved to issue OOC, with a second from Commissioner Amy Green, to approve the project, passing unanimously.

6:58PM Notice of Intent- Public Hearing – 64 Washington Drive

Vito Colonna from Connorstone Engineering outlined a septic repair project at a site with a vegetated wetland and an intermittent stream. The failing leach field, which is about 5 years old, has unsuitable shallow ledge in the backyard. However, sufficient conditions were found alongside the house for a new system fully outside the buffer zone, except for the septic tank and pump chamber. Colonna assured they would use seamless tanks to prevent leaks, with the tank located 75 feet from the wetland and erosion barriers in place. Commissioner Amy Green reported a site walk confirmed the wetland line looked accurate, and she expressed surprise at the challenging conditions on the 3.4-acre parcel. Commissioner Zywia Chadzynska addressed soil removal, with Colonna confirming containment within barriers. The homeowner, Katrina Frederick, voiced concern about potential sewage backup, and the Commission explained the steps needed post-approval, noting that they needed a DEP file number to issue a permit. The hearing was continued to August 6th.

7:07PM Notice of Intent- Public Hearing – 19 Maple Street

This item was continued to August 6th at 6:25 PM.

7:08PM Notice of Intent- Public Hearing – 279 High Street – DEP # 085 - 1392

Dan Carr from Stamski and McNary highlighted adjustments made following MassDEP comments: They provided a detailed stormwater checklist, conducted a test pit showing seasonal high groundwater at roughly 7 feet with no groundwater found, and clarified pretreatment components (pea gravel diaphragm and grass filter strip). They affirmed the suitability of rain gardens in Zone 2 drinking water well areas and bolstered the operation and maintenance plan based on the stormwater handbook. Snow storage was included on the plan, and a commitment was made to monitor invasive species removal for two years. Commissioner James Colman inquired about long-term operation and maintenance duties on town property, and Mr. Carr confirmed DPW's responsibility with reference to Corey York's email. Commissioners sought clearer operational role documentation between the applicant and town. Amy Green recommended including operation and maintenance inspection copies in the certificate of compliance request. Mike Carpenter expressed concern over the process's length and cost but acknowledged the environmental benefit of the rain garden project over a proposed easement. The Commission established special conditions:

1. The applicant has to monitor and report invasive species control for two years. Reports submitted to the Town after the growing season.
2. The request for Certificate of Compliance will include two years of copies of Operations and Maintenance inspections reports.

3. The Town and the applicant have to sign a MOA for the long-term maintenance plan and responsibility of applying for the Certificate of Compliance within 2 months of the Orders of Conditions being issued.

The Commission also opted for a "red line change" in the order for 308 Old High Street after rain garden completion, streamlining the process compared to formal amendments. Commissioner Amy Green moved to approve the conditions and issue the OOC, seconded by Commissioner James Colman. The motion carried unanimously.

7:47PM Amend Wetland Protection Bylaw Rules and Regulations – Public Hearing

Chair Maitland opened the public hearing on amending the Wetland Protection Bylaw Rules and Regulations.

Olivia Barksdale explained that the amendment aimed to close a loophole where applicants could choose whether to file for stormwater review through a land disturbance permit with DPW or through an NOI with the Conservation Commission. The proposed change would reference Chapter X (the stormwater bylaw) in the rules and regulations to ensure proper stormwater review occurs regardless of which permitting path is chosen.

Brewster Conant Jr. from Main Street asked for clarification on the process. Commissioner James Colman explained that this change would streamline the process for applicants by allowing "one-stop shopping" - they could submit all materials to the Conservation Commission, and internal town processes would ensure proper stormwater review by DPW or third-party consultants. The same stormwater review standards would apply regardless of which department received the application.

Commissioner Amy Green moved to approve the proposed language amending the Wetland Protection Bylaw Rules and Regulations, seconded by Commissioner James Colman. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Updates

- **Review and Approve Meeting Minutes**
 - The Commission reviewed minutes from June 4 and May 21.
 - Commissioner James Colman moved to approve both sets of minutes, seconded by Commissioner Amy Green. The motion passed unanimously.
- **187 Main Street Encroachment**
 - Olivia Barksdale presented an update on 187 Main Street, where the area had been cleared of cars and boulders installed along the boundary line. A dirt mound had been removed. She reported that the landowner's representative had been very amenable to addressing the issues quickly.

- Ms. Barksdale asked the Commission for guidance on vegetation for the cleared area. Commissioner Amy Green recommended planting trees and shrubs, particularly along the boulder line, plus seeding the rest of the area with a native seed mix to prevent invasive species from establishing. The Commission discussed various approaches including using a roadside seed mix from New England Wetland Plants that includes some shrub seeds, hydroseeding, and potentially waiting until fall for planting due to the current hot weather.
- Commissioners suggested calculating the area and determining appropriate spacing (20 feet on center for trees, 10 feet on center for shrubs). They recommended contacting Scott Goddard for a plant species list and noted that the restoration should have 75-80% survivorship after two years.
- Brewster Conant Jr. raised a question during public concerns about the status of 549 Main Street. Ms. Barksdale explained they were working on establishing trails and finalizing signage, with plans to complete the project this fall. She also noted ongoing discussions about maintenance responsibilities between the town and Acton Water District.

8:22PM

Meeting adjourned

Documents and exhibits used at this meeting:

The screenshot shows the Town of Acton document management system interface. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links: HOME, MY DOCUSHARE, MY TASKS, MY FAVORITES, QUICK SEARCH, and RECENT. Below this, a breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Location: Home > Boards & Committees > Conservation Commission > 2025 Meetings > 07-16-2025 Meeting Information Listing.

The main section is titled "07-16-2025 Meeting Information". It features a table with a list of documents. Each row includes a checkbox for selection, a document icon, the document title, and a brief description. The documents listed are:

Checkbox	Type	Title	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	187 Main Street 07.16.25 visit.docx	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	187 Main Street Update 7 14 25.docx	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	ConCom Minutes 5.21.25 DRAFT.docx	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	ConCom Minutes 6.4.25 DRAFT_update 7_2_25.docx	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	ToA Bylaw Rules and Regs Rev 6-30-25.docx	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	19 Maple Street	Parking lot update
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	279 High Street	Rain garden on town land
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	45 Nagog Park	Building infrastructure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	64 Washington Drive	Septic replacement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Document	72 Strawberry Hill Road	Pool installation

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with "Town of Acton" on the left and "Quick Search Home" on the right.

All Documents can be found at:

<https://doc.actonma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-19420>