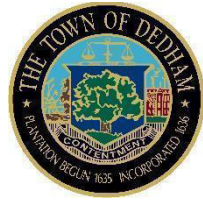


Tim Puopolo, Chair  
Erik DeAvila, Vice Chair  
Stephanie Radner, Clerk  
Nathan Gauthier, Associate  
Leigh Hafrey, Associate  
Elena Taurasi, Associate



Dedham Town Hall  
450 Washington Street  
Dedham, MA 02026

Tel (781) 751-9210

Meredith LaBelle, Agent

## TOWN OF DEDHAM

Website  
[www.dedham-ma.gov](http://www.dedham-ma.gov)

### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

**Minutes of October 3, 2024**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and given the current prohibitions on gatherings imposed by Governor Baker's March 23, 2020 "Order Assuring Continued Operation of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than 10 People," this public hearing was conducted virtually, as allowed by Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law," G.L. c. 30A, §20.

**The following Commissioners were present:**

Tim Puopolo, Chair  
Erik DeAvila, Vice Chair  
Nathan Gauthier, Clerk  
Stephanie Radner, Associate  
Elena Taurasi, Associate  
Leigh Hafrey, Associate

**The following Commissioners were absent:**

**The following Staff were present:**

Meredith LaBelle, Conservation Agent

**The following Applicants and/or Representatives were present:**

Sorreila Oliveria, Applicant for 61 Milton Street  
Ryan Boucher, Representative for 61 Milton Street  
Meredith LaBelle, Applicant for Wigwam Pond      James Lacasse, Representative for Wigwam Pond  
Al Morteo, Applicant for 50, 49-57 Bridge St  
Chris Frattaroli, Representative for 50, 49-57 Bridge St  
Joe Danubio, Representative for 50, 49-57 Bridge St

Chair Puopolo called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. Chapter 131, Section 40 and the Dedham Wetlands Bylaw.

**AGENDA:**

**1. Public Comment**

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for any conservation questions or general comments from members of the public. He received no responses.

## **2. 214 Lowder St Land Donation & Vote of Acceptance**

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor to other commissioners for questions and comments. Commissioner Radner raised several points, starting by asking if the land had been surveyed or the trees marked. She also inquired if the new school administration, including the superintendent, had been informed about the land donation, as school approval is required for access. Additionally, she noted that a footbridge would be needed for access, which the town would have to finance. Commissioner Radner also pointed out that state funding might not be available because access to the land is limited to certain times. While she acknowledged the potential for nature classrooms and educational use, she emphasized the need for clear understanding from the school that the land cannot be altered.

Agent LaBelle responded, explaining that a site visit is planned for next Thursday (10/10), with permission from the school, which will help identify the land boundaries and any existing features. Town markers will soon be placed to delineate private property. She also mentioned that a meeting with the superintendent, involving Jeremy, will be arranged, and that she has already spoken with the school principal to coordinate the visit and discuss ground rules and future land use.

Commissioner Radner then asked if the land would be protected under Article 97, suggesting that securing Article 97 protection before voting to accept the land would prevent any encroachment or future development. Agent LaBelle agreed, suggesting the commission vote to accept the land at this meeting, and aim to reach a decision about Article 97 protection in the next meeting, after seeking legal advice from K.P. Law. A memo will also be sent to the Select Board for their records.

Commissioner Gauthier expressed concern about the Planning Board's approval of the land without public access, citing issues with neighboring landowners. He expressed hope that the Planning Board would prioritize the interests of Dedham residents over individual landowners for greater access and convenience.

Jim Maher, a resident of 22 Sherman Road, emphasized the importance of including Article 97 in the deed, referencing an instance where a Parks and Recreation Commission property was repurposed for a Senior Living Center due to the absence of Article 97 protection. He urged the inclusion of Article 97 in the new deed to prevent similar situations in the future. Agent LaBelle clarified that the current deed specifies the land's use for limited conservation and passive recreational activities, such as hiking and walking. Commissioner Radner concurred, noting that the deed already protects the land from other uses.

**Commissioner Radner then motioned to accept a donation of land to the Town for conservation and passive recreational use as provided for in that Modification of Certificate of Action issued by the Planning Board and filed with the Town Clerk on May 9, 2024 for a Planned Residential Development at 146, 188 & 216 Lowder Street and 125 Stoney Lea Road and set forth in the deed presented to the Commission for this vote, with the added stipulation that this land will specifically be for passive conservation uses, and Commissioner Gauthier seconded the motion.** Commissioner Puopolo conducted a roll call vote, with all commissioners present voting "aye." The motion passed unanimously with a **5-0 vote**.

## **3. Town Land Town Meeting Article Discussion with Jim Maher**

Jim Maher presented his proposed Fall Town Hall Article which will allow individual boards and committees to set hours for lands that are under their jurisdiction. He stated that he went to the Select Board, and they were concerned about the dawn to dusk bylaw and its limitations for properties. The Select Board had the Town Council rewrite the bylaw and gave the ability to Parks and Rec Commission, Conservation Commission, and the Select Board the ability to set hours on properties based on

departments policies whenever needed instead of having to make a change at Town Hall meetings. He mentioned that there is stricter language regarding fines to individuals in violation of the set hours set by the committees.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for comments from the public. He received no responses.

**Commissioner Radner motioned to support and issue the letter of support as drafted for the proposed article. Commissioner Gauthier seconded the motion.** Commissioner Puopolo led a roll call vote. All Commissioners present voted “aye” except for Commissioner Gauthier, who abstained, and the motion passed by a **4-0 vote**.

#### **4. New Application**

##### **4.1. 61 Milton Street –Site Redevelopment – RDA 2024-17**

Commissioner Puopolo introduced a proposal for redevelopment involving the demolition of an existing building and the construction of a new two-family building. A portion of the property falls within the riverfront area of Mother Brook, with no impacts to Undisturbed Buffer Area (UBA) or the 100-foot buffer zone.

Ryan Boucher, from PVI Site Design, represented Sorreila Oliveira and presented the proposal. He explained that the existing two-family structure would be demolished, and part of the new building, as well as some pavement, would extend into the riverfront area. Some trees at the rear of the property will be removed but will be mitigated by planting new trees in the front, within the riverfront area. Additionally, a drainage system, including an underground infiltration system, will be installed in the riverfront area. Erosion control BMPs will be implemented, with silt socks placed at a nearby catch basin. The Stormwater Permit for the project has already been approved.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for questions and asked if there were any existing trees in the riverfront area. Mr. Boucher confirmed that there were none. Commissioner Radner inquired whether a new address would be assigned to the property. Mr. Boucher replied that the address would remain as 61 and 63 Milton St. Commissioner Radner suggested verifying this with the GIS department, as only 63 Milton St. currently appears online, and including 61 Milton St. would be helpful for future reference. Commissioner Puopolo asked whether there would be an increase or decrease in impervious surface. Mr. Boucher stated that there would be an 805 sq. ft. increase. He explained that the infiltration system required for next year would help mitigate runoff, with no runoff expected during a 10-year storm and only a small overflow during a 100-year storm. He added that the sandy soil conditions were also beneficial for drainage.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor to comments from the public, but no comments were received.

**Commissioner Radner motioned to close the public hearing and issue a Negative Determination of Applicability for RDA 2024-17.** Commissioner Gauthier seconded the motion. All commissioners present voted "aye," and the motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

##### **4.2. Wigwam Pond – DEP 141-0638 – Invasive Species Management**

Conservation Agent and Applicant Meredith LaBelle introduced a proposal for aquatic invasive species management at Wigwam Pond, focusing on the excessive growth of Eurasian Milfoil, Fanwort, and Phragmites. Agent LaBelle explained she is applying for a habitat management grant through Fish and Wildlife to help reimburse the town for work by Water and Wetland at the pond. She then introduced James Lacasse from Water and Wetland to provide more details. Mr. Lacasse stated that eight species were found in the pond, two of which are invasive: Eurasian Milfoil and Fanwort, along with two upland invasives: Phragmites and Purple Loosestrife. He explained that the first step would be treating Phragmites now, followed by a preliminary survey and sonar treatment next year. The sonar treatment, a

systemic herbicide, is commonly used across the U.S. for drinking water safety and effectively targets invasive species. The overall management will also include monitoring. In addition, there are plans to address native water lilies and watersheds, which have reached nuisance levels and negatively impact the ecosystem.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for questions and comments. Commissioner DeAvila recommended installing a charcoal sock at the outlet, as the dying vegetation could cause problems downstream. Mr. Lacasse responded that it could be done within the town's budget and explained that applying treatment before significant plant growth would minimize die-off impacts and prevent downstream issues.

Commissioner Radner also asked whether it was too late in the season to apply sonar. Mr. Lacasse explained that the sonar treatment would occur in 2025. He added that now is the best time to treat Phragmites, as they are taking in starches for winter storage, which helps the herbicide reach the roots for long-term control.

Commissioner DeAvila inquired about the time frame for seeing results after treating Phragmites. Mr. Lacasse explained that while immediate results would not be visible, the plants would begin to yellow and brown, with more noticeable effects the following year. About 5% regrowth is expected, but after three years, nearly full eradication should occur. Commissioner DeAvila also asked whether monitoring programs would be necessary to manage the invasives long-term. Mr. Lacasse confirmed that monitoring would be conducted either by Water and Wetland or by the town. Commissioner DeAvila further asked about the timeline for Eurasian Milfoil treatment, to which Mr. Lacasse responded that significant decreases would be seen within 2-5 years.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for public comments, but no responses were received.

**Commissioner Radner motioned to close the public hearing and issue the Order of Conditions for DEP 141-0638.** Commissioner Gauthier seconded the motion. All commissioners present voted “aye,” and the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

#### **4.3. 50 Bridge St– DEP 141-0640 – Site Redevelopment**

Chris Frattaroli, Wetland Scientist from Goddard Consulting, introduced the Notice of Intent proposal for 50 Bridge St. He reviewed the existing conditions of the property, noting that it is mostly impervious surfaces with a few areas of vegetation. He then presented the layout plan, explaining that the building will be reconstructed in the same footprint, losing an HVAC pad and a side entryway. The impervious surface area in front of the river will be replaced with landscape and native vegetation. A portion of the parking lot will be transformed into a park, with a handicap-accessible ramp and additional vegetation. Overall, the project will increase vegetation along the bank of the Charles River and within the site, as well as expand the site's flood storage capacity.

Commissioner Puopolo asked about the removal of Japanese Knotweed along the rear banks and the management plan for it. Mr. Frattaroli responded that an invasive species management plan will be implemented, with much of the knotweed being removed during site excavation. Commissioner Radner commented on the importance of using native plants in a riverfront area and eliminating cultivars where possible. Mr. Frattaroli responded that they are planning to make that revision.

Commissioner Puopolo asked if there would be a dumpster in the paved areas. Mr. Frattaroli replied that there will be one under the building, sheltered from the wind. He also inquired about snow storage and concerns about introducing salt and sediment into the river. Mr. Frattaroli responded that the current snow storage location is near the riverbank, but they are considering alternative locations further from the river. Commissioner Gauthier recommended placing signs or another method to inform snowplowers to keep snow storage in a designated area to avoid runoff into the river.

Commissioner Radner asked about the snow melt products that will be used, questioning whether sand or salt will be included in the Operation & Management Plan (O&M). Joe Danubio, Civil Engineering Consultant from A Plus Construction Services, responded that the O&M Plan currently covers stormwater facilities but will consider adding deicing and snow removal procedures for pavement. A separate O&M plan to address these issues will be created. Agent LaBelle commented that she can add a condition about snow storage and deicing to the Order of Conditions.

Commissioner Puopolo asked whether existing milkweed would be preserved. Mr. Frattaroli responded that the landscape architects are concerned about preserving it due to the need for ramp installation, but they are open to including milkweed in the planting plan. Commissioner Puopolo recommended including milkweed in the planting plan, as it is thriving under current conditions. Commissioner Radner pointed out that knotweed might grow on a bare soil plot next to the retaining wall on the northeast corner of the property. Commissioner DeAvila suggested using permeable resin stone instead of bare soil.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for public comments, but none were received.

Commissioner DeAvila asked whether the project had been approved by the Planning Board. Al Morteo, the property owner, stated that while they do not yet have official approval, they are in good standing with the board based on their reports and plans. Commissioner Radner then asked whether the dumpster will be secured since it is located on the first floor and may flood. Mr. Frattaroli replied that they will investigate the matter.

Both Commissioners DeAvila and Gauthier expressed satisfaction with the proposed changes. Chair Puopolo asked if the new changes could be implemented by the October 17th meeting. Mr. Frattaroli responded that the proposal would continue for the next hearing.

**Commissioner Radner motioned to continue the discussion to October 17th. Commissioner Hafrey seconded the motion.** Commissioner Puopolo led a roll call vote. All commissioners present voted “aye” except for Commissioner Gauthier, and the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

#### **4.4. 49-57 Bridge St – DEP 141-0639 – Site Redevelopment**

Commissioner Puopolo introduces the proposal and says existing conditions are degraded as known in the Wetland Protection Act, and it will be a redevelopment of a parking lot into a mixed use residential and commercial building.

Chris Frattaroli, Wetland Scientist, Goddard Consulting introduces the site as being entirely impervious. He explained that the applicant is proposing a mixed-use commercial residential building, with parking at the rear and under the building. Mr. Frattaroli added that the front portion of the proposed building is located in the outer Riparian Zone but is not located within the 100-Year Flood Zone.

Commissioner Puopolo stated he is pleased with the improvement to the parking lot and adding more greenery to the area to reduce the Heat Island Effect. He asked about the proposed plantings in the Riverfront Area. Mr. Frattaroli says all proposed plantings are native and proposed cultivars will be updated with non-cultivars. Commissioner Radner makes a recommendation to have smaller brush plants because it will help with visibility and safety on the road.

Commissioner Puopolo opened the floor for comments from the public. He received no responses.

**Commissioner Radner motioned to continue discussion for October 17<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner DeAvila seconded the motion.** Commissioner Puopolo led a roll call vote. All Commissioners present voted “aye” except for Commissioner Gauthier and the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

## 5. Minutes

**Commissioner DeAvila made a motion to approve the minutes for the 9/19 meeting as drafted.**

Commissioner Taurasi seconded the motion. Commissioner Puopolo led a roll call vote. All Commissioners present voted "aye" and **the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.**

## 6. Agent's Report

Agent LaBelle reports the MACC Fall Conference is happening on October 19<sup>th</sup> and ask if any of the Commissioner are interested in attending. She also mentioned that Patrick Hogan, Stormwater Manager, will be at the next meeting to go over his update on stormwater regulations and ask for feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:57 pm.