



# TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – 6:30 PM  
LOCATION: VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

Donald Blais, Chair  
Dorothy Lawrence, Vice Chair  
David Cotter  
Peter Izyk  
Nicholas Zeo  
Brenda Cole  
Mike Swiatek

Angela Panaccione, Agent  
Sarah Fortune, Assistant

**Members Present:** Donald Blais, Jr.  
Peter Izyk  
Mike Swiatek  
Brenda Cole

**Members Absent:** Dorothy Lawrence  
David Cotter  
Nicholas Zeo (enters at 6:34 PM)

**Also Present:** Angela Panaccione, Conservation Agent  
Sarah Fortune, Conservation Assistant  
Michael Fliss, Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association  
Kara Sliwoski, SOLitude Lake Management

**1. Call to Order:** 6:31 PM – Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair)

- a. Roll call attendance:
  - i. **Donald Blais, Jr. – present**
  - ii. **Dorothy Lawrence – absent**
  - iii. **Peter Izyk – present**
  - iv. **David Cotter – absent**
  - v. **Nicholas Zeo – absent (enters at 6:34 PM)**
  - vi. **Brenda Cole – present**
  - vii. **Mike Swiatek – present**

**2. Review Mail/Phone Messages**

- a. MECO Notice of Utility Work: Replace existing pole P52 on River Street (work within the 200' Riverfront Area)

The PCC received notification from Massachusetts Electric Company regarding utility pole maintenance off River Street within the 200-foot Riverfront Area to the Ware River. Maintenance activities will include the replacement of existing pole P52. All work will be staged from the road shoulder. Utility maintenance activities are exempt under 310 CMR 10.02 (2) (a) (2).

**3. Approval of Minutes**

- a. 1/19/2021

**Motion made by Nick Zeo to approve the minutes from 1/19/2021 as amended**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk**

**No further discussion**

**Role call vote: Donald Blais, Jr. – aye; Peter Izyk – aye; Nicholas Zeo – aye; Mike Swiatek – aye; Brenda Cole - aye**

**Motion Caries 5-0-0**

#### **4. Signing of Documents**

a. Conflict of Interest paperwork

The PCC received conflict of interest paperwork from the Town Clerk with various instructions as to complete the required ethics training. Conflict of Interest paperwork shall be submitted to the Town Clerk upon completion.

#### **5. New/Old Business**

a. FY 2022 Budget

The FY 2022 budget request has been submitted, and the Agent and Assistant met with the Town Manager and Town Accountant to discuss the budget, in which the Town Manager has recommended to split the Agent/Stormwater Coordinator position into two separate positions; the Assistant would become full time Conservation Agent, and the Agent would become full time Stormwater Coordinator. In the event that the position split doesn't get approved, the Assistant position has been written back into the FY 2022 budget, although an assistant would not be necessary if the position split is approved. The Assistant has been doing a majority of the wetlands review because the Agent is swamped with stormwater and MS4 requirements.

The FY 2022 expense budget is approximately \$2,000 less than the FY 2021 budget. The expense budget has remained the same from FY 2021 to FY 2022.

b. Zoom event: "Attracting Birds, Butterflies, Bees and Other Beneficials" – Thursday, February 25 at 7 PM

A Zoom event on attracting pollinators is scheduled to occur on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 7 PM. Registration is free and all are encouraged to participate.

c. Earth Day Clean-up: Saturday, April 17, 2021 from 9 AM to 12 PM

The PCC is hosting a river cleanup to celebrate Earth Day on 4/17/2021 from 9 AM to 12 PM at Laviolette Field. The Board of Health has requested an official event write up so that they may formally approve the event, given the COVID-19 pandemic. All COVID-19 safety protocols will be implemented during the event. A total of 50 people will be allowed to attend the event; this was determined based on the large size of Laviolette Field. The PCC is partnering with the Chicopee 4 Rivers Watershed Council and Keep Palmer Clean on the event. The PCC will ask Country Bank for a donation for 100 individual hand sanitizer bottles to distribute to volunteers.

a. OSRP Update

The 2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) will expire in 2021 and therefore needs to be updated. The PCC is waiting to hear if they will receive a District Local Technical Assistance grant from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to fund portions of the OSRP update, such as land surveys and mapping updates. The Agent will inform the PCC when the PVPC has responded to the request for District Local Technical

Assistance grant funds. An OSRP Update Committee will have to be formed, and will include a PCC member, a Planning Board member, and other members at large.

b. Master Plan Update

The Agent provided a presentation on open space and recreation areas during the last Master Plan Update public forum. The discussion focused on recreational trails, dog parks, community gardens, and town tree inventory for street trees.

**6. Schedule of Public Meetings & Hearings**

- a. 7:13 PM Cont. Notice of Intent (NOI) DEP #256-0348 – Solitude, LLC: Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association (Map 18 Lot 47-1): The applicant has submitted a Notice of Intent for the Ecological Restoration of Meadowbrook Green Condo Ponds through utilizing selective aquatic herbicide and algacide treatments with USEPA/MA DAR registered herbicides and other BMPs to control growth of nuisance aquatic plant species and invasive plant species, (specifically white and yellow waterlily and purple loosestrife), improve fish habitat, improve water quality and slow pond eutrophication.

Donald Blais, Jr. reopened the public hearing at 7:13 PM. Kara Sliwoski of SOLitude Lake Management was in attendance to discuss the project stating that the applicant was requesting approval to continue the pond management program which has been occurring for many years. The pond management program consist of chemical and mechanical control of target and nuisance aquatic plant species; white and yellow pond lilies are the primary target species, in addition to purple loosestrife and common reed. Although yellow and white pond lilies are native species, they are regarded as a ‘nuisance’ in this situation because of their near ubiquitous density within the largest of the three (3) ponds. Management will vary between the ponds due to varying in-pond conditions. Pre-season surveys will be conducted to review in pond-conditions and develop specific management plans for each pond on an annual basis.

The Agent requested information be submitted regarding stormwater inputs to the ponds, which is a likely cause of the vegetation growth and eutrophication occurring in the ponds. The information also proposes options for stormwater mitigation as a long-term pond management strategy including water quality monitoring, use of alum, use of bichor, aeration, and hydro-raking. The Agent requested that specifications be submitted for the aeration unit because it has already been installed, and will be permitted after-the-fact under the Order of Conditions for the project. The applicant is currently deciding how they want to address stormwater inputs to the ponds moving forward, contingent upon available funding to dedicate to stormwater management.

Donald Blais, Jr. opened the hearing for additional questions or comments from the PCC and members of the general public. Michael Fliss of the Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association commented on the project, stating that the primary focus of the management program is on the pond at the center of the site. He believes that there was a stream flowing through the site that was used as stormwater drain for Mount Dumplin Street prior to the construction of the condos, and was made into a decorative feature upon construction of the condos.

**Motion made by Brenda Cole to close the public hearing for DEP # 256-0348 for the Notice of Intent submitted for Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association at 7:40 PM**

**Motion seconded by Nick Zeo**

**No further discussion**

**Role call vote: Donald Blais, Jr. – aye; Peter Izyk – aye; Nicholas Zeo – aye; Mike Swiatek– aye; Brenda Cole - aye**

**Vote was Unanimous – Motion Caries**

- b. 7:42 PM Cont. Notice of Intent (NOI) DEP #256-350 – BWS Dumplin Brook, LLC: 3090 Palmer Street (Map 29 Lot 1): The applicant has submitted a Notice of Intent to see if the work associated with the installation of a large scale solar array is subject to the MA Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Protection Ordinance.

The applicant requested a continuance of the public hearing until 3/2/2021 at 7 PM.

**Motion made by Peter Izyk to continue the public hearing for DEP # 256-0350 for the Notice of Intent submitted for BWS Dumplin Brook, LLC at 3090 Palmer Street until 3/2/2021 at 7 PM.**

**Motion seconded by Nick Zeo**

**No further discussion**

**Role call vote: Donald Blais, Jr. – aye; Peter Izyk – aye; Nicholas Zeo – aye; Mike Swiatek– aye; Brenda Cole - aye**

**Vote was Unanimous – Motion Caries**

## **7. Set Next Meeting Date**

- a. The next meeting of the PCC is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 6:30 PM.

## **8. Meeting Adjourned: 7:45 PM**

**Motion made by Brenda Cole to adjourn at 7:45 PM**

**Motion was seconded by Mike Swiatek**

**No further discussion**

**Role call vote: Donald Blais, Jr. – aye; Peter Izyk – aye; David Cotter – aye; Nicholas Zeo – aye; Mike Swiatek– aye; Brenda Cole - aye**

**Vote was Unanimous – Motion Caries**

Sincerely Submitted,

Sarah A. Fortune

Palmer Conservation Assistant



# TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

## Meeting Documents

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Nicholas Zeo  
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Mike Swiatek

Angela Panaccione, Agent  
Sarah Fortune, Assistant

The following is a list of documents used at the above-mentioned meeting, in addition to those included in the agenda packet which is part of the official record of the meeting:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1.	Meeting Minutes: 1/19/2021	Approval of Minutes	Retained in 2021 minutes binder
2.	Notice of Intent: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
3.	Site plans: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
4.	Stormwater Management Report: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
5.	DEP file comments: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
6.	Reponse to DEP file comments: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
7.	Peer Review Agricultural Field Assessment: Bluewave solar – 3090 Palmer Street	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0350
8.	Notice of Intent: Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0348
9.	Site plans: Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0348
10.	DEP file comments: Meadowbrook Green Condominium Association	Schedule of Public Hearings & Meetings	Retained in file for DEP # 256-0348
11.	MECO: Notification of Utility Maintenance Activities, River Street pole replacement	Review Mail & Phone Messages	Retained in 2021 Mail