

Palmer Conservation Commission

MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, January 7th, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Location: Town Administration Building Meeting Room
4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069

Members: Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair), Elizabeth O'Connor (Vice-Chair), Peter Izyk, David Cotter, Nicholas Zerk, Naomi Ellis, Sandra McConathy, Jessica Ladin (Agent)

2025 JAN -2 PM 2:30
TOWN OF PALMER, MA
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Call to Order

Signing of Documents (DOA, OOC, COC, Ext, Etc.):

Public Inquiries:

Violations & Enforcement:

- **6:30 PM: Administrative Hearing-** Enforcement Order, 3205 Main St, Bondsville (Map 91 Lot 43) Violation of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131 Section 40) and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Protect Ordinance (Chapter 143) at 3205 Main Street. Unauthorized alterations include, but are not limited to:
 - Unauthorized placement of debris in a wetland resource area.
 - Unauthorized burying of tires (and possibly construction debris) in the buffer zone to a wetland resource area.
- 3054 Palmer St. - Unauthorized tree removal within wetland buffer zone. Agent notified resident of violation on 11/25/24. Agent and resident have been in communication, and they are amenable to leaving the stump and restoration plantings to account for mature red maple cut in the buffer zone.

Public Hearings:

- **7:00 PM: Continued Notice of Intent, DEP #256-0377, State Street OSRD (Map 87 Lot 12, Map 89 Lot 15 & 32):**
The applicant has submitted a Notice of Intent for activities associated with the proposed construction of a 24-lot Open Space Residential Subdivision. Work is proposed to occur within the 100' Buffer Zone and 50' No-Disturb Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands.
 - Update: Applicant requested additional contracts for Peer Review services. 3 contracts were sent by 12/3/24.
- **7:15 PM: RDA, Department of Public Works, culverts at Bacon Road and West Ware Road.**
Submitted by Tighe & Bond, on behalf of DPW, a Request for Determination of Applicability for activities associated with geotechnical borings to support the design of replacement culverts at Bacon Road and West Ware Road. This work is proposed to occur within the 200' Riverfront Area and local 50' "No-Disturb" Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands. The project is located near the intersection of Bacon Road and West Ware Road, within the right of way, immediately above the respective culverts.

Review Correspondence:

- DCR Stop Order to PAH Properties, LLC – On 11/25/24 DCR Forester conducted a site inspection and observed unapproved clearing within the harvest area along Foster Street. Survey flagging and wetland resource boundary staking was also observed that was not present during the initial Cutting Plan review. The purpose of the contact is only informative so far, Conservation does not need to act yet.
- MACC – received letter stating dues amount for FY26 so we can factor dues into budget (\$320.00)

- National Grid – 12/9/24 – Regarding National Grid’s Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) involving herbicide application to control vegetation in the wire and border zones. In compliance with 333 CMR 11.06, this letter serves as notification that follow-up treatment is needed, serves as 21-day herbicide application notification, part of their Yearly Operational Plan Public Notice, Review, and Comment.

Payables:

- E. O’Connor – MACC mileage reimbursement \$87.86
- S. McConathy – MACC mileage reimbursement \$89.20
- MSMCP (MA Society of Municipal Conservation Professionals) – \$20.00 annual dues
- Turley Publications – Public Hearing Notice, \$187.80

Approval of Minutes:

- 11/19/24

New/Old Business:

- First St. update – Capstones anchoring completed on 12/24
- Grant Writing Update – Mass Trails grant due early Feb. Midura Conservation Area: additional and accessible parking, accessible trail, and rerouting the white trail off private property
- FY26 Budget

Chair, Member, Committee & Agent Reports:

- Administrative review – infrastructure improvements to Maple Street and Maple Terrace
Weston & Sampson Engineers, inc. is working with the Town of Palmer for the design and construction of infrastructure improvements (replacing water main and storm drainage) to Maple Street and Maple Terrace. The new work will be in the approximate same locations as existing. There will be no direct impacts to a resource area and work will not change or enlarge existing conditions; therefore, work would appear to meet the standards of *Exception #1* of our regulations.
- Drought Status – As of December 6, 2024:
With precipitation at an unprecedented low over the last four months, a Level 3-Critical Drought declaration remains in the Western, Connecticut River Valley, Southeast, Central and Northeast regions. Although the recent rains have helped, streamflow continues to be extremely low across most of the regions. This has resulted in dry brooks and streambeds, increased ponding in streams, exposed beaches and sediments, limited fish passage, and drying ponds. Furthermore, groundwater levels continue to fall in all regions, with the Western, Connecticut River Valley, Central, and Northeast regions showing the largest drops. The recent precipitation has decreased the immediate risk of wildfires.

Set Next Meeting Date:

The next meetings are set for 1/21/25 and 2/4/25

Adjourn

The items listed which may be discussed at the meeting are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. This meeting will be televised live on Channel 15 and taped and shown on M-Pact.

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