



# TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Donald Blais, Chair  
Dorothy Lawrence, Vice Chair  
David Cotter  
Peter Izyk  
Nicholas Zeo  
Brenda Cole  
Lucas McDiarmid

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – 6:30 PM

LOCATION: Town Hall Meeting Room  
4417 Main St Palmer MA

**Members Present:** Donald Blais, Jr.  
Peter Izyk  
Dave Cotter  
Nick Zeo

**Members Absent:** Brenda Cole  
Lucas McDiarmid  
Dorothy Lawrence

1. **Call to Order:** 6:30 PM – Donald Blais, Jr. (Chair)

2. **Review Correspondence:**

- a. Coneco Utility Notification Project #12293.0
- b. Coneco Utility Notification Project #12294.0
- c. Coneco Utility Notification Project #12310.0

The Agent stated that utility poles will be replaced on Chudy St, Sasur St, Main St and Griffin St.

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

- a. Forest Lake Cottages- Extension (DEP File No. 256-0226)

Faith Easter as well as Paul McManus were present. Faith stated the Planning Board determined the Special Permit/ Site Plan has not lapsed due to inactivity. She stated the project has properly complied through MEPA, as well as the Chapter 91 licensing, which was obtained in 2021. The stormwater management permit was issued in 2018 and is good for 5 years.

Paul McManus stated the NHES program has issued a “no take letter” meaning there is an endangered species on site (Bridle Shiner a breed of fish). They visited the site and conducted a survey and determined the most likely spot the Bridle Shiner would inhabit, resulting in that area being off limits for construction, but no changes have been needed or proposed.

Faith then mentioned the discussions regarding the location of the water service, coming from either Bondsville or Thorndike.

Brief discussion ensued.

The Agent then asked for clarification regarding the extension from Order 42 with the COVID extension.

Paul McManus stated it is not really a permit extension, it is more of a stay with the expiration of permitting extending ~435 days.

An abutter raised concerns regarding not receiving a Chapter 91 hearing.

Nick Zeo stated that would be through the State, and is not in our jurisdiction.

Laurie Hinkle, an abutter, expressed her concerns regarding the project and asked if the applicant has reached out to the Planning Board for an extension.

Faith Easter then stated that the Planning Board has submitted a letter in February of 2022 confirming the permit has not lapsed.

It was then stated that all the applicant is only seeking an extension of the WPA and wetlands bylaw order of conditions.

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Nick Zeo then stated he understands the frustration but wanted to reiterate that the PCC only has jurisdiction for the WPA and Wetlands OOC, everything else falls under State jurisdiction.

Johnathan Pratt, of Forest Lake Road, stated his concerns with the location of the waterline access.

Christina Pike, River St, stated her concerns with the amount of water traffic this project will bring.

Lori Burnham, 681 River St, stated her concerns with the amount of traffic the new boat launch has caused and will cause, and how she was upset there was a ribbon cutting ceremony inviting folks to come teach their kids how to fish and to utilize the lake.

Nick Zeo then reiterated again that the PCC has limited jurisdiction over projects underway on the lake. He stated he personally is more than willing to work with abutters on the processes underway.

**Nick Zeo made a motion to extend the order of conditions for DEP # 256-0226, site development of a seasonal cottage resort, to September 10<sup>th</sup> 2026.**

**Motion seconded by Dave Cotter.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**

**No further discussion.**

b. 116 Nipmuck Street- Extension (DEP File No. 256-0343)

Donald Blais invited the applicant to speak. He stated that due to COVID, lumber prices and concrete were extremely high and everything stalled. He plans to start the project in June.

HE then stated that the project area is further out of the buffer zone now, at about 93 ft away from BZ. He then showed the PCC the updated site plans.

**Nick Zeo made a motion to extend order of conditions for DEP # 256-0343, the construction of a garage and a driveway for one year to June 8th, 2024.**

**Motion seconded by Dave Cotter.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**

**No further discussion.**

**4. Minutes: 11/1/2022, 11/15/2022, 12/6/2022**

**Dave Cotter made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/1/2022 as written.**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**

**No further discussion.**

**Dave Cotter made a motion to table the minutes of 11/15/2022 to the next meeting.**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk.**

**Motion carries 3-0-1 with Nick Zeo abstaining.**

**No further discussion.**

**Dave Cotter made a motion to table the minutes of 12/6/2022 to the next meeting.**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk.**

**Motion carries 3-0-1 with Nick Zeo abstaining.**

**No further discussion.**

**5. Approvable of Payables: Turley Publications- \$180.29**

**Dave Cotter made a motion to approve the payable to Turley Publications, inc. in the amount of \$180.29 from the conservation expense account.**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**

**No further discussion.**

**6. Violations/Enforcements:**

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a. **L65 Bennett St- Update**

The Agent stated that she spoke to Linda Leduc regarding using the Attorney to draft up correspondence, but decided not to move forward due to the cost. She has drafted up a letter to send to the property owner but has yet to send it out. She will send it to commissioners for review/comment.

7. **New/Old Business:**

a. **Earth day townwide clean-up Saturday, 4/22/2023 from 9 AM-12 PM, Laviolette Field.**

It was reiterated that an event will be taking place on Earth Day, 4/22 at starting at 9am to 12pm. The agent stated supplies will be provided, as well as coffee and donuts. There will be a dumpster on site to dispose of trash picked up. The Agent also stated that she spoke with local newspapers to advertise it.

b. **Gates St. Beaver Dam- Flooding**

The Agent stated she was made aware of flooding on Gates Street due to a beaver dam, on Town property. The DPW breached the dam but has since been rebuilt. She has tried to narrow down correct protocol/ order of operations for this situation. She stated she recommends issuing an after the fact emergency permit which will be good for 30 days allowing the DPW to breach the dam.

**Nick Zeo made a motion to issue a 30 day emergency permit to the DPW allowing them to breach the beaver dam.**

**Peter Izyk seconded.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**

**No further discussion.**

c. **190 Emery St**

The Agent stated that there was an OOC issued last year. The applicant approached her with some modifications he would like to add to the plans, which included moving into the 50ft NDZ as well as removing additional vegetation, that wasn't approved originally. The Agent stated she requested a written proposal addressed to the PCC, but has yet to receive it. The applicant stated there is a large pine tree on the property he sees as a hazard.

d. **Midura Fire Chief Walk**

The Chairman stated there was a walk last Wednesday with the fire chief on Midura conservation land. She stated there was a lot of discussion regarding accessibility for the Fire Departs on the trails, as well as different hazards. She stated there will be another walk with the other fire chiefs.

e. **Midura Community Event**

The Chairman mentioned there has been events on the conservation land in the past and he would like to start that back up. He stated he spoke with Recreation Director Andrew St. George about hosting events again. There was mention of getting permitting through Board of Health for a "cookout" type event. There was discussion of doing a scavenger hunt due to the Easter Egg Hung being so successful. He stated the funds created from this event could go towards a kiosk/signage at Midura. Andrew St. George stated he has the means to register participants and would be more than willing to help facilitate the activity. There was then discussion regarding getting the Boy Scouts involved with making kiosks.

The Agent also stated she has been in contact with Pathfinder, to get the students involved with Town events and "agrotourism"

**Chair, Member, Committee & Agent Reports:**

Nick Zeo stated the Chicopee River Watershed will be doing testing again this year.

He also mentioned the Fishing Platform project on First St is making good progress.

**8. Adjourn:**

**Motion made by Nick Zeo to adjourn at 8:17pm.**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk.**

**No further discussion.**

**Motion carries 4-0.**