



# TOWN OF PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Palmer Town Building  
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Tharyn Nein-Large, Chair  
Donald Duffy, Vice Chair  
Peter Izyk  
Sean O'Donnell  
Sarah Brodeur

Agent: Angela Panaccione

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## MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY JULY 21, 2015 @ 7:00 PM

**Members Present:** Tharyn Nein-Large (Chair)  
Donald Duffy (Vice Chair)  
Peter Izyk  
Sarah Brodeur  
Angela Panaccione (Agent)

**Members Absent:** Sean O'Donnell

**Also Present:** Jessica Roberts, Tighe & Bond  
Brian Huntley, Tighe & Bond  
Bob Knowles, Renewable Energy Massachusetts  
Keith Akens, Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC.  
Douglas Farmer, Turley Publications

**Meeting Opens:** 7:00 PM – Tharyn Nein-Large (Chair)

### 7:00 PM Notice of Intent (NOI) DEP # 256-0311: Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC – Landfill Solar

A Notice of Intent submitted by Tighe & Bond c/o Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC for the installation of a 4.97 MW ground-mounted photovoltaic solar facility on approximately 27 acres of the 36-acre parcel. The location of the proposed project is the Palmer Landfill, 181 Emery Street, and is also known as: Map 41-48.

Tharyn Nein-Large opened the public hearing and Jessica Roberts and Brian Huntley, of Tighe & Bond were present as well as applicant Bob Knowles, of Renewable Energy Massachusetts and Keith Akens, of Syncarpha Bondsville, LLC. No other public was present besides the applicant and their consultants.

The parcel is owned by the Town of Palmer. As proposed, the ground-mounted array will occupy approximately 27 acres of the approximately 36-acre parcel footprint. The eastern portion (approximately 19 acres) of the 36-acre parcel consists of the Palmer Landfill. The western portion of the parcel (approximately 17 acres) consists of a gravel borrow area (for construction of the Landfill cap) and buffer to the Landfill.

Portions of the proposed work will occur within the 100-foot buffer zone of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW) and within previously degraded 200-foot Riverfront Area. No work will occur within the limits of BVW, Bank or Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF). Portions of the work will also occur within the

100-foot buffer zone of Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF) per the PWPO. The northeast portion of the subject parcel is located within Priority and Estimated Habitat for state-listed rare species.

Wetland resource areas on the Project site were delineated on April 23, 2015 by a Tighe & Bond wetland scientist. Wetland flag series 1B-1 through 1B-64 represents the Bank and Mean Annual High Water (MAHW) Line of the western bank of the Ware River (a perennial stream). Wetland flag series 2B-1 to 2B-22 and 1D-1 to 1D-10 represent a perennial stream that flows from the west to the east into the Ware River. The banks were delineated using the first observable break in slope as well as drift lines and wrack deposits.

Wetland flag series 1A-1 through 1A-41 represents the southern extent of a large forested and emergent wetland complex located along the northern parcel boundary. The wetland extends into the parcel along the entire length of the northern Project parcel and ranges in distance from the fenced Landfill property. Wetland flag series 1C-1 to 1C-5 and 1E-1 to 1E-7 represent a scrub-shrub wetland adjacent to the perennial stream in the southern section of the Project area.

The Project and protective measures have been designed such that there will be no impacts within the inner 50 feet of the 100-foot Buffer Zone. Activities proposed within the 200-foot Riverfront Area will occur within the limit of previously degraded areas and within the limits of the Landfill/ solid waste site-assigned parcel. Proposed work will not be located closer to the perennial stream than existing conditions. The area of proposed work does not exceed the amount of degraded area (Landfill, borrow area and existing gravel access road). The amount of disturbance in the Riverfront Area is 39,345 SF and 56,700 SF in the 100-foot buffer zone.

Activities proposed to occur within the limit of work and within areas subject to jurisdiction under the WPA and Palmer WPO consist of the installation of PV array system (PV modules, equipment pads and replacement of sections of existing chain-link security fence along the facility's perimeter); construction of a portion of the 20-foot wide gravel access road and selective vegetation removal. Primary access to the site is provided via a gravel access road that extends from Emery Street. Gas vents, monitoring wells, and drainage swales/structures are located on the Landfill cap and also around the perimeter of the Landfill.

Proposed selective tree clearing is proposed on the western side of the site along the Emery Street frontage. Trees with a height less than 30' will be trimmed down to 20'. Trees with a height at or over 30' will be cut down to the stump. The Applicant proposes to plant (following construction activity) one 6' tall arbor vitae tree for each of the 30' trees removed along the Emery Street frontage. In total, approximately 50 trees will be trimmed and approximately 20 trees will be removed. The staging area for construction and stockpiling of materials will be located in the portion of the non-Landfill area in the southwest of the site. The southwest portion of the site will be constructed last. There will be no off-site construction staging or parking.

Installation of the PV system on the Landfill will be on pre-cast ballast blocks. Installation of the PV system off of the Landfill will with a ground-screw rack system.

The Project will utilize existing stormwater infrastructure on site and will not increase stormwater flows or volume, or impact stormwater quality at the site. The Palmer Planning Board has waived the requirement for the stormwater permit under the local ordinance. Then project as proposed meets DEP's stormwater standards for redevelopment.

In order to meet the riverfront redevelopment standard of improvement over existing conditions of the capacity of the riverfront area to protect the interests identified in M.G.L. c. 131 § 40, The Applicant is proposing to plant three highbush blueberry shrubs along the Bank of the 2B-series perennial stream to provide wildlife habitat value. The Commission had a lengthy discussion with the applicants about the proposed mitigation measures.

The Agent did not feel the planting of three blueberry plants was sufficient for a mitigation measure and recommended invasive removal within the riverfront to the perennial stream on site. The BVW and buffer zone around the 2B-series stream is full of invasive including: brush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, oriental bittersweet and autumn olive. Donald Duffy agreed he would also like to see more though put into the mitigation.

The applicant agreed to amend the mitigation measures by planting 9 high brush blueberries (three clumps of three) around the bank of the perennial and to remove the brush honeysuckle along the tree line of the site. The Applicant will draft a narrative detailing the revised mitigation measures and submit it to the commission to be included as part of the filing. Monitoring on the blueberry plants will also occur yearly during site maintenance checks to ensure the native vegetation is not being disturbed by the invasive species on site.

**Motion made by Donald Duffy to continue the Public Hearing until Tuesday August 4, 2015 at 7:00 pm**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 4-0-0 – Motion Carries**

**7:45 PM Administrative Matters: Minute Approval – July 7, 2015**

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**Motion made by Donald Duffy to accept the minutes from Tuesday July 7, 2015 as corrected**

**Motion seconded by Sarah Brodeur**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 3-0-1 (Peter Izyk Abstains)**

**7:47 PM Administrative Matters: Mail, Reports, Projects, Monitoring, Enforcement, Site Visits**

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1. Site Visit Reports: The Agent supplied the Commission with her site visit reports from the last two weeks. There were several tree removal requests and building permit sign offs. She also met with two residents interested in conserving their land and discussed options for land protection with them.
2. Letter to MassDOT, From Ann Gobi RE: Brainerd Parcel: Senator Ann Gobi sent a letter to Frank Vallarelli, from the MassDOT's Office of Real Estate and Asset Development about the swapping/donation of the turnpike parcel from DOT to the Commission.
3. ACT Aquatic Treatment of Lake Thompson: ACT will conduct a treatment of Lake Thompson on Wednesday July 22, 2015 to target big leaf pondweed and water-milfoil
4. LTCA Letter on Dam: The Lake Thompson Association cc the Commission on a letter to the Chief of police about people trespassing on the Lake Thompson dam and swimming/fishing in the area as well. LTCA has posted signage on the dam warning of the dangers and informing people to stay off the dam. The signs have been stolen on several occasions. LTCA is requesting the police monitor the dam area and ask people who are trespassing to leave.
5. National Grid Notice of Utility Line Maintenance: National Grid will be doing utility line maintenance on Flynt Street and Old Thompson Road
6. Fee Structure & Text: The Commission approved the text for the fee section of the proposed regulations
7. 66 Peterson Road: The Agent and Tharyn Nein-Large will conduct a site visit to determine the extent of site regeneration. They will also address the illegal ATV wetland crossing on site.

**8:10 PM Administrative Matters: MACC Payable \$95.00**

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**Motion made by Sarah Brodeur to approve the payable to MACC in the amount of \$95.00, for the payment of Angela Panaccione registration fee for the Fall Conference**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 4-0-0**

**8:13 PM      Administrative Matters: Travel Reimbursement Payable \$116.16**

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**Motion made by Donald Duffy to approve the payable to Angela Panaccione in the amount of \$116.16, for the reimbursement of travel (hotel) expenses**

**Motion seconded by Sarah Brodeur**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 4-0-0**

**8:15 PM      Administrative Matters: Mileage Payable \$202.98**

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**Motion made by Sarah Brodeur to approve the payable to Angela Panaccione in the amount of \$202.98, for reimbursement for Mileage for site visit and travel to training, 7/7/15-7/21/15**

**Motion seconded by Peter Izyk**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 4-0-0**

**Office Closed: Thursday July 30, 2015**

**Next Meeting Date: Tuesday August 4, 2015 at 7pm**

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:17 PM**

**Motion made by Donald Duffy to adjourn at 8:17 pm**

**Motion seconded by Sarah Brodeur**

**No further discussion – vote taken: 4-0-0– Motion Carries**

Sincerely Submitted,  
Angela C Panaccione, Conservation Agent