

**APPROVED**  
**Carlisle Conservation Commission**  
**MINUTES**  
**Thursday, January 8, 2026**

**(Note: Topics were not necessarily discussed in the order of those listed on the published agenda.)**

At 7:00 pm, Chair George Shepard called the meeting to order. For this meeting, the Conservation Commission met via Zoom web conference, as posted on the Town's website, identifying how the public might join.

**Members Present:** Chair George Shepard, Dan Wells, Vice Chair, Melissa Webster, Brian Murphy, Nick Ognibene, Sylvia Willard, Meghan Sullivan, Conservation Administrator, and Noelle Beland, Planning and Land Use Coordinator.

Members Absent: Navneet Hundal

**Other Attendees:** Trevor Smith and Marie Chieppo, EcoPlantPlans LLC; Stephen Smith, Resident; Nathaniel Cataldo, Stamski and McNary; Jonathon DeKock, Resident and Foss Farm Community Garden Manager; Barney Arnold, Select Board; and Alex Parra, Resident.

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**For more information about the meeting:**

The meeting was livestreamed; the recording may be viewed here: Town of Carlisle, MA – YouTube.

The meeting packet is available on our website: <https://www.carlislema.gov/1318/Meeting-Packets>

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**7:02 pm**

**Public Hearing**

**Notice of Intent, DEP File #125-1207**

**Location:** 300 Curve Street

**Applicant:** EcoPlantPlans, LLC, on behalf of Marily Cugini and Stephen Smith

**Project Description:** Site restoration through mechanical removal of invasive plant species, planting native plant species, and minor grading associated with the construction of an informal retaining wall within the 100-foot buffer zone. (Continued from December 11, 2025)

Meghan Sullivan summarized the site visit conducted at 300 Curve Street since the December 11th meeting. The wetland scientist had flagged the wetlands as required, and during the site visit, they augured soil samples. Sullivan confirmed the wetland delineation looked appropriate, noting that the man-made pond had a fairly abrupt boundary. The wetland flags accurately represented the boundary between wetland and upland soils.

Trevor Smith from EcoPlant Plans explained their approach to soil amendments, emphasizing that they practice soil remineralization rather than fertilization. Their focus is on creating a healthy soil microbiome using alfalfa meal and mycorrhizal fungi inoculation rather than adding NPK fertilizers, which would prevent excess nutrients from entering the waterway. Stephen Smith, the property owner, confirmed they have never used fertilizers on the property.

Sylvia Willard expressed concern about potential algal blooms in the pond if fertilizers were used, but was satisfied with the applicant's approach to soil health.

The Commission discussed incorporating the standard special condition regarding chemicals and fertilizers within the 100-foot buffer zone.

Motion to close the hearing for DEP File #125-1207, 300 Curve Street. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Melissa Webster. Roll call vote: Nick Ognibene - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Sylvia Willard - Aye, and Chair George Shepard – Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to issue a waiver of the Winter Delineation Policy and issue the Order of Conditions for DEP File #125-1207, 300 Curve Street. Motion passed by Sylvia Willard, seconded by Melissa Webster. Roll call vote: Sylvia Willard - Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye, Nick Ognibene - Aye, and Chair George Shepard - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Public Meeting**

#### **Enforcement Order DEP# 125-1195**

**Location:** 30 Robbins Drive

**Property Owner:** Emmanuel Kanyi

**Description:** Alteration of the 100-foot buffer zone outside of the permitted limit of work. The applicant is proposing a restoration plan.

Meghan Sullivan provided an update on the enforcement order for 30 Robbins Drive. The site had been stabilized with sediment controls as required. The next step was the submission of a restoration plan, which had been received in draft form.

Nathaniel Cataldo from Stamski and McNary presented the restoration plan that was developed by Dave Crossman, a Professional Wetland Scientist, who had originally delineated the wetland. The plan proposed to restore approximately 711 square feet of upland area and 289 square feet of wetland area that were disturbed. The restoration included planting 10 shrubs and 9 trees, as well as appropriate ground cover and wetland-friendly seed mix.

Dan Wells requested that the plan be modified to include notification to the Conservation Administrator at least one (1) week prior to work commencing, and to require supervision of soil work and plantings by a qualified wetland scientist. Sylvia Willard suggested that the word "should" be changed to "shall" throughout the document for stronger language and that the erosion controls be specifically approved by the Conservation Commission. She also recommended that the wetland scientist be responsible for submitting annual reports.

The Commission agreed that Stamski and McNary would make these revisions and submit an updated plan before the next meeting.

Motion to continue the discussion of the Enforcement Order and restoration plan at the next meeting. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Dan Wells. Roll call vote: Nick Ognibene - Aye, Sylvia Willard - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Chair George Shepard - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Requests for Certificate of Compliance – DEP #125-1201 - 534 Concord Street**

Meghan Sullivan presented the request for Certificate of Compliance for DEP 125-1201, 534 Concord Street. She had conducted multiple site visits and confirmed the site was stabilized. She presented photos showing the grass cover and noted that the as-built plans indicated the recharge trench was installed in compliance with the approved plan.

Brian Murphy, who previously lived at the property, expressed concern about whether the recharge trench was sufficient to handle the water from the water treatment system. Sullivan noted she hadn't observed any flooding or breakout issues during her site visits.

Motion to issue a full Certificate of Compliance for 534 Concord Street, DEP #125-1201. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Nick Ognibene. Roll call vote: Brian Murphy - Aye, Nick Ognibene-aye, Melissa Webster – Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Sylvia Willard - Aye, Chair George Shepard - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

## **New and Pending Business:**

### **Bills Approval**

Meghan Sullivan presented the following bills for approval:

- Carlisle Rubbish: \$80.00 (to be paid from the LSC budget)
- Brox Industries: \$209.66 (to be paid from the Foss Farm Community Garden revolving account for pothole repair and a new speed bump on the Garden Road)
- November Mileage Reimbursement: \$29.89 (to be paid from the general fund mileage reimbursement line item)
- December Mileage Reimbursement: \$28.14 (to be paid from the general fund mileage reimbursement line item)
- B&C Associates: \$3,730.00 (to be paid from FinCom transfer money allocated in 2024 for Japanese knotweed removal project at Greenough Land)
- Registry of Deeds: \$105.00 (to be paid from the CPA fund for cranberry bog repair)

Total Bills: \$4,182.69

Motion to approve payment of the bills as presented. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Nick Ognibene. Roll call vote: Nick Ognibene - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Sylvia Willard - Aye, Chair George Shepard - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes: 11/6/2025**

Meghan Sullivan noted that future minutes would be using AI software that would provide more summarized minutes rather than the current transcriptional style, though Judy Hodges, ConsCom contractor, would still be reviewing them for accuracy.

Motion to approve the minutes from 11/6/2025. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Dan Wells. Roll call vote: Sylvia Willard - Aye, Dan Wells - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye, Nick Ognibene - Aye, and Chair George Shepard - Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

### **MassDEP 2025 Annual Report Form for Cranberry Growers**

The Commission discussed the annual report form that must be submitted by Friday, February 27, 2026. Sylvia Willard explained the importance of submitting the form with zeros entered for harvesting to maintain water rights under the Water Management Act. Chair Shepherd agreed to sign the form and return it to Meghan Sullivan, who would submit it with a certified return receipt.

### **Informational: Planning Board ADU Rules & Regulations**

Meghan Sullivan noted that the Planning Board is adopting rules and regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units pursuant to Zoning Bylaw 5.6, and feedback must be submitted by Monday, February 2, 2026. Sylvia Willard suggested that emergency services access requirements be explicitly included in the regulations. Meghan Sullivan and Noelle Beland agreed to pass this feedback to the Planning Board.

### **Conservation Department FY27 Budget Meeting**

Meghan Sullivan informed the Commission that the FY27 budget meeting with FinCom was scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 5:30 pm. She noted that the overall budget had decreased, primarily due to staffing changes. Sullivan will represent the Conservation Department at the meeting, and Sylvia Willard indicated she would also attend.

### **Vote to Elect ConsCom Chair and Vice Chair for FY26**

Chair George Shepherd initiated a discussion about electing officers for 2026. The Commission noted that elections are held in June/July, traditionally, but were not conducted in 2025. After discussion, the Commission agreed to continue with the current officers until June 2026 to get back on the original schedule. Chair Shepherd acknowledged he could continue for the next six months despite some personal family matters.

### **Appointment of DPW Building Renovation Committee Representative**

The Commission discussed appointing a representative to the Department of Public Works Building Renovation Committee, but decided to seek more information about the commitment required before making an appointment. The item will be carried over to the next meeting.

### **Zoo New England Grant Application**

Meghan Sullivan updated the Commission that the Community Biodiversity Grant Program application has been submitted to the state for improving and expanding rare species habitat at Foss Farm. The Commission had approved the application on the condition that feedback be solicited from stakeholders. Sullivan agreed to collect stakeholder input before the next meeting.

### **Revised Wetland Bylaw Update**

Alex Parra, who was drafting the revised wetland bylaw, expressed concern that the document might not be ready for the spring town meeting due to the need for more board meetings, substantive discussions, and town counsel review. Chair Shepherd requested that Sullivan prepare a list of committees and commissions from which they need input and develop a timeline for the next meeting.

Sylvia Willard requested information on peer-reviewed articles about buffer zone values to provide independent arguments supporting the bylaw. Dan Wells offered to share the Buffer Zone Manual prepared for MACC that contains peer-reviewed research.

*Dan Wells exited the meeting at 7:55p.m.*

### **Discussion of Beaver Dams along the Otter Slide Trail**

Meghan Sullivan reported she had been working to contact professionals regarding beaver management. She had reached out to Integrated Wildlife Control (used by the state) and Beaver Solutions to arrange professional assessments. While installations would not occur in winter, assessments could still take place. Sullivan will invite commissioners to attend the assessments when scheduled.

### **Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Updates**

Brian Murphy reported on the upcoming Woodward Subcommittee meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026, when the LSC will meet with abutters. Murphy noted that notices had been sent to abutters to address concerns about the lack of communication. At the previous week's meeting, the LSC had gathered feedback from town boards, and the next steps would involve compiling all feedback.

Commissioners were encouraged to review the "Woodward Meadow: A Narrative for Invasive Management & Native Plant Restoration" document.

Alex Parra requested that the Conservation Commission review the Woodward management plan at their January 22nd meeting and provide feedback before the next Woodward Subcommittee meeting in February.

### **Cranberry Bog Dam #1 Update**

- a. SumCo has finished with GPR work. They would like to meet to review results of data and discuss next steps in repair. Meeting tentatively scheduled remotely for the morning of 1/12/26.

The Commission discussed whether to invite SumCo to present at a regular evening meeting to allow for public participation or to proceed with the daytime meeting. They decided Sullivan

would inquire if SumCo could present at the January 22nd meeting, but would also determine if there were any urgent matters that would require immediate attention.

- b. Correspondence received regarding brumation of painted turtles upstream of Cranberry Bog Dam #1. repairs.

**CPC Updates**

Sylvia Willard reported on various CPC applications, noting that the LSC/ESC proposal would not meet CPC requirements. Other proposals included funding for (1) the regional school amenities building, (2) additional funds for the Gleason Library, (3) a pathways engineering study, (4) historic properties index updates, and (5) a grant for design documents for the Cranberry Bog House.

Willard highlighted that the Cranberry Bog House project might require excising approximately two (2) acres of conservation land, which would involve Article 97 procedures that could take 2-3 years. Meghan Sullivan mentioned that the Town Planner was willing to present to the Commission an update on this project at a future meeting.

**Foss Farm Community Gardens**

Jonathan DeKock presented the *draft* Community Garden Rules for 2026, noting that the primary change was the addition of small plots to make gardening more accessible to new gardeners, elderly gardeners, and those with limited time. He also added an optional section soliciting feedback on no-till gardening.

DeKock explained that implementing no-till practices would be challenging due to divided opinions among gardeners and logistical considerations. While no-till would benefit soil ecology, it could result in the gardens looking unkempt if not properly managed. He confirmed that a raised bed system was being considered for future accessibility improvements.

DeKock also shared that he had circulated the 2025 Annual Report for the Foss Farm Community Gardens for feedback. The Commission will review the draft rules and vote on approval at the Thursday, January 22nd, meeting.

**Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) Invitation**

Chair Shephard informed the Commission that he had accepted an invitation from the Environmental Sustainability Committee to participate in the Route to Sustainability Day on Sunday, May 3, 2026, from 1:00-4:00 pm. He invited other commissioners to join him at the event, noting that last year they had six visitors to their table.

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**Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before the meeting. (No topics for this meeting.)**

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**Meeting Adjournment**

**9:42 pm** - Motion to adjourn the Conservation Commission meeting. Moved by Brian Murphy, seconded by Sylvia Willard. Roll call vote: Nick Ognibene - Aye, Brian Murphy - Aye, Melissa Webster - Aye, Sylvia Willard - Aye, Chair George Shepard – Aye. Motion passed unanimously.



Minutes prepared by Judy Hodges, Conservation Commission Contractor, using AI-based HeyGov’s Clerk Minutes.