

RECEIVED

By Town Clerk's Office at 10:12 am, Feb 13, 2026

APPROVED
Carlisle Conservation Commission
Joint Meeting with Carlisle Select Board
MINUTES
Tuesday, January 27, 2026 – 8:00 p.m.

8:00 PM Review the most recent LSC charter and discuss the various recommendations, questions, and concerns.

Conservation Commission Chair George Shepard called the Conservation Commission meeting to order with members Nick Ognibene, Melissa Webster, Brian Murphy, Navneet Hundal, and Sylvia Willard present.

Chair Triola provided background on the town's conservation lands, noting that Carlisle owns over 30 conservation parcels totaling almost 1,100 acres. The Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) was formed in 2005 as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission to help manage town-owned conservation land.

In May 2024, the Conservation Commission approved a revised LSC charter that delegated additional responsibilities to the LSC, including management of agricultural licenses and issuing land permits. Chair Triola noted that the Select Board has received multiple complaints about how these responsibilities are being managed, with concerns about process, collaboration, and transparency.

Barney Arnold, liaison to both committees, explained that the LSC has difficulty moving forward because there isn't agreement among committee members about the overall purpose and management plan for Carlisle's conservation land. Conservation Commission members expressed concerns about the current arrangement:

- Navneet Hundal stated that the current charter isn't working well and expressed concern about being responsible for decisions that aren't aligned with her views. She recommended that licensing, permitting, and any legal matters should come back to the Conservation Commission.
- Melissa Webster agreed with Hundal's assessment and added that the town lacks visionary statements and long-term plans for these lands.
- George Shepard acknowledged that the operation of the LSC needs to be tied more closely to the Conservation Commission, with the Commission making approvals for LSC decisions.
- Nick Ognibene agreed with these assessments and pointed to the reallocation of the Woodward land license as an example of a decision that was unpopular with key stakeholders.

- Sylvia Willard, who helped establish the LSC, stated that town hall staff and the Conservation Commission should be responsible for legal documents such as agricultural agreements to ensure they're done correctly.

Brian Murphy, who chairs the LSC and serves on the Conservation Commission, agreed that better coordination is needed and suggested joint meetings between the LSC and Conservation Commission every two months.

The Conservation Commission members committed to revising the LSC charter at their next meeting to address these concerns, particularly regarding decision-making authority for licenses, permits, and major land use changes.

Several members of the public commented, emphasizing the need for transparency, process improvement, and better incorporation of community input. The meeting concluded with a consensus that the Conservation Commission would take the lead on revising the charter and addressing the current issues.

Minutes Prepared by Gretchen Gallimore, Executive Assistant, using AI-based HeyGov's Clerk Minutes.