

Wakefield Conservation Commission Minutes – March 7, 2023

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Attendance: Chairman Jim Luciani, Peter Miller, Ken Alepidis, Bob Romano; Teresa Belmonte; Haley McHatton-Ballou; Paul Wendelgass  
Elaine Vreeland, Agent

2/21/23 minutes – Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve the 2/21/23 minutes.

Ms. McHatton Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

DEP#313-XXX – 10 Broadway Street – New Creek, LLC – Public Hearing: Notice of Intent – this matter was continued to 4/4/23 at the applicant's request.

DEP 313-620 -100 Hemlock Road – Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School – Continued Public Hearing: Notice of Intent for the demolition of existing school, construction of new school, parking lots, athletic fields, utilities, and stormwater management system within Bank, Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW), the Buffer Zone, and the Riverfront Area – at the applicants request, this matter was continued to 3/21/23.

Heron Pond Condominiums – tree removal request – Property manager Steve Mangano of Heron Pond Condominiums was present for the applicants. They are requesting permission to remove 5 pine trees. All trees are within 10' to 20' of the pond. An arborist letter and site photos were submitted for review this evening.

Ms. Davis stated that there had been questions from abutters regarding survey staking.

Mr. Mangano stated that they were employed by the condominium association to determine the property line.

Mr. Romano noted that the arborist letter recommended monitoring, not removal of tree #5. It also did not recommend removal of tree #1.

Mr. Mangano stated that there are safety concerns following a December 2022 storm that resulted in a large tree branch coming down. He noted that this is a grove of 12 trees that would be thinned.

Mr. Luciani noted that thinning would leave the remaining trees more susceptible to wind damage. He would like tree #5 to remain.

Mr. Mangano stated that tree #5 has a wound which makes it's health suspect.

Ms. McHatton Ballou requested that snags be left.

Ms. Davis suggested planting shrubs in several areas. The remaining linear foot replacement requirement would then be satisfied through deposit to the Habitat Replacement Fund.

Sasha Savoie – Melrose – requested planting of native species.

Ms. Belmonte made a motion to approve removal of 5 trees as requested.

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Mr. Wendelgass made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Davis will direct plant species and location.

41 Coolidge Park – tree removal request – applicant was not present. This matter was continued to 3/21/23.

30 Robert Street – tree removal request – the homeowner was present for this discussion. The request calls for the removal of 2 large pine trees at the rear of the property. It was noted that a large limb came down 2/24/23. Keith's Tree Service conducted an evaluation and submitted a letter from their arborist. The letter noted the close proximity of the trees to the house.

Ms. Belmonte noted that the suggestion to remove the trees came from the arborist, not per the homeowner's request.

Ms. Vreeland had conducted a site visit and commented that there was no evidence of disease or decay on either tree. She stated that the requested removal was for safety reasons.

Mr. Luciani stated that replication as well as leaving a snag would be required. He also suggested the installation of a barrier to the wetland.

Mr. Romano suggested a barrier of red maple trees.

Ms. Davis will provide the homeowner will suggested native plantings.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to allow the removal of the 2 proposed pine trees. A snag from one tree, at the height of 6', shall remain. A replication plan will be developed in collaboration with Ms. Davis. Any remaining linear foot replacement requirement shall be satisfied by deposit to the Commission's Habitat Replacement Fund.

Ms. McHatton-Ballou made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.

Biomap – Ms. Davis reviewed the tools available on the Mass Wildlife/Nature Conservancy map. ([BioMap Hub \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.biomap.org/)). This link will be posted on the Commission's webpage.

Healthy Soils Action Plan – The newly adopted Massachusetts Healthy Soils Action Plan [download \(mass.gov\)](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/healthy-soils-action-plan) was reviewed. This plan outlines strategies for preserving, enhancing and restoring the soils of the following five land types: forests, wetland, agriculture, recreational and ornamental landscapes. This plan highlights the need to focus on the values of healthy soils especially as they relate to climate change. This link will be posted on the Commission's webpage.

Forest Carbon document – A collaborative report from UMass Amherst and University of Vermont [42306 Magazine.indd \(masswoods.org\)](https://www.masswoods.org/42306-Magazine.indd) regarding the climate change benefits from forested areas was reviewed. This link will be posted on the Commission's webpage.

Offshoots seminar – Ms. Davis will contact Offshoots to schedule a seminar regarding green stormwater solutions and native planting ideas for homeowners. The Town engineering department will also be contacted regarding the use of green infrastructure and streetscapes.

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Appointment recommendation letters – Mr. Luciani and Mr. Alepidis are up for re-appointment to the Commission. Both have submitted applications for continued service.

Mr. Miller made a motion to issue recommendation letters for both.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed. Mr. Alepidis abstained.

Mr. Luciani made a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Belmonte made a second to the motion. After polling the Commissioners individually, the motion passed unanimously.