

Whately Conservation Commission
Wednesday, February 21, 2018
Whately Town Offices, 4 Sandy Lane, Whately MA 01093

Commissioners present: Ann Barker, Montserrat Archbald, Scott Jacson (Chair), Andrew Ostrowski, and George Owens

Commissioners absent: Patricia Devine (Associate Member)

Others present: Matt Wilcox, Bob Mizula (Nourse Farms)

Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

1. Request for a Determination of Applicability for activities related to construction of a house on lot 28, Eastwood Drive, Pine Plains Estates. Matt Wilcox, a builder, presented his Request to the Commission. A site visit for this project was conducted on February 19. The Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to issue a negative Determination of Applicability with the following condition. "The wetland shall be delineated in the field, the area 50 feet from the wetland line will be monumented, and the delineation and monumenting reviewed and approved by a representative of the Commission by July 31, 2018."
2. Nourse Farms: Informal discussion about potential projects. Bob Mizula from Nourse Farms discussed with the Commission three potential projects, seeking guidance about whether Commission approved would be required.
 - a. Cutting trees in a dry ravine along the Connecticut River to reduce potential for wind damage to an agricultural field. Commission indicated that the work might be exempt a management of field edges. However, it was suggested that an informal site visit would be the best next step in determining whether a filing would be necessary.
 - b. Maintenance of an agricultural ditch along the western edge of a field used for agricultural production. Mr. Mizula showed the Commission an old farm conservation plan indicating that the ditch in question has historically been part of an agricultural operation. The Commission indicated that maintenance of agricultural ditches, as part of a legitimate agricultural operation, would be exempt from Wetlands Protection Act jurisdiction as long as the ditch was restored to its original contours and no bigger or deeper.
 - c. Conversion of forest within 100 feet of a bordering vegetated wetland to agricultural land. The Commission suggested that this activity would require filing a Notice of Intent and that the activity would be considered a "limited project" under Wetlands Protection Act regulations. The Commission explained the expectations for "limited projects."
3. The Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to accept minutes from the January 17th meeting.
4. The Commission reviewed the mail.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Jackson