

TOWN OF NEEDHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 25, 2025

Under Governor Healey's Act "Extending Certain COVID-10 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency", extending the "Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20," issued March 2023, meeting of public bodies may be conducted virtually provided that adequate access is provided to the public.

LOCATION: Zoom Virtual Platform – the meeting was held virtually per Governor Baker's Emergency Order.

ATTENDING: Dave Herer (Chair), Sue Barber, Reade Everett, Bill Hebard, Fred Moder, Deb Anderson (Director of Conservation); Tim Puopolo (Conservation Specialist)

D. Herer opened the public meeting at 7:00 p.m.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. Minutes

None at this time.

2. Enforcement Orders

None at this time.

HEARINGS/APPOINTMENT

109 HEATHER LANE EXTENSION (DEP FILE #234-953) – NOTICE OF INTENT

Brandon Li, Kelly Engineering and representing the applicant, explained that the site currently contains a single family home. The associated resource areas include bordering vegetated wetlands and the 100' buffer zone. The back of the property slopes down with a 14' drop. The applicant is proposing a terraced retaining wall to flatten the backyard and create a more usable space. The retaining wall will occur within the outer limits of the 100' buffer zone. One wall, 4' high, will run along the property line and the second retaining wall will terrace up to a total height of approximately 12' at the highest point. There will be an additional 176 s.f. of impervious area within the 100' buffer zone from the proposed project. The closest limit of work to the bordering vegetated wetlands is 55'. All work will occur outside the 25' No Disturb and 50' buffer zones.

D. Anderson stated that the backyard has a steep slope, and a silt fence is proposed along with a silt sock. There was originally no request for tree removal with this project, but staff determined that there was some previous unpermitted tree removal on site. Staff determined that two trees had been removed, and four replacement trees are proposed for mitigation. T. Puopolo stated that

his concerns have been addressed with the additional erosion control suggestions and additional trees.

F. Moder asked if there is a special technology behind a retaining wall that will hold as much soil as is proposed. D. Anderson stated that this is required to be an engineered wall. B. Li stated that the wall will be held by tiebacks, with stone for drainage.

D. Herer asked if a Special Permit is needed from the Town for this wall. B. Li stated that a 4' wall is allowed along the property line. As the back wall is not adjacent to abutters, a Special Permit is not needed.

Bill Piersak, applicant, stated that a Special Permit is not required for this wall. The final engineering design will be done by the wall designer. He has not yet been to the Building Department.

There was no public comment at this time.

Motion to close the hearing for 109 Heather Lane Extension (DEP File #234-953), by B. Hebard, seconded by F. Moder, approved 5-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

56 CANAVAN CIRCLE (DEP FILE #234-937) – REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

T. Puopolo stated that he visited the site, and everything matches the as-built plan. The as-built plan has some deviations from the original plan. The patio was installed smaller than originally planned and the house addition is a bit larger. There is also less retaining wall, leading to, overall, a reduction in impervious surface on the site.

Motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 56 Canavan Circle (DEP File #234-937), by B. Hebard, seconded by R. Everett, approved 5-0-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION - M.G.L. c.110G, REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES BY COMMISSION MEMBERS PURSUANT TO AMENDMENT 13-7 TO THE MASSACHUSETTS DEED INDEXING STANDARDS 2018, EFFECTIVE APRIL 17, 2020.

Motion that the Needham Conservation Commission hereby recognize and accept the provisions of MGL110 G regarding electronic signatures, and that its members will henceforth execute documents either with the electronic signatures or with wet ink signatures, and that both will carry the same legal weight and effect, and also authorize Needham Director of Conservation Deb Anderson and Needham Conservation Specialist Timothy Puopolo to physically sign Needham Conservation Commission documents on behalf of the individual Conservation Commission members, by D. Herer, seconded by R. Everett, approved 5-0-0.

TRAILS ADVISORY GROUP UPDATE

T. Puopolo explained that he and D. Herer recently went to Ridge Hill to hammer in intersection stakes for wooden posts that will hopefully be installed in October. Signs can then be installed in the spring. He noted that the Select Board recently stated that it may not be able to form a Trail Advisory Group at this time and there was discussion by the Board that the trail work should be led by the Conservation Commission.

The Commission agreed that this update can become a running agenda item in order to hold discussions on various topics.

MACC FALL CONFERENCE

T. Puopolo explained that the MACC Fall Conference will be held on Saturday October 25, 2025, in Devens, MA. Any Commissioners interested in attending will have registrations purchased for them.

The Commission discussed the draft Order of Conditions for 109 Heather Lane Extension (DEP File #234-953).

Motion to close the hearing for 109 Heather Lane Extension (DEP File #234-953), by S. Barber, seconded by R. Everett, approved 5-0-0.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn the meeting, by D. Herer, seconded by F. Moder, approved 5-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING:

October 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., virtually.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Kristan Patenaude*