

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2025
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Municipal Office Building, Room #1

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Joe Sina.

2. Roll Call and Alternate Appointments
Members Present: Joe Sina, Bernie Gillis, Barry Bernard, David Walls, Cameron Beard, Alan Ponanski, Gary Wilson, John Olin
Members Absent: Susan Pagnano
Guests:

Alternate Appointments: Alan Ponanski was appointed a voting member for this meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda
Motion to approve the agenda.
Wilson/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

4. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes from April 1, 2025
Motion to approve the minutes with the correction that John Olin was present.
Wilson/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

5. Chair's Updates
Chair Sina informed members of upcoming events including the May 24th sustainability team cleanup effort and other community activities. A brief discussion included the Heritage Market and the Repair Café event. He also reported that the grant application to Eightmile for Life Forms was signed and submitted.

6. Old Business

a. Subcommittee Updates
i. Stewardship & Forestry Management – Mr. Gillis
Mr. Beard reviewed the Hatch Lot site walk with State Forester David Urban and presented a quote from Ray Sikorski ($5,500) to clear 2.75 acres of invasive autumn olive

at the overlook. The scope and visibility benefits were discussed.
Motion to approve the quote and proceed with the work.
Olin/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

Jay Brown, a landowner near the Dean Property, has allowed a trail bypass across his land due to the impassability of a current trail section. The Commission will coordinate signage and trail markers with Mr. Brown.

Mr. Gillis also reviewed recent trail clearing, a relocated gate at Urbanik for improved parking, and maintenance work at Goodwin Trail, Davidson, Sabine, and Nichols. The bridge at Rose Farm is periodically submerged due to beaver activity and needs to be raised. Potential repairs were discussed.

ii. Outreach & Promotion – Mr. Wilson
Mr. Wilson recapped attendance at the Repair Café and the Master Gardener event where 11 volunteers signed up for future service. He suggested focusing them on mulching and invasive removal projects, prioritizing the ADA trail at Patrell and the Salmon River Overlook. QR codes have been posted at multiple trailheads, and map inventories were reviewed. New map orders were approved for Chapman Pond, Dean & Hatch, Hayward, Lena, and Rose Farm.

iii. Climate Resilience – Mr. Olin
Mr. Olin updated members on CIRCA's draft report recommending bridge widening and removal of the Goodspeed rehearsal hall to reduce flooding, although Goodspeed currently has no alternate space. Olin also confirmed that the grant for the Life Forms school partnership was approved by the Board of Finance and is pending Eightmile Board approval on May 19. Fieldwork and educational activities are already underway.

b. Liaison Reports
i. IWWC – Mr. Walls
Reported approval of the bridge project at Honey Hill.

ii. P&Z – Mr. Gillis
SLR Consulting submitted redevelopment language for Moodus.

iii. Open Space – Mr. Sina
Reviewed the ongoing paperwork for the Kronberg property and details of the Sprecher Property land exchange. The 5.6-acre town parcel will be swapped for 2.2 acres and a conservation easement to create a trail connection from Harris to Dean to Hatch Lot.

iv. Eightmile Committee – Mr. Beard
No update beyond grant-related topics covered in climate resilience.

v. Sustainability Committee – Mr. Ponanski
Reviewed Repair Café details, “No Mow May” promotion, upcoming events including

the June 21 Longest Day celebration, and composting and recycling initiatives. Work continues toward gold certification.

c. Planting/Existing Garden Updates – Mr. Wilson
Wilson reported that all garden sites (Patrell, Hatch, Salmon River Overlook) are thriving. Mulching and weeding is needed at Patrell, especially along the ADA trail. Red twig dogwood cuttings are rooting for future planting.

d. Reserve Monitor Discussion – Mr. Sina
New trail monitors are active and performing well.

7. New Business
a. New Bills
No new bills were submitted for approval.

b. Discussion from Commission Members
Discussion included possible location for a new bench for Nichols Field and future engineering of a solution for the bridge at Rose Farm.

8. Public Comment
None received.

9. Next Meeting
The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 7:00 PM in Room #1.

10. Adjournment
Motion to adjourn at 8:56 PM.
Wilson/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary