OFFICE OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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Conservation Commission Minutes **Approved: April 13, 2026**
Monday, March 23, 2026

Chair Alan Chaney called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.
Members present: Marijan Andacic, Alan Chase, Kate DeLoureiro, and Bridgette Pontbriand
Members absent: Leah Basbanes and Al Starbird

Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall, 511 Main Street, lower level

NOI Public Hearing – 164 Pleasant St/MCO Cottages for MCO & Associates
Chair Alan opened the public hearing for a Notice of Intent at 164 Pleasant Street, filed by MCO Associates, with the Administrator's reading of the public notice. MCO was represented by Brian Milisci of Haley Ward, Inc., with developer Mark Hagan, builder Brian Weilbrenner and members of the public also in attendance.

The proposed project consists of construction of 36 cottage-style residential buildings (creating 48 rental dwelling units), associated access roadways, parking areas, grading, utilities, and on-site septic systems on the 28.51-acre site owned by the Town of Dunstable. Four proposed cottages are located within the 100-foot buffer zone to a bordering vegetated wetland. Portions of site grading are also proposed within bordering land subject to flooding, with floodplain compensatory storage incorporated into the project design.

The applicant reviewed the project history, noting that the development resulted from a Town-issued Request for Proposals and is proceeding as a Local Initiative Program (LIP) Chapter 40B project. The project has received a Comprehensive Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals following full peer review of engineering, stormwater, and drainage plans. The applicant stated that municipal water will serve the site and that stormwater runoff will be collected, treated, and recharged on site through subsurface infiltration systems.

The Commission discussed wetland resource areas, buffer zone impacts, roadway elevation relative to flood levels, stormwater management methods, septic system

layout, and coordination with the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program. The applicant described efforts to redesign and compress the layout to reduce impacts to potential wildlife habitat and confirmed that floodplain impacts will be fully offset through compensatory storage at equivalent elevations.

The DEP file number had not yet been issued. As such, the hearing could not be closed and no Order of Conditions could be issued at this time. The applicant formally requested a continuation to the next meeting of April 13th, to allow time for issuance of the DEP file number and receipt of any DEP or further NHESP comments.

- Alan Chase made a motion to accept the public hearing extension request. Bridgette seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Nashua River Rail Trail Culvert at Unkety Brook

Local resident, and Department of Conservation and Recreation Dam Rehabilitation and Maintenance Engineer for the Office of Dam Safety, Chris DeTurk, presented information regarding beaver activity blocking the rail trail culvert at Unkety Brook off River Street. This has resulted in flooding which poses threat of property damage and may prevent normal agricultural use of the abutting land area. Chris discussed some potential mitigation options including debris removal, installation of a keystone fence and pond leveler, and necessary coordination with the Board of Health.

The Commission voiced their support for lowering the water levels and Chris will proceed with an application for a emergency permit from the BOH. No vote was taken.

Extension/Waiver on Request for Determination of Applicability, Groton Water Main Expansion

The Administrator noted that the RDA application was received on March 16, 2026, and additional time was required for proper public notice and Commission review. The proposed project consists of expanding the water line to additional properties on Groton and Kemp Streets impacted by the PFAS contamination. The engineering firm Apex Company, for the applicant, the Groton Water Department, formally requested an extension from the Commission to open and hold the meeting until their next meeting of April 13, 2026.

- Marijan made a motion to accept the public meeting extension request. Kate seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Finalized Open Space and Recreation Plan 2026–2036, Vote of Approval

The Commission reviewed the final version of the OSPR dated March 12, 2026.

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- Kate motioned for the Commission to approve the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Bridgette seconded the motion. - Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Alan signed the letter of OSRP support for inclusion with the OSRP. Northern Middlesex Council of Governments will proceed to send the finalized plan to the MA Division of Conservation Services.

Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2026

- Marijan made a motion to approve the March 9th meeting minutes. Alan Chase 2nd the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Bills/Payroll

- Bridgette made a motion to sign off on one payroll. Kate seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.
- Bridgette made a motion to sign off on a $100 invoice from Nashua River Watershed for annual membership. Alan Chase seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship

A) DCC Property Maintenance

- **Flat Rock and Stone Arch Bridge Conservation Areas --** Ongoing erosion issues at the Flat Rock driveway and the Stone Arch Bridge apron were discussed. Coordination with the Roads Department is ongoing to address driveway washout and improve access conditions.
- **Unkety Brook Conservation Area** *(off Adams Street) --* A tree is down on the Commission's property near 93 Adams. The Administrator contacted D. Nichol for a cost estimate to "*drop the tree in place"* after his assessment.
- **Conservation Property Signage --** The Commission reviewed proofs and pricing for new conservation property signage to be produced through the Massachusetts Correctional Industries program. A reduced-size sign format was selected for initial installation at two conservation properties.
- **General Properties** – The Administrator requested that Commissioners report back property needs encountered during any personal expeditions to formulate a listing of needs for prioritization to be addressed.
- **Forestry** – The Farnsworth Wildlife Management Area timbering is wrapping up.

B) Programs and Outreach

- **DCC Website** – Discussion included selection of a conservation trails website domain: "**dunstableconcommtrails.org**" was preferred. The Administrator

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confirmed with the Select Board's Admin that the new site could be linked to the forthcoming new Town website to be created.

- **DCC Monday Morning Walks in May** – Chair Alan will guide three walks of DCC and/or DRLT properties on May 4th, 11th and 18th this Spring, weather permitting. Interested hikers should meet at the Town Hall parking area for 9am, to caravan in their own vehicles to the selected property of the day.
- **Great American Rain Barrel Program**: Orders via https://www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com/community/ must be made by March 29th; with pickup on April 11th, at the Tyngsborough Highway Department, 89 Kendall Rd, between 9-11am.
- **Conservation Volunteer Day** – Upcoming volunteer workdays were discussed to address trail maintenance, invasive species management, signage installation, and general property upkeep. Possible dates in early May of the 9th or 16th (rain date) were considered. Members were encouraged to identify additional site needs and required tools to address.
- **Flat Rock Trail Race –** The Humane Society of Greater Nashua will once again host their trail race on the DCC and DRLT properties off Flat Rock CA. The event is scheduled for June 13, 2026 and 42 racers have registered to date. The organizers are coordinating the necessary insurance binders and notifications to emergency services and neighbors. They have expressed willingness to assist with trail maintenance activities as part of stewardship support.

Topics not Anticipated in Advance of Meeting

Ad Hoc Committee 476 Main Street

Chair Alan shared a request from the Select Board to appoint a Commission member to serve on a newly formed committee regarding this property.

- Alan Chase made a motion to appoint Alan Chaney to serve on the 476 Main Street ad hoc committee. Marijan seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Marijan moved to close the meeting at 8:05PM. Alan Chase seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting scheduled is on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Rock
Administrative Coordinator
Dunstable Conservation Commission

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