OFFICE OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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Conservation Commission Minutes **Approved: July 13, 2026**
Monday, June 22, 2026

Chair Alan Chaney called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.
Members present: Leah Basbanes, Bridgette Pontbriand and Al Starbird.

Members absent: Marijan Andacic, Alan Chase, and Kate DeLoureiro

Others Present: Karen Hanecak of BSC Group

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

Notice of Intent (NOI) Public Hearing Continuation – 5 Pleasant Street Extension for New England Power (NEP) *147-0329*

Chair Alan reopened the public hearing regarding the NOI Substation Project (MLI Application) at 5 Pleasant Street Extension. The applicant, New England Power (NEP), was not in attendance but represented by Karen Hanecak of BSC Group who presented to the Commission.

Summary: The hearing was opened by Chair Chaney at 6:30 pm. The representative for the applicant (NE Power/National Grid), Karen Hanecak of BSC Group, presented the proposed substation expansion project, which qualifies as a **Limited Project under 310 CMR 10.53(3)(d)** for construction and maintenance of public utilities.

Key points included:

- No adverse impacts to rare species habitat.
- No feasible alternatives to the proposed location.
- Best available measures will be used to minimize construction impacts.
- **Natural Heritage filings:** Checklist and Turtle Protection Plan submitted; **No Take** letter issued.
- **Alternatives Analysis:** Relocation and no-action alternatives are not viable.
- **BMPs** included in the NOI.
- **Wetland replication:** 1,250 sq ft proposed, exceeding the 1:1 mitigation requirement for 1,023 sq ft of permanent fill.

Commission Discussion: DEP comment regarding the required bathroom was clarified. A Plumbing Board variance has been requested due to the existence of a

bathroom at the control house. A bathroom would require septic and additional buffer zone impacts. A similar variance was granted for the Pepperell substation.

Public Comment: None.

Motions:

- **Motion** to close the hearing made by Leah Basbanes, Seconded by Al Starbird**. Vote:** Unanimous.
- **Motion** to issue an Order of Conditions based on submitted materials plus standard boilerplate conditions made by Leah Basbanes. Seconded by Al Starbird**. Vote:** Unanimous.

Two copies of the OOC signature pages were circulated for signatures. The OOC is to be issued within 21 days of closed hearing.

Notice of Intent (NOI) Public Hearing Continuation – 164 Pleasant St/MCO Cottages for MCO & Associates

Chair Alan reopened the NOI public hearing for the MCO Cottages project at 164 Pleasant Street with Commissioner Leah recusing herself from the discussions. The applicant and their representative Haley Ward were not in attendance.

Status: Several outstanding items remain:

- Confirmation of corrected floodplain elevation labeling.
- Updated plans with new revision dates, test hole locations, elevation corrections.
- Status of **Conservation & Management Permit (CMP)** from NHESP.
- Clarification on who will hold the required **Conservation Restriction**.

Quorum Note: Leah Basbanes recused thus leaving only 3 members present for this hearing. The status of the quorum was uncertain.

Action: Hearing **tabled** until next meeting.

[CR Note: The applicant had provided a formal signed request for extension of the Public Hearing, via email on June 22, 2026 at 1:12 PM]

Building Permit Release – 125 Thorndike Street

Summary: Existing Order of Condition is still valid, erosion control is in place, driveway and culvert work largely complete.

Discussion:

- Gravel driveways must meet stormwater permit requirements (washed stone).
- Incorrect gravel was installed and is being removed/replaced.

APPROVED

- Commission will add gravel specification to future OOCs.

Motion:

- **Motion** to sign building permit release, made by Leah Basbanes. Seconded by Al Starbird. **Vote:** Unanimous.

RDA Extension Request – 711 Main Street (Town Well Field)

Summary: Work involves injection system within 100 ft of wetland.

Motion:

- **Motion** to approve extension made by Leah Basbanes. Seconded by Bridgette Pontbriand. **Vote:** Unanimous.

Site Visit Reports

A. 153 Off Pond Street

Findings:

- Multiple existing retaining walls; some appear unstable.
- Remnants of former decks; applicant wishes to replace or rebuild.
- New footings or helical piles could compromise wall stability.

Commission Position:

- Any repair, replacement, or new deck installation requires a Notice of Intent.
- Engineering will be required to ensure wall stability and protect the resource area.

B. 13 Brook Street

Findings:

- Applicant exploring major fill and retaining wall construction to level yard.
- Proposed work would require a NOI with engineered plan for the retaining walls
- Owners had expressed at the site that the desired project is likely not financially feasible due to volume of fill and height of retaining walls required.

Commission Recommendation:

- Consider alternatives such as repaving existing driveway and placing basketball hoop there.
- Any work requiring a retaining wall or fill requires an NOI.

APPROVED

Stewardship & Property Maintenance

Unkety Woods Mowing

- Area currently supports **Blanding's turtle nesting** and active bird nesting.
- **Mowing postponed until August** to avoid impacts.

Meeting Minutes of May 26, 2026

- Leah made a motion to approve the June 8th meeting minutes. Bridgette seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Bills/Payroll

- **Motion** to sign 2 payroll sheets for the Administrative Coordinator made by Al Starbird, seconded by Leah Basbanes **Vote:** Unanimous.

There were no other bills.

No other topics were discussed.

Leah moved to close the meeting at 7:25PM. Al Starbird seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

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

Respectfully submitted from notes taken by Leah B.

Carol A. Rock
Administrative Coordinator
Dunstable Conservation Commission

APPROVED