

Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2026

Remote meeting via Zoom

Members Present: Chair Carolyn Nielsen, Vice-Chair Nina Villanova, Robert Mosher, Douglas Troyer and Philip Edmundson

Members Absent: Henry (Bob) Hidell and Thomas Roby

Staff Present: Shannon Palmer, Conservation Officer & Natasha Molina, Administrative Assistant

Chair Carolyn Nielsen opened the meeting at 7:04PM and read the following statement:

"This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 and all other applicable laws temporarily amending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the chair at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording."

1. Minutes

Vote: Commissioner Troyer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher to approve the meeting minutes from 3/9/2026 as drafted.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 4-0 (Eligible)

In Favor: Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Philip Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen

Opposed: None

Public Meetings

1. 206 Cushing Street, Christi Fried

Meeting Documents: Staff memo, RDA and Site Plan Revised 2/20/26

Scott Fanara, Project Representative from Grady Consulting, explained the proposed project to the Commission, consisting of construction of a new sunroom, walkways and deck as well as removal of an existing detached garage and concrete slab. He stated that there was a Bordering Vegetative Wetland (BVW) to the east and no work was proposed within the 50 foot Buffer Zone. He stated mitigation planting would be planted adjacent to the BVW to replace existing lawn.

Ms. Palmer noted that it was a relatively minor project partially within the Buffer Zone and given the small area needed for the mitigation plantings, the 2 year monitoring is not required. She recommended the Commission issue a Negative Determination.

Commissioner Troyer questioned the distance of the new detached garage from the Buffer Zone.

Mr. Fanara stated it was to be 95.4 feet from the resource area.

Vote: Commissioner Troyer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmundson, to issue a Negative #3 and #6 Determination of Applicability for 206 Cushing Street with Findings of Fact and Special Conditions as noted in the Staff Memo.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen
Opposed: None

Public Hearings- Chair Nielsen read the public hearing statement and opened the hearings.

1. Cont. 10 Friend Street, DEP No. 034-15XX, Victoria Grady

Vote: Commissioner Villanova made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher, to continue the public hearing for 10 Friend Street at request of applicant to April 13, 2026 at 7PM.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen
Opposed: None

2. 58 Bonnie Brier Circle, DEP No. 034-1557, Richard D'Ambrosia

Vote: Commissioner Troyer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher, to continue the public hearing for 58 Bonnie Brier Circle, DEP No. 034-1557 at request of applicant, to April 13, 2026 at 7PM.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen
Opposed: None

Other Business:

1. Request for Minor Plan Change (after-the-fact), 322 Rockland St, DEP No. 034-1505, Stephen & Donna Linskey

Dana Altobello, P.E from Merrill Engineers, explained to the Commission that since the last meeting the homeowners, Stephen and Donna Linskey, had met with Ms. Palmer to develop a solution to the constructed raised patio. A revised request for Minor Plan change was presented to remove the existing concrete retaining wall and raised patio and construct a new deck (22' x 11') in approximately the same location, two and half feet from the wetland, with three timber posts on footings and cantilevered decking. The surface of the proposed deck would be at elevation 11.7 above the FEMA Flood Zone.

Ms. Palmer explained she had met with the homeowners to go over potential alternatives that would comply with the wetland regulations. She stated the proposed deck would allow for free passage of flood waters and in her opinion would result in minimal disturbance compared to the originally approved patio. She further explained the bluestone patio at grade was originally approved in close proximity to the marsh because of the extensive mitigation proposed including removal of hardscape and restoration of Salt Marsh.

Chair Nielsen questioned if there would be any barrier to keep the crushed stone from washing into the marsh.

Mr. Altobello responded that the area would be dug down and filled with four inches of stone and did not anticipate any washing away.

Chair Nielsen questioned if there would be any vegetation control used for any growth between the stones and noted she would not want herbicides used given the proximity to the wetland.

Mr. Linskey stated no herbicides are used on the property.

Chair Nielsen questioned the schematic showing a permeable bluestone patio depicted on the plan.

Mr. Altobello noted the detail was for the patio and also for bluestone wheel stops at the front of the property. He stated the area was currently seashells.

Vote: Commissioner Troyer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher, to approve request for Minor Plan Change for 322 Rockland Street, DEP No. 034-1505 to include removal of constructed elevated patio and construction of new deck as shown on Site Plan prepared by Merrill Engineers and Land Surveyors dated revised 3/17/26.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen

Opposed: None

2. Discuss Propose Revisions to Filling Fees (Hingham Wetland Regulations)

Ms. Palmer explained that staff is proposing to update the filing fees as part of the upcoming Wetland Regulations update, as they have not been updated since 2017. Staff compared fees from neighboring communities to develop a proposed fee schedule that fell within the average range. She explained the increases and noted a higher increase for Requests for COCs based on the extensive amount of time to review, especially older COC requests. New fees were added for minor plan change requests and review of Enforcement Order restoration plans. She requested the Commission's feedback.

The Commissioners were in favor of the increases.

Ms. Palmer noted she would proceed with a final draft and anticipated a public hearing at the end of April/ beginning of May.

3. Vote on Contract Amendment for HWR Update-Horsley Witten Group

Ms. Palmer explained that a contract amendment was needed as the scope of work was expanded to include a review of the local floodplain regulations. She stated that Horsley Witten Group had determined that certain provisions within the regulations would be more appropriately addressed under Zoning and Planning.

Vote: Commissioner Troyer made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher, to approve contract amendment from Horsley Witten Group in the amount of \$3800.00 for the Hingham Wetland Regulations Consulting Services.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen

Opposed: None

4. Agricultural License Agreement renewals – Schultz & Cushing Fields

Ms. Palmer explained the license agreement renewal was for a three year term with Hornstra Farm Dairy to conduct agricultural activities on Shultz and Cushing Fields. She explained it was a standard agreement prepared by legal counsel.

There were no comments or questions from the Commission.

Vote: Commissioner Villanova made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mosher, to renew the License Agreements with Hornstra Farm Dairy for use of Schultz and Cushing Fields for three additional years ending on March 31, 2029.

The motion passed by a roll call vote 5-0

In Favor: Nina Villanova, Bob Mosher, Douglas Troyer, Phil Edmundson, Carolyn Nielsen

Opposed: None

5. Conservation Officer Updates

Ms. Palmer asked the Commission to complete the poll for 10 Village Lane site visit date. She also reminded the Commission there would only be one meeting in April due to Town Meeting and a Holiday.

Adjourn

Motion: Commissioner Mosher moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Villanova seconded the motion. The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34PM

Approved on: April 13, 2026