

Leverett Conservation Commission Minutes: December 1, 2025

Start time: 7:03 PM

Board members present: Joan Deely (Acting Chair); Seth Heminway, David Powicki, Sarah Manteiga, Bill Corwin (Voting Members)

Attendance: Bella Yeager (Conservation Agent); Judith Inglese (8 Ryans Hill Rd); Chris Stoddard, P.E. (142 Depot Rd); Mark Stinson, DEP Circuit Rider; Bridget Likely, Chris Volonte, Kestrel Land Trust

1. PUBLIC INQUIRIES: None

2. REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY – 142 Depot Rd

Applicant:

- Chris Stoddard presents a proposed septic design in the buffer zone of Leverett Pond.
- Discussion:
 - The septic has been sited as far from wells as possible while avoiding BVW, meeting Board of Health code
 - Silt fencing and straw will be used to prevent erosion during installation
 - Timing of work was discussed; work is proposed before ground freeze, potentially next week
 - Mark Stinson suggests that Chris Stoddard go upstairs to the Board of Health meeting to make sure no variance is required for the septic design, then return to ConCom meeting after for issuance of Determination of Applicability. Chris does so.
 - When he returns, having needed no variance from the BOH for the septic, the Commission votes.
- Joan moves to issue a Negative 3 Determination for 142 Depot Road. Bill seconds. Unanimous in favor.

3. REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF APPLICABILITY – 8 Ryans Hill Rd

Applicant: Judith Inglese

- Judith Inglese presented a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for proposed work at 8 Ryans Hill Rd and explained the project plan to build a home with some grading work taking place in the buffer zone of an intermittent stream. The wetland delineation was performed by Ward Smith in the fall of 2025.
- Discussion:
 - The proposed well is located appropriately on the property and as far from wetlands as possible while avoiding BVW.

- The project meets the 80-foot setback requirement.
- Septic system location was discussed; septic is proposed on the north side of the hill near the road, well outside the buffer.
- Questions were raised regarding fencing and erosion control. Applicant plans to use silt fencing and straw wattles.
- Joan moves to issue a Negative 3 Determination. David seconds. Bill recuses himself as an abutter. Unanimous in favor.

4. REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE: 119 Long Plain Rd

Bella explains that an email requesting the close-out of an open Order of Conditions was sent in by the attorney of the recent buyer of this property, and that a site visit was performed to try to ascertain the nature of any work performed as no Notice of Intent or Order of Conditions are on file in the Conservation office, but that there was not enough information to make a determination to this effect, and that more paperwork is needed before any steps can be taken by the Commission to close the open Order. She will work on this in the coming month.

5. NEW & OLD BUSINESS

Kestrel Land Trust discussion with Bridget Likely re: Eversource & National Grid easement work on Heronemus CR

- Bridget Likely and Chris Volonte present their documentation and mitigation planning for the Eversource easement work proposed on the Heronemus Conservation Restriction, consisting so far of two site visits with foresters and ecological specialists. Eversource appears to be taking landowner relations seriously.
- The Conservation Commission, as holder of CR, are being asked for their approval of a 37-foot widening of the National Grid right-of-way (ROW)
 - Kestrel will ask the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
 - Proposed widened easement area has been mapped and marked by a dotted line on the plans
 - Access routes have been clarified, including use of Depot Road
 - Terrain within the easement area is rocky; expansion beyond proposed limits may not be feasible
 - Minimal to no new clearing proposed
 - The land in question is already impacted; a small proportional area would be cleared
 - The project is undergoing MEPA review; materials are available on the MA website
 - Invasive species management was discussed; the focus would be on managing tall vegetation, not actively controlling invasives
 - Eversource has seemed willing to do restoration work to mitigate impacts
 - Kestrel has monitored the site extensively and documented wetlands and road drainage issues

- David asks about NHESP concerns; Mark generally recommends contacting Leverett's service forester for specific inquiries, as well as possibly Dave Ziomek (Amherst) re: ag on conservation land (ag exemption for Gordon King)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Approval of the minutes: 11/3/25

Seth moves to approve the minutes as presented. Joan seconds. Unanimous in favor.

Seth notes that we should schedule seasonal monitoring of Heronemus when weather allows.

MEETING WRAP-UP

Next meeting date: 1/5/25

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Joan moves to enter executive session by roll-call vote at 8:16pm. Unanimous in favor.

Seth moved to exit executive session at 8:42pm. Unanimous in favor.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:42pm.

Minutes taken by Bella Yeager.

Approved 3/2/26.