

TOWN OF SOMERS
Conservation Commission
600 Main Street

REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026
7:00 PM TOWN HALL
MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Joan Formeister called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The commissioners in attendance were Dan Fraro, Candace Aleks, Drew Kukucka, and alternate Lise Wood. Joanna Shapiro, the Town of Somers Wetlands Agent, was also present.

Lise Wood was seated for Sydney Flowers.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. **Discussion/Possible Decision Application #828: 115 Parker Road.** Construction of addition and relocation of driveway within upland review area. Marcy Hogan.

Wetland Agent Joanna Shapiro summarized the presentation and discussion from the April meeting, and further described her subsequent visit to the site, where she confirmed that the proposed garage within the existing driveway is downgradient from the pond and stream, so sediment from the site is unlikely to reach these resources. She presented photos from her visit, showing the proposed location of the garage addition, the current driveway location, and the pond and stream.

At the prior meeting, it was discussed that the contractor would protect the pipe that carries drainage from the site, under the neighboring driveway, into the brook. There had been no outstanding questions or concerns during the prior meeting, and Joanna had no further comments.

Drew made a motion to approve Application #828: 115 Parker Road. Construction of addition and relocation of driveway within upland review area. Marcy Hogan, based on the following:

- The Commission finds that the Applicant has submitted all necessary application materials pursuant to Section 211-7 of the Wetlands Regulations, including but not limited to Section 211-7(E)(5), “Alternatives considered and rejected.”
- The Commission did not find the proposed activities “significant.”
- The Commission finds that the criteria set forth in Section 211-10B have been met by the Applicant.

Candace Aleks seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Candy made, and Lise seconded, a motion to reorder the agenda to consider “Approve use of Conservation Funds” first under new business.

1. Approve use of Conservation Funds – Wetland Agent Joanna Shapiro explained that we currently have \$1260 remaining of our \$1500 “Other – Conservation” line, because \$240 was used to purchase the signs for the recent public hearing. It’s possible that could be shifted to the “Dues & Fees” line if another project arises, but we are very tight on our Advertising budget, also due to the public hearing.
Candace Aleks made, and Dan Fraro seconded, a motion to use \$1260 from the conservation budget toward Dr. Martin’s Scantic River water quality monitoring program. Motion carried.
2. **Application #829: 144 Mountain Road.** Subdivision of land containing wetlands, to create one additional lot. Lisa DeGray.

Soil Scientist Rick Zulick and property owner Lisa DeGray were present to represent the application. Rick Zulick described that this is an approximately 18 acre parcel on Mountain Road, and they are proposing to cut a lot off from the Gillette Road end of the property. Rick Zulick provided 3 color-coded plan sheets, with the wetland represented on the plan and the proposed new lot shown. Wetland consists of Gillette Brook running north-south, with a wetland flagged along floodplain. Only the east bank of the floodplain was delineated, as this is where the work is going to occur. An 8’ waterfall exists on the parcel, approximately mid-way, as well as grist-mill remnants. A small water seep is also on the edge of the property. Closest disturbance proposed is approximately 350’, but it is a steep gradient down to the brook. Proposed driveway is off of the Gillette Lane cul-de-sac. Soils are very good, sand will be brought in to build up the septic system. Silt fence proposed on the west side, at the west side to protect the brook.

Lisa DeGray mentioned that they chose this location further from the brook in order to protect it, per the guidance of Rick Zulick. Rick Zulick explained that alternative locations would have required much closer encroachment on the brook and wetlands, and that this was his recommendation to protect these resources.

Joanna Shapiro explained that this is coming before the Commission because it is the subdivision of land containing wetlands, even though there is no work proposed within the upland review area. The purpose is to ensure that when land is subdivided, problematic lots are not created. In this case, the new lot does not contain wetlands.

IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - *Items not on the agenda or coming before the commission*

Kevin Barbeau from 66 Hangdog Lane approached the commission to express concerns regarding the ongoing site work occurring on Old Hampden Road. From available NearMaps aeriels, the area of disturbance is approximately 7 acres. His understanding is that DEEP will generally have jurisdiction when site work exceeds 5 acres. He described that aeriels also show a trash pit, and wondered where it ends up, and if any of the trash is coming from off-site. He expressed concern about trash potentially being stored or buried on site. He also pointed out an apparent gravel processing operation on-site. He complained to the ZEO, who ultimately sent a letter to the landowner.

Joanna Shapiro pointed out that it is on the Planning & Zoning Commission agenda for tomorrow night's meeting. Kevin Barbeau explained that it is for a modification of their special use permit, and may require a public hearing if it's a significant modification. Kevin Barbeau showed a detailed aerial that shows a parking lot area has been constructed. While there was originally a berm at the edge of the work, he stated that recent expansion of site work has gone beyond that.

Kevin explained that he had attended a CEQ meeting, where he expressed concern about lack of enforcement in town, including this work on private land and the town's work on Old Hampden Rd, including the replacement of culverts. There is now erosion on the opposite side of the road, on the stream side, although it's hard to prove if it's due to this site.

Kevin has observed rills eroding on the site, further along the driveway toward the Hampden line, and requested that the town land use department revisit to inspect. Kevin pointed out the instances of sediment running off the site, with stormwater entering the brook, and his concern that it will happen again if not addressed.

Kevin stated that the state has minimum standards for ZEO documentation of site visits that the town should follow. He heard that the town of Canton has an incredibly effective ZEO procedure that may be helpful to town staff to use as a model.

Drew asked if Kevin had also spoken with DEEP stormwater staff, and Kevin believed that his complaint form had gone to them.

Drew stated that he appreciates Kevin as a resident bringing this to the Commission's attention, because it was not shared with them by other commissions. He explained that most of the concerns do not fall under this commission's regulatory role, but liked the idea of a joint inspection with the wetland agent and ZEO, to screen for erosion issues and potential risks to the stream.

Bob Thiesing, 12 High Meadows Crossing, approached the Commission. He stated that one of the homes backs up to Hall Hill Brook. He reviewed Chapter 211 Inland Wetlands Regulations for the Town of Somers, and read the preamble to the Commission. He cited a public act requiring that commission members take the inland wetland and watercourses training. He reviewed the definition of a significant activity, and read items that he felt were important for the commission to consider, and reviewed what additional requirements could be imposed if deemed a significant activity. He urged the commission to exercise that option in the future.

V. STAFF REPORT

Joanna reported on several ongoing projects in town, in addition to the large influx of building permit applications

1. 45 Green Tree Lane – Joanna issued a minimal impact wetland permit for a deck within the upland review area.
2. 32 Bailey Lane – Joanna is issuing a minimal impact permit for a detached garage in the upland review area.
3. 18 Sokol Road – Joanna is working with the property owner toward a minimal impact permit for a garage in the upland review area.
4. Town sidewalk project – Joanna heard from DPW that this grant-funded project may require a wetland permit, she will stay updated.
5. 120 and 121 Scully Road – there has been interest on building on these two properties, which both contain wetlands.

Lise Wood made, and Dan Fraro seconded, a motion to accept the staff report. Motion carried.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

1. Journal Inquirer April legal notice - \$62.96

Lise Wood made, and Drew Kukucka seconded, a motion to pay the April JI bill. Motion carried.

2. Joanna reported that we received correspondence related to an upcoming herbicide treatment of Shady Lake.

VII. MINUTES APPROVAL: April 8, 2026 regular meeting

Candace Aleks made, and Dan Fraro seconded, a motion to approve the April 8 minutes as written. Motion carried.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Lise Wood made, and Dan Fraro seconded, a motion adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:35

Respectfully Submitted, Joanna Shapiro, Wetland Agent

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING