TOWN OF LEVERETT
CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 2026 at 7:00 PM
Leverett Town Hall

Present: Joan Deely, David Powicki, Seth Heminway, Pete Sylvan, Sarah Manteiga
Absent: Bill Corwin

Attendees: Abby Lamborn, Marjorie McGinnis, Tom Hankinson, Jed Proujansky, Richard Nathhorst, Silas Ball, Chris Stoddard, Ben Eddy, Maureen Ippolito, Julie Marlow, Patricia Duffy**,** Stephen Nagy, Janna Tetreault, Jack Kruse, Marg Kruse, Gregory Tuzzolo, David Henion, James Hicks, Anna Botta, Alex Bouthillette.

1. **Open Meeting:** Acting Chair Deely called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
    a. **Record Attendance:** Conservation Agent Lamborn recorded attendance

2. **Additions to the Agenda:** Conservation Agent Lamborn brought up an addition regarding a presentation about the potential for becoming a Cultural District, which Acting Chair Deely allowed.

3. **Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – 200-0210: Town of Leverett:**
   Chris Stoddard of Stoddard Engineering informed the Commission that the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife had submitted their findings, and that the findings were that the project would not result in a prohibited take of state-listed rare species. C Stoddard also explained the changes that had been made to the plans, based on the previous hearing date. The changes included removing the turnoff by the bridge, including parking spaces at the bottom of the hill with boulders on each side so vehicles cannot get through, and a gate 20 feet off of the road so that vehicles opening the gate are off of the main road.

   SH asked why boulders were chosen over a gate or bollard. C Stoddard stated that a gate could be used instead, if that was desired. C Stoddard showed the Commission the updated plans and explained the revisions. SH asked if the Town tractor would be able to make it down. DH pointed out the water path, requesting that it be water resistant.

   A resident requested that the NHEP document be read more fully to the audience, which C Stoddard obliged.

   The Commission decided to set conditions to make the road a minimum of 8 feet wide and to put a gate where the boulders were outlined, with boulders optionally on the sides of the gate if helpful.

   SH motioned to approve the project with conditions. Seconded by DP. Motion passes 5-0-0.

4. **Board Discussion**
    a. **RDA - 59 Camp Road:**
       Janna Tetreault, representing 59 Camp Road, explained that there were two trees on the property that needed trimming, one tree that was damaging the roof that needed to be fully removed, and two trees that would eventually need removal.

       SM and PS conducted a site visit and agreed with the branches that needed to be removed, as well as the tree that was damaging the roof.

       DP asked how the trees would be trimmed and removed. J Tetreault stated that the trees would be climbed and sections would be dropped down to be removed, as to minimize ground disturbance. DP asked what the distance from the water was, and J Tetreault stated that they were within 15 feet of the water.

DP made a motion to issue a negative 3 Determination of Applicability. Seconded by SH. Motion passes 5-0-0.

b. COC - Dudleyville Road

JD explained the Dudleyville Road project, including a recent site visit she had conducted. She gave several notes and reported that the requested changes had been made from both the site visit and the Order of Conditions.

SH made a motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance. Seconded by SM. Motion passes 5-0-0.

c. RDA - 117 N Leverett Road:

Chris Stoddard of Stoddard Engineering presented the Request for Determination of Applicability for 117 N Leverett Road, including the building of an additional dwelling unit outside of the 200 foot riverfront and the repair of an existing septic system outside the 100 foot riparian zone.

SM and PS conducted a site visit. SM had no comments and PS clarified the area for the septic tank. C Stoddard added that silt fencing would be used around the construction area.

DP made a motion for a negative determination of applicability, as the work is exempt under state regulations. Seconded by SH. Motion passes 5-0-0.

d. Parcel #3-0-12C: Peter Brown Site Visit:

AL explained the responses that she received from other qualified individuals, recommending that the sandbags be removed. SM explained that the removal of the sandbags would likely mean the eventual drying of the pond. SH was in favor of removing the sandbags and letting it be. PS agreed. It was decided a letter would be drafted to Peter Brown, with the request to remove the bags while providing other options, such as submitting a Notice of Intent.

e. RDA - ELM Footbridge

Greg Tuzzolo presented the proposed project to repair the East Longmeadow Footbridge. A group is willing to donate their time and labor to repair the bridge. They will replace the frame with steel beams and the decking and railings will be made of wood. The existing cribbing needs reinforcement, it is undermined on one side. They will be using hand and battery powered tools, the removed treated wood would be disposed of off-site. There is a dead tree that is leaning on the railing that needs to be removed. A woodsmith will take the tree out through climbing, which will be an adjacent project. They are meeting with the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust to go over cost and detailing, but they have completed their design standards. They aim for the project to take place in October and November.

The Commission discussed the cribbage, including the possibility of completely replacing the cribbing, riprap, reinforcing, and potentially moving the cribbage further up the bank. G Tuzzolo explained that the plan was to use very large rocks to keep the shoring in place. DP noted that the undermined cribbage was on the point bank, and that would likely be enough. The Commission decided that the cribbing could both be replaced and be moved back to the bank without reappearing before the Commission, but that any structural work that would involve ground disturbance would need to come before the Commission.

SH made a motion for a negative three determination of applicability with the condition of, if upon inspecting the cribbing, more structural work needed to take place than discussed in the meeting, they would come back before the Commission. Seconded by PH. Motion passes 5-0-0.

f. Hicks Botta Land Donation:

SH and James Hicks explained the updates on the Hicks Botta Land Donation. There will be a trailhead with two parking spots, the existing structures will be removed. It will link to another conservation area and contains a small, possibly intermittent, brook. They would like a trail named "Tornjak Trail". The Commission discussed their desired restrictions, citing that a Conservation Restriction may be required to disallow hunting, camping, general time restrictions, etc.

SH also brought up that the Commission had volunteered to contribute to the survey cost, which had recently been doubled, as the surveyor had to canvas the front lots as well as the rear. SH proposed that the Commission cover the full amount.

DP made a motion to use up to $7,000.00 from the Conservation Donation fund for any fees associated with the survey and deed registration. Seconded by SH. Motion passes 5-0-0.

The Commission discussed questions brought up by the Town Administrator, including who would be responsible for removing the existing structures, who would make and pay for the existing trail and trailhead, and how the imposition of the restrictions would be handled. SH mentioned that Matt Boucher of the highway department had already visited the site to look at the structures and would also be creating the parking area. AL will do more research on what is needed for the land transfer.

J Hicks asked if he should register the plans, and a member of the Planning Board, Richard Nathhorst, stated that he should.

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA: Cultural District Designation:

David Henion, president of the Leverett Crafts and Arts, presented the idea of Leverett having a Cultural District Designation to the Commission. D Henion stated that the plan was to have three sections, Historic Buildings, Conservation Areas, and a Cultural Section. DP asked what it would get the Town and D Henion explained that it would provide information and mapping for the Town, as well as an annual $15,000.00 stipend that will partially fund a sub committee of the Leverett Cultural Council. Jed Proujansky, Select Board member, explained that it was a highly competitive process. The Commission discussed the Conservation areas briefly that would be involved.

g. Forest Fire Talk

SH will be a part of the "Forest Health and Understanding Forest Fire Risk" panel discussion on October 24th at the library. He would like to open with comments on the Commission's behalf and asked if the Commission was comfortable with that. The Commission agreed that they were.

h. Invasives Education:

JD will be writing an article about invasive education for the fall newsletter. SH brought up that Sarah Tooker would be a good resource, as she is passionate about the topic.

i. Certified Abutters List Deadline Policy:

AL explained that a question had come up regarding the Commission's policy on the viability of older certified abutters lists for their filing processes. AL requested that the Commission set a policy, which was discussed.

JD made a motion to have a deadline of 60 days for a Certified Abutters List. Seconded by DP. Motion passes 5-0-0.

j. **Sponsoring MACC Winter Shrub ID Course:**
AL explained the request from the MACC to the Commission to sponsor their Winter Shrub ID Course at the library. The Commission granted AL permission to write a letter if necessary. SH requested that they include invasives in their course.

5. **Administrative Matters**
   a. **Approval of minutes: 8/3/2026, 8/31/2026:**
   SH made a motion to approve the minutes from August 3, 2026. Seconded by DP. Motion passes 4-0-1. SM abstained due to being absent at the August 3, 2026 meeting.

   SH made a motion to approve the minutes from August 31, 2026. Seconded by SM. Motion passes 4-0-1. DP abstained due to being absent at the August 31, 2026 meeting.

   b. **Worked on Organizing Office:**
   AL worked on organizing the Conservation Commission Office over the last month.

   c. **Email Correspondance:**
   AL kept up on the Commission's email.

6. **Meeting Wrap-up**
   a. **Known agenda items for the October meeting:**
      1. Hicks Botta Land Donation

   b. **October meeting date:** October 5, 2026.

7. **Adjournment:** DP made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by PS. Motion passes 5-0-0. Meeting Adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Supporting Documents:
NOI - 200-0210 - DEP Document and Engineering Document
NHEP Response to NOI - 200-0210
King Meadow Drivable Trail Comments
Answers to Question about NOI 200-0210 Email
RDA - 59 Camp Road and Site Visit Email
Request for Certificate of Compliance - Dudleyville Road
Dudleyville Road Emails and Plans with Explanations
RDA - 117 N Leverett Road and Site Visit Email
Email Correspondence Relating to Rear Long Plain Road
RDA - ELM Footbridge and Related Emails
Hicks Botta Land Donation Application of Endorsement of Plan Believed Not to Require Approval and Map
MACC Request to Host Winter Plant ID Course in Leverett Library
August 3, 2026 Minutes
August 31, 2026 Minutes