



Town of Bedford
Conservation Commission Workshop Minutes
October 24, 2023

A workshop meeting of the Bedford Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 in the McAllster Room at the Bedford Public Library, 10 Meetinghouse Drive, Bedford.

6:00 PM Call to Order

Present: Pat Grogan (Chair), Stephanie Jones (Vice Chair), Bill Carter (Town Council Rep.), Steve Clough (Planning Board Rep, member), Grant Killian (regular member), Julie Donovan (regular member), Joanne Smith (regular member), Kathleen Bemiss (Town Council Alt.), Freya Killian (member of the public), Becky Hebert (Planning Director), Kathleen Ports (Associate Planner)

Absent: Deborah Evans (regular member) and Brian Labrie (regular member)

New Business: Workshop – The Bedford Wetland Ordinance

Attendees were invited to answer the following question posted on a flip chart – What can the Commission do to enhance wetland habitat protection?

Ms. Ports presented a timeline of the current Wetland Ordinance (Article IV, Sections 275-24 to 275-29) and she and Ms. Hebert provided background on previous efforts by the Commission to attempt substantive changes to the ordinance that involved the addition of a 100 foot setback and 50 foot vegetative buffer for Wetlands of Exceptional Value (2007). The group reviewed wetland setback and vegetative buffer requirements from other neighboring towns. The group discussed potential changes to the wetland ordinance and the benefits and challenges of such a task. The group then discussed implementing a riparian overlay district on named ponds and streams in lieu of amending the wetland ordinance. The group also discussed other efforts to educate the public on the importance of vegetative buffers outside of changing the wetland ordinance.

Group Decisions: The members voted to: (1) initiate the process to create a new Riparian Area Overlay District, (2) create a formal Conservation Commission application, and (3) develop Fact Sheets on Best Management Practices to accompany various projects like new indoor pools, additions with gutters and downspouts, etc.

Old Business:

The members were encouraged to complete their outreach letters to owners of properties of interest to the Commission.

Ms. Bemiss shared that PLC had acquired additional lands added to the Tarr Preserve.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00PM. Next meeting is scheduled for November 28, 2023.

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Ports