



SUDBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting Minutes of Monday, August 4, 2025

Present: David Henkels, Chair; Ken Holtz, Vice Chair; Jeremy Cook; Bruce Porter; Mark Sevier; and Lori Capone, Conservation Coordinator

Absent: Luke Faust; Kasey Rogers; Harry Hoffman, Associate Member; and, Victor Sulkowski, Associate Member;

The meeting was called to Order by Chair Henkels at 7:00 PM via roll call.

Minutes:

On motion by Comm. Sevier to accept the minutes of the June 23, 2025 meeting, seconded by Comm. Holtz, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

On motion by Comm. Sevier to accept the minutes of the July 27, 2025 meeting, seconded by Comm. Cook, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Wetland Applications:

Notice of Intent: 20 Tavern Circle, DEP #301-TBD

Chair Henkels resumed the Hearing for the project to remove trees within the 100-foot Buffer Zone and 200-foot Riverfront Area, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Matthew Drew was the applicant. This Hearing was continued from January 27, 2025.

Chair Henkels stated that he understood the applicant had requested a further continuance to August 18, 2025.

Coordinator Capone reported that the applicant was no longer responding to communications. She recommended that the Commission continue the Hearing for two more weeks but also consider withdrawing the application if there was no further response. She added that DEP agreed with this approach, noting that the lack of response justified withdrawing the application in the near future.

On motion by Comm. Cook to continue the Hearing to August 18, 2025, seconded by Comm. Sevier, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Notice of Intent: 182 Wayside Inn Road, DEP #301-1434

Chair Henkels resumed the Hearing for the project to install a gravel driveway and stream crossing after-the-fact, renovate and expand an existing garage, construct an accessory out-building, exterior pool, and replace an existing culvert within the 100-foot Buffer Zone and 200-foot Riverfront Area, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Andrew Leverone was the applicant. This Hearing was continued from November 18, 2024 and June 23, 2025.

Mr. Leverone reported that he had documented the stream and confirmed it was dry for thirty consecutive days, thereby meeting the definition of intermittent. He had submitted photographs and documentation and had spoken with the DEP, who indicated that they were inclined to overturn the perennial status in favor of intermittent, pending the Commission's acceptance. He also indicated that he planned to remove the proposed accessory building from the plan, postponing it for a later date, and would submit a revised plan at scale with landscape details included.

Chair Henkels asked whether Mr. Leverone anticipated a formal response from DEP. Mr. Leverone replied that he was uncertain how to proceed, since DEP had told him they were waiting for the Commission's position, while he had thought DEP should provide the determination first.

Chair Henkels stated that based on the documentation, the stream had been deemed intermittent under both DEP standards and the Sudbury Wetlands Administrative Bylaw, specifically the thirty-day provision. Mr. Leverone confirmed that he had submitted documentation to Coordinator Capone for review.

Chair Henkels emphasized that the documentation supported classification as an intermittent stream, reducing jurisdiction from Riverfront Area to a 100-foot Buffer Zone. He asked Coordinator Capone to confirm.

Coordinator Capone stated that the Riverfront Area no longer applied, so much of the proposed work would fall outside jurisdiction. The performance standard limiting impervious surfaces to 5,000 square feet or 10% of the lot would also no longer be applicable. She confirmed that she had reviewed the submitted photographs, had visited the site with Commissioners, and agreed that the stream met the intermittent definition. She said the Commission now needed to consider the existing stream crossing, which remained jurisdictional. She explained that the Commission should decide whether to allow the crossing to remain as is, require upgrades, or request alternative access.

Chair Henkels thanked Coordinator Capone and asked Comm. Holtz, who had conducted site visits with him, for comments on the stream crossing in light of the intermittent classification and the standards that would guide the Commission's review.

Comm. Holtz stated that he was not an expert in stream crossings but observed that the existing crossing appeared sufficient and likely involved less disturbance than a new crossing from Prides Crossing. He noted the stream was intermittent and considered the current crossing better than the prior condition. Chair Henkels agreed and remarked on the vegetation that had established in the channel. He asked whether Mr. Leverone wished to present an alternative crossing approach or proceed with the existing one.

Coordinator Capone advised that the next plan submission should document existing conditions within jurisdiction, describe the crossing as it exists, and include a narrative comparing the alternative access from Prides Crossing. Comm. Holtz asked what would happen to the current crossing if access were provided from Prides Crossing. Coordinator Capone explained that if the Commission required access from Prides Crossing, the existing crossing would need to be restored to an open stream channel without a culvert. Mr. Leverone noted he had photographs of a crossing from when he moved in. Coordinator Capone responded that such documentation would be part of the decision-making process.

Chair Henkels asked if Mr. Leverone had enough information to proceed. Leverone confirmed, stating that he would redraw the plan to include landscaping components, document the existing crossing, and provide the alternative route analysis with reasons why Prides Crossing might not be preferable. He agreed this would allow the Commission to evaluate the options comprehensively. Chair Henkels requested more detail within four to six weeks. Mr. Leverone added that he planned to remove an outbuilding within the Buffer Zone, which would reduce impacts.

Chair Henkels asked whether mitigation would be required for work near the intermittent stream. Coordinator Capone confirmed mitigation would be required within 100 feet of the stream, noting that the jurisdictional area had shifted from 200 feet under the Riverfront regulations to 100 feet for an intermittent stream.

Chair Henkels invited Commissioner questions.

Comm. Porter asked whether the Commission had a procedure for evaluating historical properties in the Order of Conditions process, given the age of the property. Mr. Leverone replied that the house was built in 1960 and located outside the Wayside Inn Historic District. Chair Henkels confirmed there was no mechanism for historical review within Commission procedures.

Chair Henkels asked for audience questions, then turned to scheduling. Coordinator Capone said materials would be needed two weeks in advance of the next hearing. Chair Henkels confirmed the applicant's consent to continue the hearing until September 29, 2025, and Mr. Leverone agreed.

On motion by Comm. Holtz to continue the Hearing to September 29, 2025, seconded by Comm. Porter, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Notice of Intent: 26 Windmill Drive, DEP #301-1446

Chair Henkels resumed the Hearing for the project to construct a garage, expand the driveway, replace the existing deck and replace the walkway, within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Aaron Widell was the applicant. This Hearing was continued from June 23 and July 21, 2025.

Montgomery Nsamba, of Stamski and McNary stated that one of the main concerns from the last hearing had been the sufficiency of the mitigation area and the plantings proposed. He explained that the plans had been revised to provide stronger mitigation, including a new planting list within the disturbed area of the 100-foot Buffer Zone. He noted that the revision included two caliper-inch trees, approximately twenty shrubs, seven red oaks, gray birch, and spruce. He emphasized that these changes addressed the Commission's concerns and added that, in response to Coordinator Capone's request, the mitigation area would be seeded with a native conservation seed mix, which was included as a note on the plan.

Mr. Nsamba then turned to the driveway concerns discussed previously. He explained that he had used software to simulate how two cars would maneuver in and out of the garage. He shared the simulation, showing that one car parked in a bay could easily back out and exit, but if two cars were parked in the garage and another car was parked in the driveway, maneuvering became much more difficult. He pointed out that even with the bump out, cars needed to make multiple turns to exit. Without the bump out, he said, it would be nearly impossible to maneuver. He acknowledged that the bump out extended closer to the wetlands but stated that the mitigation provided offset the impacts within the 100-foot Buffer Zone. He concluded his presentation by inviting questions from the Commission.

Coordinator Capone stated that the mitigation area now included adequate vegetation and restoration for the unpermitted clearing. She distinguished the clearing issue from the driveway matter but said that the placement of mitigation between the bump out and the wetlands would provide protection from the additional impervious surface. She stated she had prepared a draft Order of Conditions for consideration to close the Hearing.

Chair Henkels thanked her and invited questions from the Commissioners.

Comm. Sevier questioned the parking arrangement and referenced a location marked by the red arrow on the plan. He observed that prior testimony suggested only one car would be parked in that area, but photographs showed two cars parked there. He explained that while it might be possible for one car to back straight out to get around another car parked head-in, the layout appeared very tight to him, and he did not see how the maneuvering would work as presented. He reiterated that his concern was with the overall tightness of the arrangement and that the simulation did not place a car where he thought the applicant had originally indicated.

Chair Henkels asked if there were any further questions from Commissioners. Comm. Holtz questioned why one of the simulated cars was shown backing straight out and hitting the driveway edge instead of turning slightly, similar to the maneuver of the other vehicle in the simulation. Mr. Nsamba explained that the straight backing was modeled under the assumption that if the bump out were not included, it would be extremely difficult to make the turn within the space available. He said that even with the bump out it was very tight, and therefore he considered straight backing and then turning to be the best option. Comm. Holtz accepted the explanation and reiterated that the matter was not worth extended debate.

Chair Henkels again asked for Commissioner questions, and hearing none, he opened the discussion to the audience. With no audience input, he asked Coordinator Capone for guidance, stating that the Commission appeared to be considering a motion to allow the bump out as presented.

On motion by Comm. Sevier to close the Hearing, seconded by Comm. Porter, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Coordinator Capone reviewed the draft conditions, and explained that she had distinguished between mitigation for the new impervious surface and restoration for the unpermitted clearing. She specified that erosion controls must be installed, that the existing dog fence within the cleared Buffer Zone must be removed and relocated to the lawn area, and that all restoration work, including removing wood chips and planting, must be conducted by hand without machinery. She required reports to be submitted to the Commission on the restoration progress. She also stated that while there was limited invasive species on site, a large barberry bush adjacent to the proposed mitigation and restoration area must be removed as part of the conditions. She confirmed that the rest of the conditions were standard.

Chair Henkels asked Mr. Nsamba if he had any questions, to which he replied that he did not.

On motion by Comm. Sevier to issue the Order of Conditions, seconded by Comm. Cook, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Notice of Intent: 14 Churchill Street, DEP #301-1447

Chair Henkels opened the Hearing for the project to install a hot tub within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Julie Marhoom was the applicant.

Ms. Marhoom identified herself as the homeowner at 14 Churchill Street. She explained that her proposal involved placing a hot tub in the backyard. She emphasized that the project would not require any tree removal, would remain within the existing yard, and would involve minimal site work. The base would consist of compacted gravel with treated lumber to maintain level placement. She clarified that the hot tub was a saltwater, above-ground system. She added that Coordinator Capone had assisted her in preparing the application materials, though she had not brought any formal presentation documents.

Coordinator Capone explained that while the project was small, she had required a Notice of Intent rather than a Request for Determination because of its proximity to the wetlands, which she estimated to be about 35 feet from the resource area. She noted that her principal concern related to the long-term maintenance of the hot tub, particularly how it would be drained, as direct drainage into the wetland could be harmful. She stated that she had discussed the issue with the applicant and would recommend a condition requiring drainage into the front yard, which lies near or beyond the Buffer Zone. Alternatively, if that option was not feasible, the applicant would need to arrange for the water to be professionally removed and disposed of appropriately. Coordinator Capone said that no mitigation measures were warranted because the project involved no vegetation removal and the surface remained pervious apart from the footprint of the hot tub itself. However, she expressed disappointment that during her site visit she found the hot tub already installed prior to Commission review. She shared photographs with the Commission, showing the hot tub in place and the limited site alteration involved, aside from a trench dug for electrical conduit, which caused no erosion given the flatness of the yard.

Chair Henkels invited questions from Commissioners.

Comm. Sevier asked whether discharging saltwater into the front yard would damage the grass. Ms. Marhoom responded that she had discussed this issue with the hot tub provider. She explained that the system requires shutting down for three to five days before draining, at which point the water would be tested to ensure chlorine and bromine levels were safe. She stated that many owners use the discharged water for gardens. Comm. Sevier pressed further, questioning how bromine and chlorine related to salt, noting that the explanation sounded inconsistent. Ms. Marhoom clarified that the salt system generates chlorine through a chemical process and reduces the need for chemical additives. Comm. Sevier remained skeptical, stating that salt placed on a counter

does not transform, and he wondered if salt discharge would still accumulate in the front yard. Ms. Marhoom reiterated that the procedure required professional testing before disposal to ensure safe pH and chemical balance, which is why she would not attempt it herself.

Comm. Holtz added that he had researched the subject briefly and noted that saltwater systems use electrolysis to generate chlorine, which might address Comm. Sevier's concern. He then shifted to a question about the trench for the electrical line, commenting that it appeared wider than expected. He asked whether machinery was used for excavation. Ms. Marhoom explained that her electrician had secured the proper permits and that the trench was required to be two feet deep with a six-inch sand base. Although it appeared wide from above, the conduit itself was only two to three inches in diameter. Comm. Holtz confirmed that the electrician had obtained a permit from the Building Department, which Ms. Marhoom affirmed.

Comm. Sevier again raised concerns about the discharge of saltwater pool onto a lawn, noting that readily available guidance, such as from Google search results, cautions against this practice because the salt can damage or kill grass and other vegetation. He emphasized that in his professional experience, many experts are not fully familiar with the practical effects of such discharges, and he remained unconvinced that this method was viable. To illustrate his point, he suggested a test: placing the water in a cup on the counter for several days and then tasting it to determine whether it still had a salty character, which would imply a risk to plants.

In response, Ms. Marhoom explained that she had been told the water could be tested and, if found safe, discharged into her front garden, which lies outside the 100-foot Buffer Zone. She noted that she was not an expert but had understood from the vendor that this was a common practice. As an alternative, she described another option provided by the hot tub supplier, which involved having the water taken off site by a service to designated gray water deposit facilities. Since the draining would only occur twice per year, she indicated that this option remained feasible.

Comm. Sevier pressed her on how she would decide between discharging on site and transporting off site. Ms. Marhoom stated that her choice would depend on what she learned through the process, as she wanted to avoid doing anything improper. She emphasized that she had sought alternative solutions in case the Commission expressed concerns and reiterated that her garden was not within the jurisdictional 100-foot Buffer Zone. She also stressed that she did not want to kill her lawn and therefore was open to using the off-site option if needed.

Comm. Sevier remarked that applicants sometimes resort to workarounds outside the Commission's awareness, but if it became evident that the discharge would damage the lawn, then off-site disposal would be the logical solution. He advised that the Commission would want to see documentation demonstrating that the discharge was safe, or alternatively, a clear commitment from the applicant to transport the water away. He reminded that plants not adapted to saltwater generally do not tolerate it, making on-site discharge appear optimistic at best. He cautioned that if the applicant chose to experiment with discharging onto the lawn, the Commission's concern would be ensuring that the water did not ultimately reach the wetlands.

Ms. Marhoom agreed, reiterating that she did not want the discharge to harm her property or the wetlands. She explained that since gray water deposit facilities were available and she would have several months before needing to drain the hot tub, she was not overly concerned. She intended to explore the options further and use professional services for the water change when the time came.

Chair Henkels asked Comm. Sevier what he would like to see included regarding the issue of hot tub water discharge. Comm. Sevier responded by asking how Ms. Marhoom would determine what to do when the time came to drain the hot tub, pointing out that nothing was likely to change between now and that point. He stated that, in his view, the straightforward solution would be for her to commit to having the water removed from the site. He added that it was ultimately up to the applicant to decide whether she wanted to risk the effects of discharging onto the lawn or commit to off-site removal.

Ms. Marhoom acknowledged his concerns and said she wanted to keep the option open to investigate further. Chair Henkels noted that it appeared she was more comfortable with the off-site removal option and suggested that this might ultimately be the required solution. He then asked whether it was possible to continue the Hearing

so Ms. Marhoom could obtain more professional information about the composition of the water and its potential effects on vegetation.

Comm. Sevier stated that he did not think a continuance was necessary, explaining that his main point was simple: if the water harmed the lawn, it needed to be removed from the site rather than discharged there for convenience. Chair Henkels noted that if that approach was taken, the Commission would need to draft an Order of Conditions that spelled out her responsibilities. Comm. Sevier replied that he believed such language was already included in the draft.

Coordinator Capone clarified that the draft allowed for both options. She explained that when Ms. Marhoom applies for a Certificate of Compliance, she would evaluate the site. If she observed no negative impacts on the lawn, she would request written documentation verifying whether the water had been safely discharged or taken off site. Comm. Sevier agreed with this approach.

On motion by Comm. Porter to close the Hearing, seconded by Comm. Sevier, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Coordinator Capone clarified that she had not circulated the Order of Conditions, as the project was already completed and the only special condition under consideration was the water disposal. She confirmed that with the minor modification discussed, the Commission was in a position to issue the decision.

On motion by Comm. Holtz to issue the Order of Conditions, seconded by Comm. Cook, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Request for Determination of Applicability: 67 Concord Road, RDA #25-07

Chair Henkels began the meeting for the project to remove trees and manage vegetation within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Patrick Rahill was the applicant.

Mr. Rahill and Sara Vargas of 67 Concord Road presented their proposal to address invasive plant growth and diseased trees on their property. They explained that they intend to remove the invasive vegetation and replace it with new plantings, including five red maples and twenty Allegheny serviceberries along the back border, where a new tree line will be established. The first hundred feet from the house would be maintained as lawn, while the area beyond that would be seeded with a native meadow blend. They noted that the project required review because an intermittent stream runs through the southwest corner of their property.

Coordinator Capone described the property as heavily overgrown with invasive species and noted that the proposal involved clearing the area, removing compromised trees, and re-establishing lawn and meadow habitat. She emphasized that the approach would ultimately benefit the wetlands by replacing invasive growth with a diverse native planting palette. She recommended a negative Determination of Applicability with several conditions: that she meet with the contractor before work begins to ensure alignment; that all invasive material be disposed of properly off-site; that plywood be used for site access to minimize spread of invasives; that details of the meadow seed mix be provided and confirmed as native; that a clear demarcation be established between the lawn and meadow to prevent future lawn encroachment; that the meadow be managed through annual mowing; and that post-project documentation be submitted to confirm compliance.

Comm. Holtz asked about the primary invasive species, which the applicant identified as bittersweet, with additional species such as lily of the valley. Mr. Rahill explained that they had considered using goats but could not due to the toxicity of lily of the valley. Instead, they planned to clear the area with machinery and then manage invasive regrowth by hand for the first few years. They added that Arbor Works had advised them that the new tree line, along with vigilant follow-up care, would help the plantings establish successfully.

Comm. Holtz asked about their ability to identify invasives. Mr. Rahill joked about his limited experience but acknowledged they would need guidance. Coordinator Capone confirmed that she would provide materials and conduct a site meeting to assist them in recognizing the invasive plants. She explained that mowing and follow-up management would be crucial over several years until the native meadow became well established.

Comm. Holtz also inquired about an old foundation on the site. Coordinator Capone confirmed that invasives were growing around the structure, which the applicants intended to uncover but not remove. Ms. Vargas noted that they had consulted the Historic Commission, which determined that the concrete-and-metal foundation was not historic. They planned to leave the structure in place, likely a remnant of a shed or barn.

Chair Henkels commended the applicants for the scale and ambition of the project.

There were no further questions from the Commission or the public.

On motion by Comm. Sevier to issue a negative Determination of Applicability #3, seconded by Comm. Holtz, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Notice of Intent: 177 Marlboro Road, DEP #301-1450

Chair Henkels opened the Hearing for the project to remove 12 trees within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Charles & Lara Urso were the applicants.

Charles Urso of 177 Marlborough Road, represented by consultant Daniel Cathcart of Plant Healthcare Consultants Inc., appeared before the Commission to request approval for the removal of twelve trees, including eleven mature pines and one oak, located close to the rear of their home. Mr. Cathcart explained that the trees stand within approximately ten to fifteen feet of the back of the house, where the bedrooms of the Urso children are located. The primary motivation for the request is safety, as the applicants are concerned about the risk of falling trees damaging the house or endangering their family. He emphasized that the Ursos have no intention of expanding their lawn, repurposing the land, or altering the natural character of the property, and that they are willing to consider mitigation measures such as leaving snags or downed logs to preserve habitat. He also noted that the Ursos are open to contributing to the tree fund as part of mitigation.

Coordinator Capone provided historical context, noting that the Ursos' property and a neighboring lot were developed in 1996, at which time much of the land was placed under a strict Conservation Restriction held by the Commission. This Restriction prohibits the removal of any vegetation, living or dead, which is unusual compared to most Conservation Restrictions that typically allow for hazard tree removal. The trees in question stand within the restricted area and are very close to wetlands. She pointed out that no health problems were identified in the application; the request is based solely on proximity to the house and the species' height. She strongly recommended that Commissioners conduct a site visit before making any determinations, as the Conservation Restriction leaves very limited flexibility.

Comm. Holtz asked whether the trees slated for removal were part of a single line close to the house and whether removing them might increase wind exposure for the remaining trees. Mr. Cathcart confirmed that most of the concern is with the first line of trees, though additional dense growth exists further back. He acknowledged the issue of windthrow but stated that most of the remaining pines lean away from the house and do not pose the same level of risk. Discussion also addressed the oak, which Mr. Cathcart described as structurally weak, with a heavy lean and poor form that suggested limited longevity, though it does not currently show signs of disease.

Mr. Urso reiterated that he did not move into the property intending to cut trees and values the wooded setting, but he remains worried about the safety risk of the tall pines looming over the house where his young children sleep.

Chair Henkels concluded that the matter would require a continuation and a site visit so Commissioners could directly assess the trees in question. The applicant agreed to continue the hearing to August 18, 2025. Coordinator Capone indicated that a site walk would be arranged for late that week or early the next.

On motion by Comm. Sevier to continue the Hearing to August 18, 2025, seconded by Comm. Cook, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Certificates of Compliance:

Berry: 4 Dawson Drive, DEP #301-1371

Coordinator Capone introduced Susan Berry and her contractor, Mike Ruggieri, noting that this project involved a significant stream restoration effort on Ms. Berry's property. She explained that drainage flowing in from a private development in Framingham had caused severe erosion, creating a deep gully and dangerously undercut banks in the backyard. The project aimed to restore the stream channel to a stable width and secure the banks for safety. She praised the work, calling it the best stream restoration project she had seen, and invited Mr. Ruggieri to describe it further.

Mr. Ruggieri introduced himself as representing New England Lake and Ground and outlined the project history. The Notice of Intent was submitted in 2022, and the restoration was substantially completed within three months. The work included rebuilding embankments, stabilizing the stream channel, and installing erosion control features. Natural materials such as coir logs and tree stumps were used to strengthen the banks. He explained that regular follow-ups had been conducted since completion to ensure stability, with failed vegetation promptly replaced. He confirmed that the site is now stable, plantings are thriving, and erosion issues have been resolved.

Comm. Porter asked about a feature visible in a submitted photograph. Mr. Ruggieri explained that it was an access pad created for heavy machinery, in an area where initial erosion had begun. That section was replanted with native species including blueberries, and native grasses, and reseeded multiple times until it stabilized.

Comm. Holtz noted his initial skepticism when the project was first presented but expressed admiration for the outcome. He asked about plantings on the steeper slopes, to which Mr. Ruggieri responded that red osier dogwood stakes were primarily used, supplemented with ferns and blue flag iris. While some dogwood stakes failed and were replaced, the majority have now taken root and spread successfully. Additional plantings, including a dogwood tree, have flourished, further stabilizing the site.

Chair Henkels commended Mr. Ruggieri's creativity and effective use of natural materials. With Commissioners expressing satisfaction, Henkels invited any final audience questions.

On motion by Comm. Holtz to issue the Certificate of Compliance, seconded by Comm. Sevier, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Other Business

Coordinator Capone reported on several ongoing projects. She began with the beaver deceiver installation at King Philip Woods, noting that at the last meeting the Commission had issued a negative Determination for the project. She explained that the work was completed by hand the previous Thursday and that the existing pipe was reused, allowing the installation without disturbing the beaver dam itself. The project involved placing an extension pipe with a cage into the pond, along with a second pipe downstream to prevent the beavers from quickly blocking the channel. She stated that when she visited the site earlier in the day, the pond was at the desired level, the flow of water had ceased, and the beavers had not yet discovered the system. She said the installation appeared functional, which allowed the town to proceed with the next phase of work, including restoration of Old Berlin Road and removal of invasive species.

She then reported on a volunteer who had assisted the office over the summer. With this help, the Commission created a new turtle management page on the town's website to explain the measures taken on Raymond Road. She noted that the Commission continued to receive many calls from residents about that project. She shared that on Friday, four turtles were observed using the culvert, showing that the animals had begun to adapt to the system and successfully cross under the road. She said turtle mortality on that stretch of Raymond Road had been significantly reduced this year. She acknowledged that some residents found the fencing visually unappealing, but emphasized that it had proven effective.

Coordinator Capone also described work at Davis Farm. She said that a brochure had been prepared to introduce the Davis Farm pollinator meadow project to residents. She explained that the field had initially been solarized with black plastic, which looked unsightly to some, but that the meadow had now bloomed into a diverse habitat. She reported that invasive species had been largely eliminated, though bittersweet, buckthorn, and mugwort remained. She explained that the meadow covered approximately one acre, successfully converted from forest to meadow. The Commission planned to distribute brochures on the trails and was also preparing signage. She described how visitors arriving from the parking lot on Route 117 walk down a farm road flanked by invasive species, before entering the meadow. She said the signs would help people distinguish between invasive and beneficial plants, with the goal of encouraging residents to apply these lessons at home.

Chair Henkels thanked Coordinator Capone, along with Joe Miller and Robert Bosso, for their work. Comm. Holtz commented that while the turtle fencing may be unsightly, it was preferable to the alternative of dead turtles. Coordinator Capone replied that she agreed, though she continued to receive complaints from residents about the fencing's appearance and hoped alternatives could be considered for next year.

Adjourn Meeting

On motion by Comm. Porter to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 PM, seconded by Comm. Cook, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.