



SUDBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting Minutes of Monday, July 13, 2026

Present: David Henkels, Chair; Ken Holtz, Vice Chair; Jeremy Cook; Harry Hoffman; Kasey Rogers; Mark Sevier; Victor Sulkowski; and Lori Capone, Conservation Coordinator

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

Wetland Applications:

Request for Determination of Applicability: 101, 142, 148, 195 North Road, RDA #26-12

Chair Henkels began the meeting for the project to decommission 16 groundwater monitoring wells within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, 200-foot Riverfront Area, Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, and Bordering Lands Subject to Flooding, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. Jaaly Schommer (Unisys Corporation) was the applicant.

Lyndsey Colburn, of ERM, presented the proposal to abandon 16 monitoring wells associated with the former Unisys facility. She explained that the site had experienced a release of volatile organic compounds and chlorinated solvents in the 1980s and had undergone a long history of groundwater and soil remediation. The project was in the final stages of groundwater remediation, and several monitoring wells that had shown concentrations below applicable action levels for several years were no longer being sampled and were proposed for decommissioning.

The wells were located in both Sudbury and Concord, with a similar application pending in Concord. Several wells were located on the Davis Field property operated by the Parks Department, while others were located near the former Sperry Research Center and existing buildings on North Road. Of the 16 wells proposed for decommissioning, three were outside resource areas and 13 were located within one or more resource areas, including areas where floodplain and Riverfront Area jurisdictions overlapped.

Ms. Colburn estimated that approximately 3 feet by 3 feet, or 9 square feet, would be disturbed at each well location to remove the well infrastructure. She stated that the estimate was conservative because the work would be performed by hand and some locations could involve less disturbance. A wetland delineation had been completed around the proposed well locations, although a comprehensive delineation of the properties had not been performed. Colburn noted that most wells were located at the edge of wetland resource areas or within the Buffer Zone and were accessible using existing footpaths or trails.

Ms. Colburn described the proposed means and methods. Workers would use hand tools to remove the well infrastructure. An ATV would be used where necessary to transport equipment along existing footpaths and trails, but it would not be used within Wetlands Protection Act jurisdictional areas. Equipment and fuel would remain outside the resource areas. Tools would then be transported from the ATV to the well locations by wheelbarrow or by hand.

At each location, workers would manually remove the concrete pad and loosen and remove the well casing. The PVC monitoring well would be cut at the ground surface or as far below the surface as practicable. The well would then be filled with grout to seal it and prevent a preferential pathway from the ground surface into the aquifer. The standpipe and remaining PVC would be removed from the site. The surrounding area would be raked to remove concrete fragments and other materials, and the disturbed area would be seeded with a New England wet mix or another appropriate seed mix.

Ms. Colburn stated that some groundwater could be generated during the grouting process. Because the wells had shown clean groundwater conditions for several years, contamination was not expected. Workers would attempt to pump water from the wells to accommodate the grout. Any groundwater generated would be discharged back to the location from which it originated, over erosion-control fabric or with booms to prevent scour. Colburn stated that the amount of water would be limited because the monitoring wells were small in diameter.

After the grout had set, a concrete plug would be installed at the top of the inner PVC casing, followed by clean fill and seed mix. All removed materials would be taken off site.

Ms. Colburn stated that the application was a Request for Determination of Applicability and that the applicant believed a negative Determination was appropriate because of the limited footprint, the use of hand tools, and restoration of the locations to existing conditions. She stated that the applicant was open to conditions imposed by the Commission.

Coordinator Capone reported that she had observed the decommissioning of several similar wells in Concord and found that the work was conducted sensitively. She did not have general concerns with the proposal but noted that several wells, primarily in the Davis Field area and adjacent to the Verrill Farm where a stream runs between the properties, were located within wetland resource areas and presented more difficult access conditions.

Coordinator Capone asked when the work was expected to occur, noting that the current dry conditions would be favorable but that access during the spring could be more difficult and result in greater impacts. Ms. Colburn stated that the work was proposed for the fall and that the applicant intended to conduct the work during drier conditions while allowing fall rainfall to assist with establishment of the seed mix before winter.

Ms. Colburn also noted that one well location shown in the photographs had substantial woody vegetation around it. Hand pruners would be used to cut back vegetation as necessary to provide sufficient room for the work crew to remove the concrete pad. She stated that the clearing would be limited and that any vegetation generated would be distributed rather than left in piles, so that it would not obstruct flow in the channel or create a hazard.

Coordinator Capone confirmed that representatives from ERM would oversee the contractor to ensure that the work was conducted appropriately. She recommended that the Commission issue a Negative Determination with conditions requiring a pre-construction meeting on site with the contractor and environmental monitor to review access points and proposed work at each wellhead; that all work be completed as detailed in the RDA, including the proposed staging, clearing, disturbance, and restoration measures; and that the applicant submit a completion report with photographs documenting restoration at each well.

Chair Henkels opened the discussion to Commissioner questions.

Comm. Hoffman asked how deep the wells were. Ms. Colburn stated that several were bedrock wells more than 150 feet deep, while others were shallow.

Comm. Hoffman asked what the wells were used to test. Ms. Colburn explained that they had been installed to monitor volatile organic compounds associated with the chlorinated solvent release discovered at the Unisys site in the 1980s. She noted that the contaminants could migrate through bedrock and travel significant distances.

Comm. Hoffman asked whether there was a reason to leave the wells in place for potential future testing. Ms. Colburn explained that the wells could degrade over time and potentially create migration pathways if they were no longer properly sealed. She also stated that wells left unused for an extended period might not provide representative samples because components such as the sand pack surrounding

the well screen could deteriorate or change over time. For those reasons, the applicant was proposing to remove and properly seal the wells rather than retain them for possible future use.

Comm. Hoffman asked whether one of the wells could be useful to the Town for PFAS testing. Coordinator Capone stated that the well in that area was the only location where PFAS had not been detected.

Comm. Sevier asked whether the PVC would be removed from the well casing. Ms. Colburn stated that the contractor would attempt to remove the PVC from shallower wells where feasible. For deeper wells, the PVC would generally remain in place and the well would be sealed because removing it could create a migration pathway between different aquifer zones. She stated that wells less than approximately 10 feet deep could generally be removed.

Comm. Sevier asked how the steel casing would be cut if necessary. Ms. Colburn stated that a power tool would be available for cutting the steel casing, but the contractor intended to minimize its use and, in most cases, would attempt to pry the concrete pad and casing out of the ground together. She explained that most of the wells were smaller than the one shown in the photograph and that the steel casing was primarily a protective casing around the top of the PVC.

Comm. Holtz asked about the broader remediation program, including the location of the original contamination, the number of wells remaining, and how the wells selected for decommissioning fit into the overall monitoring program. Ms. Colburn stated that the original release was located closer to the remaining building at the former facility and that the wells still being monitored were concentrated closer to that area. She did not have the current monitoring results available but stated that the contaminant plume was shrinking and receding toward the original release area. She also stated that concentrations were generally low and that the number of wells being sampled each year continued to decrease.

Comm. Holtz asked when another group of wells might be selected for decommissioning. Ms. Colburn explained that under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, sites in remedy operation status or post-remedy monitoring generally undergo a formal five-year review. Those reviews could include recommendations to eliminate additional monitoring wells.

Comm. Holtz noted that approximately 142 wells had originally been installed and that 16 were now proposed for decommissioning. He asked how many remained, considering the wells already decommissioned in Concord. Ms. Colburn stated that she did not know the current number. Christina Schauss stated that approximately 50 or 60 wells had been decommissioned in Sudbury and Concord about 10 years earlier. She was uncertain whether additional wells had been decommissioned before that period but estimated that approximately 20 to 30 wells might remain.

Comm. Hoffman asked whether there was a particular life expectancy for the wells. Ms. Colburn stated that there was not necessarily a fixed life expectancy and that wells could remain in good condition with proper maintenance and regular access. She stated that wells could be redeveloped or rehabilitated if they became clogged with sediment or lost their sand pack.

Comm. Hoffman stated that he found it notable that the monitoring wells represented a large set of instrumentation across the area and questioned whether the data could provide additional information before the wells were decommissioned. Ms. Colburn stated that a large data set was associated with the wells and that MassDEP's Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup maintained information concerning the groundwater concentrations, plume, and changes in the plume footprint over time.

Chair Henkels then asked Ms. Colburn to briefly explain the groundwater monitoring process. Ms. Colburn stated that, under the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup's Massachusetts Contingency Plan regulations, sites undergoing active remediation generally required quarterly monitoring of pertinent

wells. She stated that, as the site conceptual model developed and the effect of the remedy on concentrations became better understood, monitoring frequency could be reduced to semiannual or other intervals based on the data needs. Seasonal sampling could also be used to evaluate fluctuations in groundwater levels and concentrations.

Ms. Colburn stated that groundwater monitoring could include chemicals of concern as well as dissolved oxygen, temperature, and conductivity. These measurements could help evaluate naturally occurring degradation and determine whether the implemented remedy was affecting contaminant concentrations.

Chair Henkels asked whether the Sudbury Water District received detailed information from the monitoring program or worked with Unisys on additional monitoring. Ms. Colburn stated that she was not aware of such a relationship. She stated that the Water District would be aware of documented releases and could request monitoring data if the site were within the radius of influence of a water supply well or withdrawal point. She was not aware of that being the case for this site.

Chair Henkels asked whether the Water District would be notified that the well abandonment work was expected to occur in the fall and whether notification was necessary. Ms. Colburn stated that she did not believe there were regulatory requirements to notify the Water District of the well abandonment.

Chair Henkels asked how the original well locations had been selected. Ms. Colburn stated that groundwater flow direction was one factor used to determine monitoring locations. For bedrock wells, additional methods could include pump tests and transducer studies to determine connections within the bedrock aquifer. She stated that monitoring wells were used to triangulate the plume, with clean wells outside the plume and higher concentrations toward the center, allowing the monitoring network to establish the boundaries of the plume.

Chair Henkels asked whether the data generated from the project would be submitted to the state and whether state agencies would review it. Ms. Colburn stated that the state generally became more involved when a site was being closed. She stated that the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup did not necessarily comment on every report but typically audited sites that were closing and retained the ability to reopen closed sites.

Chair Henkels asked whether the owners of the Davis Field and farm properties had been notified of the proposed work. Ms. Colburn confirmed that the applicant had contacted the property owners, including the Town of Sudbury.

Chair Henkels asked whether there were any additional questions from the Commission or the public.

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

Notice of Intent: 94 Pride's Crossing Road, DEP #301-1455

Chair Henkels resumed the Hearing for the project to demolish an existing carriage house and construct a single-family house within the 100-foot Buffer Zone, pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act and Sudbury Wetlands Administration Bylaw. First Colony Development Co. was the applicant. This Hearing was continued from September 29, November 17, December 29, 2025, January 26, and April 6, 2026.

Coordinator Capone confirmed that the stormwater review remained in process. She stated that the applicant also needed to revise the applications to incorporate the other matters discussed during the Hearings.

On motion by Comm. Cook to continue the Hearing to July 27, 2026, seconded by Comm. Sevier, with Comm. Sulkowski abstaining, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Certificate of Compliance:

Kaye, 45 Normandy Drive, DEP #301-893

Coordinator Capone stated that the project had been discussed at a previous meeting and involved an addition to the house that required infiltration from the roof and shrub plantings as mitigation. She reported that the infiltration had been completed, while the shrub plantings had not been installed at the time of the previous discussion. She stated that the shrub plantings had since been installed and that the Order of Conditions did not require monitoring of the plantings. She concluded that the project was in compliance with the Order of Conditions and was ready for a Certificate of Compliance.

Chair Henkels asked whether there were questions from the Commission. He then invited members of the audience to ask their questions, if any.

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

Adjourn:

On motion by Comm. Hoffman to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 PM, seconded by Comm. Rogers, via roll call the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.