

TOWN OF AMHERST
Conservation Commission

May 27, 2026

APPROVED

In attendance: Steve Lutz (Chair), Jared Hardner (Vice Chair), Rob Clemens, Frank Montesanto, Christian Littlefield, Marion Kastner (alternate), Cynthia Dokmo, (Board of Selectmen ex-officio), Rich Hart (alternate)

Administrative:

1. Chair Comments

Steve Lutz called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was sent to the Commission, and it was noted that the end of the fiscal year is approaching. All invoices should be sent in shortly.

**Frank Montesanto moved to expend \$92.80 for wood to repair a kiosk from the Water Crossing Repair and Maintenance line. Seconded by Rob Clemens.
Vote: 5-0-0; motion approved unanimously.**

**Frank Montesanto moved to expend up to \$1,750 for wood for abutments for a bridge from the Water Crossing Repair and Maintenance line. Seconded by Rob Clemens.
Vote: 5-0-0; motion approved unanimously.**

Review Minutes (Apr 22, 2026)

Review of the minutes was tabled to the next meeting.

Special Topics & Presentations

CASE #: PZ20031-040626 – Golden Valley Way Holdings, LLC (Owner & Applicant), 30 Northern Boulevard, PIN #: 002-028-023. Conditional Use Permit. To impact wetlands and buffers to construct a contractor building and associated stockyard. *Zoned Industrial. Continued from May 6, 2026*

Jason Hill, TFMoran, explained that this property is south of Bon Terrain Drive in the Industrial Zone. This is a vacant property that has been partially cleared and some of the overburdened topsoil. This is effectively a sand pit with a perimeter of woodland and some wetlands. The town line with Hollis runs across the parcel. Witches Brook runs along the south of the parcel and there is an unnamed tributary to the north. This project proposes both temporary and permanent impacts to the buffer zones of those areas, but no direct impact to the wetland itself. The plan shows a new 10,000 s.f. shop in the central portion of the site and roughly a one acre storage yard on the south portion of the site. This will be used for storage for a small fleet of equipment. There will also be a small administrative component to the use for the contractor as part of the

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main building. The 100' buffer is shown as being impacted. The applicant received feedback from the Commission regarding inadequate compensation for the impacts to the resource area, along with other questions. The applicant then worked to scale back the design. The intention was to pave all the way to the town line, with a detention pond installed in Hollis. The storage yard area has been reduced by approximately 10,000 s.f. and paved area has also been reduced by approximately 10,000 s.f. As a result of the feedback received from the last meeting, the applicant moved the building as far as possible out of the buffer, though this is only approximately 5'-6', while still enabling the reasonable use of the property that his client is proposing. The direct impacts to the buffer have been reduced from moving the building and a restoration plan was drafted to mitigate the effects of the construction. There is a floodplain impact from the project, and the proposal is to mitigate the floodplain area by using a wetlands mix in the northern portion of the property. A plant mix was designed with appropriate seeding and mulching techniques to develop mitigation in the northern portion of the site. The applicant is also looking to restore some of the buffer itself, such as by planting an upland grass and shrub mix. A wetland buffer restoration zone is shown in green on the plan. Also, the applicant is looking to expand that zone further by using a wetland grass mix, which is designed to not be maintained, allowing for vegetation establishment in the long term. That area and the detention pond will be supplemented with different varieties of native upland shrubbery. Finally, there are areas of overburdened sand and gravel throughout the site which have a habitat value for certain species. These areas are proposed to remain the long term. The applicant has moved all of the impacts out of the Witches Brook buffer. Impacts, where necessary, are now being made to the unnamed tributary. The applicant is proposing to create a terrain feature approximately 80'x5'-6' tall as a turtle nesting habitat zone.

Jason Hill stated that the applicant continues to work with DES and Fish & Wildlife Management. This project requires a shoreland permit and this has been issued. The applicant submitted a conditional use permit (CUP) for the impacts to the wetland buffer with the Planning Board. The applicant has met once with the Planning Board and there is a site walk scheduled next Thursday. The applicant will be back before the Planning Board on the 17th.

Jared Hardner stated that the Commission will be focused on the 100' buffer. He asked what will be done within the proposed structure. Jason Hill stated that the applicant does not intend on doing any heavy or common maintenance on the site. The building will be used for other purposes. The vehicles will be cleaned at a commercial fleet maintenance facility. There is no intention for typical daily washing of any equipment on the site or any long term or regular equipment maintenance within either the building or the yard. Jared Hardner asked what will be done in the large building. Jason Hill explained that the applicant plans on expanding in the future and is investing money in a large building now. There will be an opportunity to temporarily bring in a trailer to unload some of their equipment and/or dry products and other things. This will be a high bay warehouse for a lot of equipment and product storage.

Jared Hardner asked the nature of the business. Jason Hill stated that this is a commercial paving contractor. This will be a small scale business with a small fleet of vehicles, likely less than ten. Jared Hardner noted that this property is located in the Aquifer Protection District. There are

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specific restrictions as to what can be stored in the building. He stated that it seems as though an asphalt business would potentially have petroleum-based products in storage. He asked what else might be in the building, if not items related to asphalt or machine maintenance. Jason Hill stated that the applicant does not require a CUP for the AP District in terms of how the site is proposed to be utilized. The applicant does not even meet the criteria because there will be no allowed storage of regulated substances over a certain size and other types of things, including seal coating and other things such as 55 gallon sized drum. This applicant is not proposing to store any illegal quantities of regulated materials in the District. He does not show a hose bib on the plan which would be used for pressure washing. The applicant recognizes that there could be residual material that can come off the equipment and so there will be petroleum separator devices installed as part of the stormwater management system to catch any hydrocarbons.

With regard to some of the footprint being the in buffer, Jared Hardner stated that there is an impact from an impermeable surface in the form of a paved yard and the building. It is unclear the square feet calculation for this. The requirement is to then offset that in such a way that ecological function is maintained, if not improved. He asked about the thinking regarding the compensatory flood storage and if there is a calculation for the compensation as proposed. Jason Hill stated that the location of the proposed building is technically within the 100' flood zone AE. As such, the applicant is providing compensatory mitigation to create more storage than what is being filling. The applicant is required to mitigate for the fill placed in the floodplain. This is a requirement of flood insurance Most towns have a floodplain management office, or this is administered through the Building Department. Rob Clemens asked if the compensatory area is specifically for the area taken up by the proposed building. Jason Hill stated that it is for a section of the building based on the topography. A corner of the building is set inside the floodplain at elevation 197. Work inside the floodway would not be allowed. This is the minimum program needed to make the proposed use practical. The impacted areas will be under an acre, having been reduced since last month. The proposed building will have much less load and impact on the wetland buffer than the yard. This is a passive use which is more appropriate. It also works better for the site grading components, minimizing the required cuts and fill. From the applicant's point of view, it is also the most efficient way of accessing and egressing the site and to operate the business. Also, it will be closer to the septic system, which is on the northern portion of the site.

Jared Hardner stated that the site is very sandy. In terms of the proposed compensatory flood storage that the applicant is hoping will turn into a wetland, he asked how the water will be maintained in that area as it will likely drain out quickly. Jason Hill stated that he would either place a clay liner at the bottom of it or a better idea might be to excavate it below the wetland elevation.

Rob Clemens asked about a stockpile area that was originally proposed to be located in Hollis. Jason Hill explained that this was proposed as an extension of an existing stockpile in the south of the site. It has since been reduced in size and made a permanent habitat zone in a more northerly location of the site. This means that any material will need to be made an appropriate sand/loam mix before it is dumped the area will then be grassed accordingly. Rob Clemens asked

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if it is currently serving as a turtle habitat in Hollis. Jason Hill stated that there is an existing stockpile in that area. The proposed stockpile will be made up of material from the site. Excess material will need to be hauled offsite.

Rob Clemens stated that there is a 50' conservation easement bordering the site on the northeast side. He asked if there are restrictions associated with it. Jason Hill stated that the easement was never executed. It was shown on a plan to be conveyed, but never formally conveyed.

Rob Clemens stated that the Commission's previous comments suggested reducing the stockyard area, which was done in part. The Commission also asked about a stormwater feature in the wetland buffer, which Hollis took care of but stating that it cannot be in Hollis. Jason Hill stated that it could be located in Hollis, but the permit requests were pulled because they were unnecessarily complicating the project. Rob Clemens stated that the Commission suggested moving the building out of the wetland buffer entirely and 5'-6' does not quite do this. He asked why the building cannot be reduced and moved to an upland area. Jason Hill stated that this would introduce other grading challenges based on the topography. The ground in low in other areas of the site and would change the drainage to be lower in the ground. The pond would be in the buffer zone, along with traffic activity of the site. DES wants to keep wildlife from the yard.

Frank Montesanto stated that a vehicle maintenance pad was previously shown on the plan. Jason Hill stated that this was on the wrong sheet and is meant to be used only during the construction phase to wash off vehicles. This is part of the construction phase BMP.

Frank Montesanto asked about temporary storage of materials on the parking lot. Jason Hill stated that there may be occasional nights for storing millings. There is no proposed storage of aggregate or landscape materials. Frank Montesanto noted that the parking lot will need to be plowed and treated. Jason Hill stated that the yard may not be maintained in the off season.

Frank Montesanto stated that 10,000 s.f. was mentioned as the ideal size for the business, but it was also mentioned that the applicant hopes to grow into the space. Jason Hill stated that this is engineering and construction economics. This is a phased project. The first phase will be a 1,500 s.f. paved storage yard, rough grading and mitigation. Within five years, the building will begin construction for phase 2, along with the rest of the yard.

Christian Littlefield stated that the site is constrained in size, but this is also a proposed asphalt paving contractor next to the aquifer and wetlands.

Rob Clemens asked if there is any bedrock on the site. Jason Hill stated that there is not. Rob Clemens stated that the site would allow for the building location to be moved. Jason Hill stated that the grades around the perimeter may not allow for this. The building should be higher than the road, leading the drainage down and away.

Steve Lutz stated that the size of the proposed building and its intrusion into the wetlands, along with the comments that the applicant is looking to grow into the business, seems to lead to

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further discussion. He is concerned that the proposed business use will create the potential for storage on the site.

Rob Clemens suggested that Commissioners join the site walk on June 4th with the Planning Board.

The Commission agreed to continue to compile its comments for the Planning Board.

CASE #: PZ20036-050826 – Geoffrey and Lisa Jones (Owners and Applicants), 35 Thornton Ferry Road I, PIN #: 006-111-002. Conditional Use Permit. To depict the proposed construction of a non-riverine wetland crossing and paved driveway within 50' of the WWCD buffer and proposed stormwater management for proposed barn. *Zoned Residential/Rural*

Aspyn Kutz, Meridian Land Services, explained that the proposal is for a non-riverine wetland crossing on the property to access buildable upland, which is otherwise inaccessible. This is a lower functioning system. The applicant is seeking relief from impacts to the 50' wetland buffer for the building of a crossing and an associated driveway. The applicant plans to implement some stormwater management techniques to mitigate any excess runoff in the form of drip edges and a common infiltration trench.

Jared Hardner noted that these mitigation items are outside of the buffer and he would put these in the minimizing column. He asked about other actions being taken to enhance the wetland functions and values that are affected by the proposed work. Aspyn Kutz stated that there will be a scour control and the outlet of the current culvert offsite to lessen the impact of the slope. There will be erosion controls and minimized tree clearing. Jared Hardner noted that these items also fall into the minimizing category. A requirement of the CUP is to offset the impacts. After the minimization actions, there will still be a residual impact which must be compensated for. An example could be rehabilitating previously impacted wetland buffer areas and bringing them back to a natural state. Jared Hardner asked that this requirement be addressed as part of a future meeting.

In response to a question from Rob Clemens, Aspyn Kutz proposed barn in the upland area outside of the buffer. Rob Clemens asked if the barn could be put closer to the house. Aspyn Kutz stated that there is limited space due to a wetland transecting the front of the entire property. Placing the barn elsewhere on the property would lead to larger impacts on the buffer.

Jared Hardner stated that the area for the proposed driveway seems forested. Aspyn Kutz stated that this is an existing forested wetland on the left side of the house. Much of this vegetation will need to be removed for the proposed driveway. Jared Hardner stated that the proposal will remove mature, woody, forested vegetation and compensating for this will be difficult at this site. Aspyn Kutz stated that it is at the toe of the slope and is quite vegetated. This area drains into a riverine system further down the property.

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Steve Lutz suggested that the applicant work through the comments given by the Commission and come back at a later date.

Lisa Jones, owner/applicant, stated that one of the reasons that there are wetlands on the property is due to drainage from Thornton Ferry Road I. There is not a large amount of standing water in this area, and this is the Town's water. Jared Hardner stated that it is up to the applicant's wetlands scientist to tell the Commission what type of wetland this is and the buffers it requires. If a wetland was created from the construction of the road, this project could be exempt from the requirements. This should be further worked through with the applicant's representative.

Steve Lutz stated that the Commission would work to draft any comments from this evening's meeting.

CASE #: PZ20037-050826 – The Antonia G. Dinkel Revocable Trust (Owner and Applicant), 3 Beldens Mill Lane, PIN #: 018-043-000. Conditional Use Permit. This proposal intends to raze a preexisting garage and reconstruct a 28'x24' detached garage, reconfigure the existing driveway, and install stormwater management techniques within the WWCD. *Zoned Residential/Rural*

Taylor Dessureault, Meridian Land Services, stated that the subject parcel is approximately 13.7 acres and has frontage on both Beaver Brook Circle and Courthouse Road. The subject parcel is bisected by Beaver Brook, with the existing residential development clustered on the westerly side. The existing improvements on site include a primary structure, detached garage, and some accessory structures. The existing developed area that is westerly of Beaver Brook is subject to the New Hampshire DES Shoreland Zone which is 250' from the ordinary high watermark of Beaver Brook. The subject parcel is also entirely located within the town of Amherst's Wetland and Watershed Conservation District (WWCD). There is a 100' buffer for this shown on the plan. The proposal intends to demolish the existing garage and reconstruct a 24'x28' garage located within the WWCD. The proposed garage will not encroach further towards any jurisdictional wetland areas on site nor towards the adjacent property line building setback. The proposal will slightly reduce the overall impervious area on site. The project also intends to modify the existing driveway configuration and includes the installation of a proposed infiltration trench to line the driveway once reconfigured and a proposed drip edge along the side of the garage. This will improve the overall drainage patterns on site and improve the stormwater infiltration on site, creating a net improvement as the existing development does not contain any sort of stormwater infrastructure. The total permanent disturbance included within this proposal, associated with the driveway reconfiguration and the reconstruction of the garage, will be 3,603 s.f. The total temporary disturbance that will be restored to vegetated areas post construction will be 2,221 s.f. The proposal will utilize areas of previous disturbance. It will not impact any mature forest or vegetated buffer areas. It does not include the removal of native woody vegetation on site nor any jurisdictional wetland impact. The proposed work area will be bounded with a double erosion control technique, including silt sock and silt fence. This will remain in place until construction is complete and the soil is stabilized. A standard DES Shoreland Permit application was filed through the scope of work completed within 250' of

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Beaver Brook and is still pending, with a response anticipated by June 7th. The applicant sought conservation measures through the DES ecological review for the identified rare species potentially within the project area.

Jared Hardner asked if the existing garage and the new garage will be the same size. Taylor Dessureault explained that the existing garage is about 20' which runs perpendicular and then extends approximately 26.5'. The proposed garage will be 24'x28', resulting in a 3.5' expansion towards the primary structure and a 1.5' expansion into the existing impervious area of the gravel driveway. Technically all of the proposed impervious area improvements are located within existing impervious or disturbance areas. Jared Hardner asked if the impervious surface area will remain equivalent. Taylor Dessureault stated that there will be a 35 s.f. reduction.

Jared Hardner asked about the change in configuration of the driveway. Taylor Dessureault stated that it will hold a 12' width. The additional parking space will be squared up. The driveway will go from 2,882 s.f. to 2,623 s.f. The intention is to have the driveway paved. The compensatory measure is to improve the stormwater drainage along the driveway and adjacent to the proposed garage. The intent is for the site to function better overall based on the proposed changes.

Rob Clemens stated that he cannot remember an application where the entire residence and project was within the 100' buffer. He asked who let this project get built. Taylor Dessureault stated that this occurred a long time ago. Rob Clemens asked where the water from the driveway will go during a large rain event. Taylor Dessureault explained that both the infiltration trench and the drip edge have a perforated pipe and under drains adjacent to the driveway. This will not result in a sheet flow runoff during high precipitation events. The daylight for the infiltration trench is at the forest edge, and the daylight for the drip edge is at an existing stonewall.

Steve Lutz stated that the Commission would draft its comments to send along to the Planning Board.

CASE #: PZ20038-050826 – Marmon Utility, LLC (c/o Grant Bonczar) (Owner); Schroeder Construction Management, Inc. (c/o David Schroeder) (Applicant); 116 Route 101A; PIN #: 002-042-000. Non-Residential Site Plan Amendment. To relocate two (2) existing silos from interior to exterior of building, install concrete pad and pave existing gravel drive. *Zoned Commercial*

Steve Lutz explained that he included this because it was unclear if there are any impacts proposed to the wetland buffers, but upon reviewing the plans, it does not appear that there will be. The Commission agreed that there were no concerns on this item and would forward along these comments to the Planning Office.

Other Business

- Baboosic Lake Alum Treatment Project

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310 Rob Clemens explained that he previously broached the idea of contributing some nominal
311 amount of funding to the Baboosic Lake Alum Treatment Project as a gesture of the ACC's
312 interest in seeing the water quality improved. He noted that the state is involved with regard to
313 the planning and oversight of the project. Also, the proposed project will benefit the Town
314 portion of the lake beach based on the overall improvement of cyanobacteria outbreaks. A
315 contribution would show the Commission's interest in the largest surface water body in Town.
316 He suggested something between \$2,500-\$5,000 max from the Gift Account because.

317

318 Jared Hardner stated that he has reviewed the satellite imagery of the area and is negatively
319 impressed by how little is being done by the landowners with waterfront property to control the
320 amount of nutrients entering the water. He has observed lawns that go right up to the edge of the
321 lake and ones with artificial beaches which are a very significant source of phosphorus.
322 Additionally, he has seen very green, obviously chemically treated, lawns. He asked why
323 chemical treatments are being paid for when people who have the waterfront property are not
324 properly caring for it. A constructive idea would be to use this as an opportunity to present a
325 challenge to those landowners, to state that the Commission would be willing to help if the
326 landowners could explain how they plan to reduce nutrient loading in the lake. The intention
327 should not be to continue retreating the lake and the landowners need to have skin in the game.

328

329 Steve Lutz agreed. He stated that the Commission would like to work toward a positive result
330 instead of retreating based on the nutrient loading not going down based on other factors. He
331 asked what will occur if there is not enough funding collected for the project. Rob Clemens
332 stated that the contractor will not likely begin the treatment unless funding is in place.

333

334 Frank Montesanto stated that it seems to be a waste of money to just do this as a show of support
335 when there seems to be funding available for the project.

336

337 Christian Littlefield stated that he believes it would be best to contribute toward something that
338 will help make the lake better.

339

340 Marion Kastner suggested additional collaboration with the Baboosic Lake Association. This
341 could help with ongoing education to landowners. The Commission agreed that this would be a
342 good next step.

343

- 344 • Buck Meadow Update

345

346 Jared Hardner noted that there has been continuous interest in the accessibility of trails in Town.
347 There are 50 miles of trails in Town, but there are not many that one would feel comfortable
348 walking on if they had any disability or other type of accessibility issues. The obvious place for
349 an accessible trail would be Buck Meadow. The Rec Department is at the end of the design
350 process for the fields, and he asked them to consider the topography in terms of an accessible
351 trail. He noted that the Commission will be asked to pay for the cost of the accessible trail. The
352 Commission agreed that this item should continue to move forward.

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- Joppa Farm Trail Improvement Update

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356 Christian Littlefield explained that the contract timeframe for this work is August 17-28. Access
357 to the trail during the work period will be addressed and there are a couple of workarounds.

358

- July 4th Celebration Update

360

361 Rich Hart gave an update on the July 4th table proposal.

362

- Other Items

364

365 Laura Taylor introduced herself to the Commission as a possible new alternative member. The
366 Commission agreed that it would send a recommendation for acceptance to the Board of
367 Selectmen.

368

369 **Rob Clemens moved to accept Laura Taylor as an alternate to the Commission.**

370 **Seconded by Jared Hardner.**

371 **Vote: 5-0-0; motion approved.**

372

373 **Christian Littlefield moved to adjourn at 8:53pm. Seconded by Jared Hardner.**

374 **Vote: 5-0-0; motion approved.**

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376

377 *Respectfully submitted,*

378 *Kristan Patenaude*