



City of Nashua
Conservation Commission
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NASHUA CONSERVATION COMMISSION

September 2, 2026

A. Call to order

A regular meeting of the Nashua Conservation Commission was called to order on Wednesday, September 2, 2026 at 7:00 PM, 229 Main Street, City Hall.

B. Roll call

Members present:

Sherry Dutzy, Chair
Dick Widhu, Vice Chair
Carol Sarno
Will Darby
Gloria McCarthy

Brandon Pierotti (Absent)
Amanda Griffith (Absent)
Dale Carruth (Absent)

Also, in Attendance: Deb Chisholm, Sustainability Manager.

C. Approval of minutes

August 4, 2026

MOTION to approve minutes as amended by Commissioner Sarno.
Seconded by Commissioner Dutzy

MOTION CARRIED

D. Old Business:
NONE

E. New Business:

Eric Newman, 5 Roby Street. Proposal to fill, grade and stabilize 1,435 SF of the wetland buffer for a prime wetland, to create a small level back yard, while controlling invasive knotweed. Map 126. Lot 23. Zone R-A - Urban Residence. Ward 6.

Eric Newman, the owner of 5 Roby Street led a presentation on his

request to fill, grade, and stabilize 1,435 square feet of wetland buffer for a prime a prime wetland to create a small level backyard while controlling the invasive knotweeds. Mr. Newman purchased the property in June of 2025 and encountered a massive infestation of Japanese knotweed, which he described as a six-foot sea of Japanese knotweed next to his driveway. In September of 2025 Mr. Newman began manually digging out the root systems without chemical herbicides due to safety concerns for his dog, son, and the nearby wetland ecosystem. Rob Sousa, City of Nashua Code Enforcement officer, was alerted and informed Mr. Newman to cease all work within the regulated zone and required. Mr. Newman consulted with Deb Chisholm who provided him with information on the restrictions, setbacks, and recommended hiring a wetland expert. Mr. Newman stated he is not looking to build on this area and more to possibly provide a safe children's play space and to store a small boat and canoe.

Mark West, a certified wetland scientist from West Environmental in Nottingham, NH introduced himself and presented that he was hired to formally delineate the wetland boundaries on the property. Mark West stated that no trees have been cut during the work. The site maintains a mature forest canopy for the first 35 feet along the wetland boundary. Mr. West emphasized the importance of leaving the canopy of trees, which actually provides shade and may help a little with the reduction, and expansion of knotweed. The burning bush in the shrub layer will be left. The topography features an abrupt downslope leading to a steep, 15 to 20-foot drop-off from the flat work area down toward the wetland. The upper portion of the wetland contains historical fill and functions as an active groundwater seep. Two large storm drains at the end of Oakland Ave discharge high volumes of stormwater into the wetland, creating an active system, depositing sediment, and causing scouring.

Mr. Newman expressed he was not provided any notice of the site being a former federal asbestos waste disposal site upon purchase of the home in June of 2025. Nor was there anything on the title or deed. Deb Chisholm provided information that this site was capped with a protective barrier that is partially located on the property, extending onto neighboring properties at 15 and 17 Roby Street and to the south. This capped asbestos area does not extend into the current planning or work zone and will not be disturbed.

Mark West indicated that the outer portion of the buffer zone was disturbed during the initial manual removal of the knotweed. Protective and restorative measures include planting native shrubs and maintaining the mature pine and oak trees to preserve the

wetland shading, stability, habitat, and runoff protection. The property features a larger natural buffer to the wetland compared to adjacent houses further down the street

Commissioner Sarno asked if all of the knotweed was within the buffer.

Mr. Newman responded saying that a lot of it is in the buffer. He was able to manually remove about 75% of the knotweed behind and next to the garage (outside the buffer zone) during his first year of ownership. Mr. Newman noted that chemical applications have been avoided and stated he is strongly against the use of chemicals for this control because of the nature of the sensitive area.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT PHOTOS PROVIDED AND THE LOCATION OF THE KNOTWEED WITHIN THE BUFFER AREA AND WHAT IS STILL THERE.

Commissioner Sarno asked what procedure was done when dealing with this knotweed.

Mr. Newman explained he researched control methods through global knotweed support group of scientists and homeowners. Methods evaluated included chemical sprays, stem injections, plastic tarp smothering (deemed unfeasible due to the steep slope), and digging and burying.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT THE DISPOSAL OF THE CLEARED-OUT KNOTWEED

Commissioner Dutzy asked what Mr. Newman intended on doing with the level space.

Mr. Newman responded by stating he did not have any intention of planting grass or lawn there. Bring in soil to continue to manage it. Possibly wood chips to place a small playground in the future.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT THE FILL BROUGHT IN AND A TREE NEAR THE FILL AREA.

Commissioner Darby asked what kind of fill was brought in, what percentage was filled and what percentage more is left to fill in.

Mr. Newman stated he had 40 yards of clean, rocky soil, with no debris or trash fill brought in from James Longa of Merrimack, NH. And about 40 additional yards of clean fill are required to complete the leveling work and extend the knotweed management area.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT TARPING THE KNOTWEED IN THE ASBESTOS AREA.

Site walk is scheduled for Monday, September 14th, at 5:30pm

F. NCC Correspondence and Communications

G. Commissioners Discussion

JOYCE PARK TRAIL CLEANUP:

Commissioner Widhu spoke about leading an invasive plant clearing at Joyce Park along with a couple of volunteers. The target date is the end of September. Commissioner Dutzy encouraged other members to volunteer to scout out the areas needing attention and to help with the cleanup. Commissioner Darby volunteered.

STUDENT DAYS OF SERVICE PLANNING:

Commissioner Sarno led a discussion on two major volunteer events scheduled for local student groups.

- Rivier University Day of Service: Saturday, October 3, from 9:45am-12:45pm.
- Bishop Guertin (BG) Day of Service: Thursday, November 5th, from 9:30am-1:30pm.

TERRELL MEADOW MAINTENANCE AND EQUIPMENT STATUS:

Commissioner Dutzy attempted to mow at Terrell but the lawnmower would not start. She will inspect the mower over the weekend to determine if the engine was flooded. If it remains non-operational, they will transport it to Mike Maynard's shop for repair. Heavy vegetation growth has occurred along the walking trail leading up to the restored meadow. The commission previously hired a professional brush hogger in 2018. The historical recommendation is to brush hog the meadow every three to five years to halt woody plant succession.

BUCKMEADOW MAINTENANCE PLANNING:

Commissioner Sarno lead a discussion about Buckmeadow due for periodic maintenance. The landscaper who cleared the boardwalk at Buckmeadow is working on an estimate to complete the brush hogging work. He will need to rent the necessary heavy machinery.

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Commissioner Sarno lead a discussion recommending the hiring of a professional to draft a comprehensive, long-term invasive species management plan.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT DEALING WITH ALL THE INVASIVE(S)

The commission reviewed external planning resources:

- The Belmont Conservation Commission hired an outside professional to conduct a comprehensive invasive species assessment.
- The Town of Merrimack partnered with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) to develop an invasive species management plan.
- The Merrimack Trails Committee is currently developing a similar plan.

Terrell Farm and Buckmeadow Road are the priority target areas. Joyce Park is heavily infested but is considered "beyond help at this point."

Two members will research professional contacts from Merrimack and Belmont, request a site walkthrough, and secure quotes. Municipal rules require three competitive quotes for expenditures of \$5,000 threshold.

102 Flint Lock Drive Infraction:

Commissioner Dutzy asked Deb Chisholm for an update on the unauthorized tree cutting that was done on this property in September of 2025. The matter remains on hold due to a similar ongoing infraction case.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ABOUT REVISING THE LAND USE CODE TO ADDRESS UNAUTHORIZED CUTTING.

GREELEY PARK MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Darby discussed that he is on the Greeley park advisory board. There is a dense pine forest behind the park that contains significant deadfall and storm debris. Some community members oppose any tree cutting, while others argue the forest is unhealthy. Commissioner Darby was looking for clarification on

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Conservation Commissions role on this advisory board. The conservation commission recommends that the Park Commission undertake a formal forest management plan.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ON THE CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN.

H. Committee Reports

I. Public Comment Related to Items on the Agenda -

NONE

J. Nonpublic Session per. RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) lands (Roll call vote required).

NONE

K. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Commissioner Darby at 8:18 PM

SECONDED by Commissioner Widhu

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting notes taken by Nichole Wilkins