

Town of Canaan
Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting, August 18, 2025

Members Present: Mark Burdick, Brant Burz, Susan Kelsey, Ellery Sinclair

Others Present: Patrick Hackett, engineer

Meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Chairman Burdick. Minutes of July 21, 2025 were reviewed. Motion made by Sinclair to approve minutes as presented; seconded by Burz; passed unanimously.

Public Input: None

By consensus, agenda order was changed to accommodate Hackett who submitted application on behalf of Warren Whitaker.

New Business:

1. **Warren Whitaker Application, 67 Undermountain Road:** Hackett, engineer for Whitaker, submitted a check, application and engineering plans for dam and waterway work. Sinclair made a motion to accept application for review; seconded by Kelsey; passed unanimously. Application calls for the repointing of three dams associated within a watercourse transecting the Whitaker property. Estimated watershed area of said watercourse is 80 acres. Sediment within the three small ponds associated with each dam is proposed to be removed (total of 95 cubic yards). Sediment in a fourth pond located nearer Undermountain Road is also proposed to be removed (an additional 10 cubic yards). Removed sediment will be transported across the road to a flat area of other Whitaker property and spread. John LaPorta will be doing masonry and Josh Tyson, the excavating. Hackett assured members that the spread spoils will not be subject to migration. Permanent turf reinforcement mat will be installed at the toe of the slope of each dam to enhance stability. Kelsey made a motion to approve the application with the following findings and conditions:

Findings:

1. There are four small ponds situated within a watercourse that have silted in and are in need of dredging.
2. Three of the ponds have dams that are in need of repair.
3. It is proposed that the four ponds be cleaned out and spoils be spread across the road on other lands of Whitaker.
4. Area to receive spoils is level, ensuring spoils will remain in place.
5. Erosion control measures have been addressed in submitted plan (i.e. silt fencing, haybales and permanent turf reinforcement).

Conditions:

1. Erosion Control Measures are to follow those as detailed in submitted plan dated August 18, 2025 and titled "Whitaker Ponds, 67 Undermountain Road, Canaan, Pond & Waterway Work and Pond Cleanup".
2. Permitted activity will occur only during dry conditions.
3. Only one pond will be repaired and cleaned out at a time.
4. Area over which spoils are transported will remain stable at all times.
5. Pat Hackett will serve as contact person for the project (203.788.9959; prh@prhackett.com).

Motion seconded by Sinclair; passed unanimously.

Old Business:

1. **Elm Tree Treatment:** The Commission was notified that the elm tree on Brewster Road has been treated by Bartlett. Kelsey noted that she observed dead limbs in the upper canopy of the tree and that this should be closely monitored prior to making decisions for future treatment.
2. **Cobble Road Upgrade Update:** None.
3. **Street Tree Management Strategy Planning:** Sinclair reported having communicated with tree warden Bruce Bennett. Bennett has offered to guide our town in planning for the management of the town's street trees. Kelsey will talk to Tim Downs of our highway department to apprise him of Bennett's offer and of the Commission's commitment to work with both the Town and Bennett in planning for our trees long-term management. Members will discuss this further at our September meeting.
4. **New Commission Members:** No update.
5. **Wetlands Mitigation Grant Update:** Kelsey reported having researched said grant and recommended that the Commission be proactive in next year's round of the grant to get interested parties on board to apply for this grant. Funding is through the Army Corps of Engineers. The grant awards funding for wetlands-related projects in several distinct categories, one of which is for projects contributing to the protection of wetlands, of which Cobble Road repair/stabilization might qualify.

New Business:

1. **Messing/Mailick Application, 15 Belden Street:** An application and check were received from Albert Messing and Marsha Mailick. Burdick had visited the site. Members reviewed the application and had several questions regarding the proposed activity (i.e. Where will removed materials be deposited? Is the whole length of the driveway to be resurfaced or just the parking area? Are they resurfacing driveway with gravel or asphalt?). Sinclair made a motion that the Commission not accept the application for action due to the application not being complete; seconded by Burz; passed unanimously. Burdick will inform the applicants of the Commission's action and will query what their preference is in regards to their submitted check.
2. **Town Roadside Mowing:** Burdick commented on the town's roadsides not being mowed back as far as they have been in years past. He questioned if this was due to a lack of manpower, or broken machinery, or budget constraints. Safety concerns and encroachment of invasives resulting from this reduction in mowing was discussed. Kelsey will speak to selectmen to shed light on this matter. Burdick seemed to recall in the last Town Plan of Conservation and Development, control of invasives was addressed. Kelsey will research past minutes and the TPOC&D to see if the issue of invasives was included.

Routing Sheets: None.

Communications: None.

Motion to adjourn made by Sinclair at 8:43 p.m.; seconded by Burz; passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kelsey, secretary

