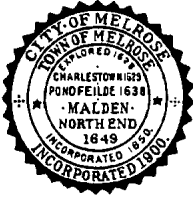


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CITY OF MELROSE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MICHAEL PAIEWONSKY
Chair

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 979-4312
Fax - (781) 979-4290

Melrose Conservation Commission Minutes for January 15, 2026

Present: Michael Paiewonsky, Paul Moore, Jason Jancaitis, Craig Molway, Charles McCabe, and Associate members Dorian Rose and Cole Lepler

Absent: Forrest Tiedeman and Emily Anderson

Staff present: Ingrid Winkler

Chair Paiewonsky opened the public meeting at 7:30pm. All members participated in person.

Public Comment:

Philip Morgan of 11 Sargent Street was present. He is concerned about the dumpsters at Whole Foods along the fence near Franklin Field. He had previously spoken to the Health Department about this as well. Mr. Morgan said that trash was blowing from the unsecured dumpsters onto the fields and that maintenance in that area is restricted due to the presence of wetlands. He also mentioned that the fence is compromised. Mr. Paiewonsky said that he will look into the matter.

Review of Minutes/Correspondence:

Conservation Commission members reviewed draft minutes from the December 18, 2025, meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to approve meeting minutes for the December 18, 2025, meeting, seconded by Mr. Moore. Motion was approved 5-0.

Request for Certificate of Compliance – DEP # 217-0223

Continued from December 18, 2025

Owner/Applicant: Anthony Natale

Project Location: 110 Sycamore Road

Representatives: Meera Cousens and Troy Stearns of Civil Design Consultants, Inc. (CDCI)

Project Description: Expansion of an existing home with three additions within the 100-foot buffer zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW).

Conservation Commission will hold off on this matter until after discussion of the Notice of Intent (NOI).

Public Hearing:

Notice of Intent – DEP # 217-0235

Continued from December 18, 2025

Owner/Applicant: Anthony and Erin Natale were present

Project Location: 110 Sycamore Road

Documents Submitted: Drainage Summary (12-01-2025), Site Plan (12-01-2025), Revised Drainage Summary (01-12-2026), Revised Site Plan (01-12-2025)

Representatives: Meera Cousens and Troy Stearns of CDCI were present

Project Description: Submitted after work was completed on the property, including installation of an in-ground pool, patio, pergola, outdoor kitchen, widening of the driveway, and landscaping partially within the 100-foot buffer zone to BVW, and which impacted wetland resource areas and associated buffer zones.

Based on the initial NOI submission, specifically the Drainage Summary, the Conservation Commission is considering requiring an independent peer review at the applicant's expense, as permitted under the Wetland Protection Ordinance, §231-4.D. The Commissioners had requested that the drainage calculations be double-checked by the engineer for more precision and accuracy and use of more appropriate units (square feet for area, cubic feet for volume, more than one significant digit and less rounding) and then resubmit for further consideration.

DPW/Engineering also had comments on the drainage report and asked for revisions that

- Include the area of pervious pavers in the impervious area calculations; but the reservoir course below can be used as storage areas
- Provide cross-section details of the installed pervious paver and reservoir course.

CDCI provided revised versions of the Site Plan and Drainage Summary on January 12 and presented the changes made in the revisions at this meeting.

Ms. Cousens began her presentation with some background about the property. She said the NOI was filed in response to a cease-and-desist letter sent by the Conservation Commission to address the Commission's concerns about unpermitted work done at the property and to bring the property into compliance. An Order of Conditions (OOC) was issued to Mr. Natale in 2023 for additions to the existing home. Ms. Cousens said that the additions were constructed in accordance with the OOC. In 2024, however, additional unpermitted improvements were made to the property, including installation of an in-ground pool, a permeable paver patio, walkways and driveway, resulting in impacts to wetland resources (floodplain and buffer zone to BVW).

CDCI calculated the extent of the impacts and proposed a plan for remediation. Based on a base flood elevation (BFE) of 103.7 (developed from Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) documents of abutting properties), approximately 1,300 square feet of floodplain area was impacted resulting in a flood storage loss of approximately 20 cubic yards. To address the flood storage loss, CDCI proposes re-grading the northern portion of the property where a bocce court had been located. According to CDCI, the pre-construction storage volume was 616 cubic feet and the post-construction conditions will provide 708 cubic feet of storage volume, an increase of 92 cubic feet, with equal volumes of storage provided at each elevation where storage is lost.

Mr. Natale provided the spec sheets for the permeable pavers that he says were used for construction of the patio, walkways, and driveway. This information was used to analyze pre- and post-construction runoff.

According to Ms. Cousens, in the initial drainage analysis submitted on December 1, 2025, CDCI took a conservation approach and did not take full credit for storage beneath the permeable pavers. Instead, they assumed the permeable pavers function similarly to paved surfaces but with slightly reduced runoff. The Engineering Department had reviewed the initial drainage analysis and requested that the pervious pavers be included in the impervious area calculations; however, the underlying reservoir course could be used as storage areas.

In response to this comment, CDCI revised the HydroCAD model using a curve number (CN) of 98 and accounting for the storage capacity of the reservoir course. This resulted in significantly reduced runoff volumes. They also updated the drainage report using smaller, clearer units as requested by the Commission to improve accuracy of the calculations.

Michael asked for cross-section of the composition of the flood plain. While Ms. Cousens did not have that available, she said that the contours are relatively flat and very subtle.

Ms. Anderson, who was unable to attend the meeting, had emailed some questions she had about the drainage report. She asked why the existing condition CN was changed and if the depths of crushed stone shown on the plans were accurate (a 3-ft layer of crushed stone is not common in residential applications).

Mr. Natale responded to Ms. Anderson's question about the depth of crushed stone. He said that since the pool was steel-walled, he chose not to use common fill behind it. He explained that with thaw and freeze conditions, the pool walls could be pushed in. He chose to use crushed stone throughout this project instead of common fill. Mr. Natale said he wasn't sure if he had any pictures showing the installation. Because he was bringing the grade up and he knew there is poor drainage in the area, he decided to use crushed stone beneath the driveway and walkways. He had also used crushed stone beneath the bocce court.

Mr. Stearns explained that the CN changed due to the change in units, going from acres and acre-feet to square feet and cubic feet.

Mr. Moore had questions about the HydroCAD analysis. He said that HydroCAD guidance recommends using extended time of containment values (T_C) and noted that the T_C values used throughout stayed the same.

Ms. Cousens said she is ultra-conservative and always uses a T_C value of 6 min. Mr. Moore said that, based on inconsistencies seen in the submissions discussed at last month's meeting, the history of the site, questions about assumptions, methodology, and conclusions of the analyses, and because various departments are involved, he would feel more comfortable having a peer review done. Mr. Paiewonsky will reach out to firms he has worked with to inquire further.

The applicants requested a continuance to next meeting on February 12, 2026.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to accept the applicants' request for a continuance, seconded by Mr. Moore. Motion was approved 5-0.

Discussion:

Hillside Park utility work:

National Grid had reached out to the Engineering Department regarding installation of a new utility pole for service to 16 Hillside Park. The proposed location for the new pole appears to be close to the no construction/no disturb setback of BVW. Staff recommended filing an RDA for this work to make sure it falls under the utility exemption per 310 CMR 10.02(2). Additional forestry work will be required in the area, including trimming and removal of trees from Conservation land north of Hillside Park. An RDA is expected to be filed in time for consideration at next month's meeting. Erosion and sedimentation controls along Hillside Park were recently replaced as other utility work is ongoing within the roadway.

Fishing line receptacles for Ell Pond and Swains Pond:

Staff inquired with local businesses about prices for decals and signs. The Commissioners considered several materials for signs and sample decal designs. Staff will modify and refine the designs for review by the Commission.

Administrative updates:

Staff will research permitting requirements for hydro-raking portions of Towners Pond to remove excess vegetation in preparation for free cash that will be requested from City Council in March. Total volume of material to be removed will be less than 100 cubic yards and therefore dredging permit would not be required.

Staff will reach out to Rob Carillo, to find out more about certification for golf courses, perhaps he can come down to meeting to discuss this certification and ConCom can learn more about their pond treatment plan as well.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be February 12, 2026, at 7:30 PM.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Molway. Motion was approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. 39, 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.