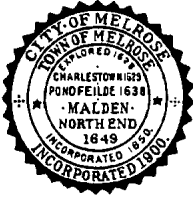


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CITY OF MELROSE

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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Chair

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Melrose Conservation Commission Minutes for February 12, 2026

Present: Michael Paiewonsky, Forrest Tiedeman Jason Jancaitis, Charles McCabe, Craig Molway (arrived at 7:37 pm), Emily Anderson and Associate member Dorian Rose

Absent: Paul Moore and Associate member Cole Lepler

Staff present: Ingrid Winkler

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

Public Comment:

Philip Morgan of 11 Sargent Street followed up on his comments at last month's meeting regarding his concern about the dumpsters at Whole Foods. He said that carts and debris had been removed from the fence. Mr. Morgan expressed concern about snow getting dumped on Franklin Field from Towers Plaza and pushed up along the fence.

Review of Minutes/Correspondence:

Conservation Commission members reviewed draft minutes from the January 15, 2026, meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to approve meeting minutes for the January 15, 2026, meeting, seconded by Mr. McCabe. Motion was approved 3-0. (Two Commissioners did not vote since they were not at the January meeting and Mr. Molway was not present yet).

Public Hearing:

Notice of Intent – DEP # 217-0235

Continued from January 15, 2026

Owner/Applicant: Anthony and Erin Natale were present

Project Location: 110 Sycamore Road

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

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

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-ft buffer zone to BVW, and which impacted wetland resource areas and associated buffer zones.

Staff had spoken to Jay Coy, Acting City Engineer, about the revised drainage calculations and asked about specific questions Commissioners had at the last meeting regarding assumptions and methodology used in the analyses. Mr. Coy said that in his opinion, the calculations were sound.

Mr. Paiewonsky confirmed that re-grading and lowering the elevation along the northern property boundary satisfies the requirement for compensatory storage.

In response to Ms. Anderson's questions about the depth of crushed stone under the patio pavers, the applicant submitted photos showing the installation of the pool and crushed stone around the pool walls.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. McCabe. Motion was approved 6-0.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to issue an Order of Conditions approving the project with the standard conditions, seconded by Mr. McCabe. Motion was approved 4-0. (Mr. Tiedeman and Ms. Anderson were unable to listen to the recording of the January 15, 2026 hearing and therefore were unable to participate in the vote.)

Request for Certificate of Compliance – DEP # 217-0223

Continued from January 15, 2026

Owner/Applicant: Anthony Natale
Project Location: 110 Sycamore Road
Representatives: Meera Cousens of CDCI

Project Description: Expansion of an existing home with three additions within the 100-foot buffer zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands (BVW). Order of Conditions (OOC) was issued on 05-24-2023.

The project was completed in substantial compliance with the OOC.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to approve the Certificate of Compliance, seconded by Mr. McCabe. Motion was approved unanimously, 6-0.

Public Hearing:

Request for Determination of Applicability – Hillside Park Utility Project

Applicant: Massachusetts Electric Company (MEC)
Project Location: 240-ft stretch along north side of Hillside Park
Representatives: Casey Bardier and Zoe Leff of VHB, Moses Okokuro of National Grid, Sanderson Nascimento of 16 Hillside Park Melrose, LLC
Documents Submitted: Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) (01-22-2026)

Project Description: Replacement/installation of poles and wires for electric service in buffer zone to BVW, requiring trimming and removal of trees.

All proposed work is in previously disturbed roadway and utility easements. Some tree trimming and removal falls within the 15-ft No Disturb Zone (NDZ) and 20-ft No Construction Zone (NCZ) established by Melrose Wetlands Ordinance (the Ordinance) although no ground disturbance will occur. VHB is seeking a Negative Determination of Applicability per 310 CMR 10.02(2)(a)2.

Ms. Bardier summarized the project. Each of the two pole installations will cause approximately 4 ft² of impact within the buffer zone to BVW. Some tree trimming and removal of a total of nine trees, including two dead ones, will be required within the NDZ and NCZ; however, no ground disturbance will occur as part of the tree trimming and removal.

Mr. Tiedeman asked why this work is required. Mr. Okokuro explained that the installation of a new mid-span pole between the two existing poles will shorten the non-standard 250-ft span between the existing poles and raise the wires to provide electrical service to 16 Hillside Park. Mr. Tiedeman also asked if there are any plans to replace the trees that will be removed. The Melrose public shade tree policy would not apply in this case since the trees are on the utility easement along a private way. There are no plans to replace the trees at this time.

Mr. Nascimento added that he and some of the neighbors are concerned that some of the trees in question pose a hazard, especially with the current snow load.

Mr. Morgan expressed his concern that Melrose continues to lose its tree canopy, and he spoke about the tree program and the tree hearing process. He said he'd like National Grid to reach out to the City and offer to replace some trees.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to close the hearing and approve the Determination of Applicability as a Negative 5 (work described is exempt per 310 CMR 10.02(2)(a)(2)), seconded by Mr. Jancaitis.

Motion was approved unanimously, 6-0.

Discussion: Request for Amendment to OOC (DEP File # 217-0234)

Owner/Applicant: L Pond, LLC (Donald Stead)

Project Location: 28 Crystal Street

Representative: Mark Sleger, ALAN Engineering, LLC

Documents Submitted: Revised NOI Plan and Revised Stormwater Calculations

Project Description: Construction of a new two-family dwelling with driveways and associated utilities within the 100-ft buffer zone to BVW and partially within BLSF. OOC was issued on 11-24-2025.

As part of the building permit application process, the Acting City Engineer had made comments relating to stormwater management and drainage calculations. A Revised Notice of Intent Plan and Revised Stormwater Calculations were submitted to address the comments from Engineering. These revisions include:

- Stormwater calculations that analyze flows toward the street and Ell Pond separately.
- Addition of trench drains with bottom outlets to the driveways to prevent runoff to the street. Drainage from the trench drains will be treated in a precast sediment trap located

between the two driveways before discharging into the larger proposed infiltration system behind the proposed house.

- Slight modification to front yard grading to direct runoff away from the street and toward the rear of the property.
- Increase in size of the proposed infiltration system after correction of an error in the original drainage calculations.
- The Revised NOI plan includes construction details for the sediment trap and infiltration system inspection ports.

Mr. Sleger explained the changes made to the approved plan. The new drainage analysis shows no increase in the peak rate of runoff toward Crystal Street or Ell Pond. The larger size of the infiltration system does not affect the previously approved surface grading because the system is below grade. The revisions to the plan do not change the previously approved floodplain alteration or compensatory flood storage volume. Therefore Mr. Sleger asked for administrative approval for these changes.

Mr. Paiewonsky asked about the maintenance required for the sediment trap and infiltration system. Mr. Sleger said the maintenance would be done by the future homeowners. An Operation & Maintenance Plan was submitted with the original NOI.

Ms. Anderson asked about the slope of the pipe from the sediment trap to the infiltration system and if there would be enough cover since it is a long run of pipe. Mr. Sleger said that the cover of the run of the pipe would vary but would be at least 1 ft to 1.5 ft.

The Commission approved the changes as submitted.

Discussion: Question about Ell Pond Park Stormwater Project

As part of the Ell Pond Park Stormwater project, Weston & Sampson (W&S) is working on a proposal to add sports lighting to the Lewis Monk Ballfield within Ell Pond Park. This field falls entirely within the FEMA floodplain and two of the poles would be located within the 100-ft buffer zone. The diameter of each pole is approx. 1.1 ft. The total permanent impact would be approx. 3.9 ft², with 1.95 ft² falling within the 100-ft buffer, and additional temporary impacts to run the underground conduits. Appropriate erosion and sediment controls would be placed between the trenching and the pond during the work, and the site would be returned to its original existing condition. W&S is asking if the Commission would consider an RDA in lieu of a full NOI for this work. The Commission agreed that an RDA would be appropriate.

*Mr. Paiewonsky left the meeting at this point after recusing himself from the following public hearing for Burnett and Laurel Streets Stormwater Management Project due to conflict of interest.

Public Hearing:

Notice of Intent – DEP # 217-0236

Owner/Applicant: City of Melrose
Elena Ellis Proakis, Director of DPW, and Jay Coy, Acting City Engineer, were present

Project Location: Multiple parcels on Burnett and Laurel Streets (between Wheeler Ave and Sycamore Rd)

Representatives: Michele Simoneaux and Emerson Olander of Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. (Stantec)

Documents Submitted: Notice of Intent (01-23-2026) and Permit Set of Plans

Project Description: Filed as an Ecological Restoration Limited Project within Bank, BVW, Land under Water Body and Waterway (LUW), BLSF, 100-ft Buffer Zone to Bank and BVW, and 15-ft No Disturbance Zone and 20-ft No Construction Zone under the City’s wetland Ordinance for the purposes of stormwater management, flood mitigation, wetlands enhancement and habitat improvement. Proposed project activities include:

- Removal of sediment in an intermittent stream
- Removal of fill from BVW
- Construction of forebays for storage and pretreatment of stormwater runoff
- Construction of permeable and impermeable berms to direct flow and provide access to Burnett Park for passive recreation
- Wetland restoration and replication
- Invasive plant management within Burnett Park

The City is seeking an Ecological Restoration-Limited Project OOC and requesting a Waiver for work proposed within the 15-ft NDZ and 20-ft NCZ.

Ms. Ellis Proakis gave a brief history of the chronic flooding in the area and described how this project came about, through the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program.

Ms. Simoneaux presented the proposed project. She confirmed that the project meets the eligibility requirements for an Ecological Restoration Limited Project per 310 CMR 10.53(4).

According to Ms. Simoneaux, the project area was historically used as agricultural land and a shallow drainage ditch was dug by residents to drain the land for farming. As the area was developed, the drainage ditch was partially enclosed in a culvert and flood storage was reduced, resulting in significant flooding for residents in the project area and for down-stream residents. The drainage ditch is now an unnamed intermittent stream.

A large wetland area encompasses most of Burnett Park and borders the length of the daylighted portion of the intermittent stream. Almost the entire site is in a FEMA Zone A 100-year floodplain with Base Flood Elevation (BFE) 104.1 ft.

Work is proposed to occur within inland Bank, LUW, BLSF, 100-ft buffer zones to Bank and BVW, and the NDZ and NCZ of the Ordinance, and includes:

- Removal of sediment from the intermittent stream (approx. top 12 inches);
- Construction of two vegetated sediment forebays to capture stormwater and increase flood storage capacity;

- Construction of two berms, one permeable and one impermeable, to reduce surface water flow onto adjacent residential properties; the berms would also function as walking paths for the public to access Burnet Park;
- Improvements to in-road stormwater management infrastructure (piping, curbing, cured in place pipe (CIPP) lining, etc.);
- Removal of historic fill and debris from BVW;
- Creation of replicated wetlands and restoration of temporarily disturbed wetlands; and
- Invasive species management.

Mr. Olander presented more details about the stormwater functions of the project.

The proposed forebays will be constructed using articulated concrete block. Forebay #1, located in the northwest corner of the site, is designed to treat subsurface stormwater fed to it from Grove Street and Burnett Street, including storm drains located on Wheeler Street properties. Forebay #2, located in the southern part of Burnett Park near the intersection with Granite Street, will receive surface stormwater runoff from Burnett and Granite Streets directed through a curb cut.

The impermeable berm is proposed to be constructed along the eastern boundary of Burnett Park and the permeable berm is proposed to be constructed along the southern bank of the intermittent stream. Some of the materials excavated during the construction of the forebays, if suitable, will be used to construct the berms. Vegetated walking paths on top of these berms will allow passive recreational access to the park. The berms' elevations above existing grade vary, but are approximately 1-1.5 ft for the impermeable berm and 0.5-1 ft for the permeable berm.

A 2025 geotechnical study of the project area showed historical fill over what were wetlands at Burnett Park. This fill will be removed to provide flood storage capacity and the area will be replanted as replicated wetlands.

Mr. Olander described some of the best management practices (BMPs) that will be used during construction, including sediment and erosion controls, stockpile management, and tree protection.

Mr. Olander answered the Commissioners' additional questions about the forebays (the articulating concrete blocks are brought in as blankets, can be driven on, easy to maintain), planting plan, frequency of future sediment removal (it depends), purpose of the underdrain (infiltration to groundwater), and volume of sediment estimated to be removed from stream (approx. 90 cubic yards).

Mr. Morgan had some additional questions about whether there will be a chain-link fence along the stream and who will do maintenance. He also asked if the CIPP lining will increase the velocity of flow through the pipes and cause more flooding; Mr. Olander said that it will not.

A technical comment from DEP asked for a narrative and supportive information to demonstrate how the BMPs have been designed to meet the stormwater standards to the maximum extent practicable. Stantec must give a written response to this comment.

Due to current snow cover at the project site, the wetland flags could not be refreshed and the wetland delineation could not be confirmed. A continuance until the next meeting was requested so that the wetland flags can be checked.

Motion made by Mr. Jancaitis to continue this matter to the next meeting on March 19, 2026, seconded by Mr. Molway. Motion was approved unanimously, 5-0.

***Mr. Paiewonsky re-entered the meeting at this point.**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be March 19, 2026, at 7:30 PM.

Motion made by Mr. Paiewonsky to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Tiedeman. Motion was approved 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 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.