

TOWN OF OTIS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

6/16/2026 MEETING MINUTES

Location: Otis Town Hall, One North Main Road, Otis & Via Zoom

Conservation Commission Members present: Dave Sarnacki, Bruce Wall, Jeff Laramy, Domenic Battista, Chris Chaffee, Admin Assistant - Candy Chaffee

Opening items/Introduction of Commission members and staff. Dave opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and noted that the meeting is being recorded. Dave introduced the members of the commission, and asked everyone to turn off/down their cell phones for the duration of the meeting. The Next meeting will be Tuesday, July 21st, 2026 @ 6:00 PM. The deadline for applications for the July 21st, 2026 meeting is on Wednesday, July 1st, 2026 by 3:00PM. The next office hours, for the July 21st, 2026 meeting, is on Wednesday July 1st, 2026 by 3:00PM.

Minutes: Dave made a motion to approve the minutes from May 26th, 2026 Meeting Minutes.; DB 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the April 21st, 2026 meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by David Novotney, 10 Hayre Island, Map 17B Lot 38, removal of a dead hemlock tree, all within the BZ of the Otis Reservoir. With all the being said, Dave made a motion to grant a -3 determination with standard conditions & to grind or cut flush the tree. JL 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Maxine Nogard, 105 Reservoir Road, Map 17 Lot 21, regarding maintenance, recovery and stabilization of the driveway, all within the buffer zone of the riverfront. The Commission discussed whether a culvert would be installed and confirmed that no new culvert was proposed across the driveway. The driveway will be finished with crushed stone and will not be paved. The applicant may use wood chips and/or topsoil to stabilize and finish the disturbed area and may use pavers for the walkway/patio area. With all the being said, Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions, including the use of wood chips and/or topsoil. JL 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Matthew Putnam, SK Design Group, Inc., on behalf of the Town of Otis, Beach Plain Road, regarding the extension of the existing sewer force main along Route 8 to Beach Plain Road, ending at the Sandisfield town line, all within the buffer zone of the riverfront. The proposed work will extend the force main approximately 800 feet along the roadside shoulder and across portions of private property, generally following the alignment shown in earlier sewer plans. The work will occur on the opposite side of Route 8 from the Farmington River and within the buffer zone of nearby wetlands. Future property owners connecting to the line will be responsible for their own grinder pumps and private connections. With all the being said, Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions. CC 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Tighe & Bond on behalf of Mass DCR, 410 Tolland Road, Map 17 Lot 38, regarding demolition of existing concrete stairs and replacement with new galvanized steel stairs, all within the buffer zone of the Otis Reservoir. The representative stated that the staircase is approximately 25 feet above the resource area and that the staging area will be within the buffer zone. Work is anticipated during the summer of 2026. With all the being said, Dave made a motion to issue -2 and -3 determinations. CC 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Michael Los Friese, East Meadow Enterprises, LLC, on behalf of Bill Martin, 47/52 Hare Island Road, Map 17B Lot 14 and Map 17B Lot 21, regarding removal of 17 hazardous trees, all within the buffer zone of the Otis Reservoir. During the site visit, the Commission found that the proposed trees were not clearly marked. The applicant's representative agreed to mark the trees and delineate the high-water mark before a follow-up site visit. The Commission noted that any trees within DCR jurisdiction will require applicable DCR approval before removal. At the applicant request, Dave made a motion to continue the hearing until the next meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to grant the continuance.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Kevin and Lori Randall, 56 South Gate Island Road, Map 17C Lot 13, regarding construction of a terrace, all within the buffer zone of the Otis Reservoir. The Commission required the silt fence to be repaired and restored. The applicants stated that the terrace area will primarily be grass, with a possible patio area directly outside the sliders. Any material change to the proposed finish will require further review. With all the being said, Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions. DB 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Ralph Huber, 897 Algeria Road, Map 12A Lot 27, regarding removal of 11 trees, all within the buffer zone of Big Pond. The Commission

confirmed that the trees are dead or affected by emerald ash borer and discussed whether the stumps would be flush cut or ground. The applicant agreed to flush cut the trees. With all that being said, Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions. DB 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions.

Public Hearing – Notice of Intent – Submitted by the Carl and Barbara LeGrand Trust, 59 Pine Grove Ridge, Map 15D Lots 99-100, regarding construction of two stair landings, a deck/walkway to access the water, and replacement of the dock, all within the buffer zone of the Otis Reservoir. The applicants submitted additional information responding to comments from Mark Stinson and clarifying the project scope. The replacement dock will be located generally within the existing Chapter 91 footprint and will rest on sand feet without penetrating the lake bottom. The walkway will rest on the lawn with no excavation; helical piles may be used if additional support is needed. Existing trees and vegetation will remain, and no work is proposed to the seawall. Dave made a motion to approve the Notice of Intent with the condition that helical piles may be used if needed. DB 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the Notice of Intent.

Continued Public Hearing – RDA – Submitted by Robin Martin and Sherri Chrzanowski, 96 South Gate Island Road, Map 17C Lot 20, regarding removal of multiple trees, all within the buffer zone of the Otis Reservoir. Following the site visit, the Commission determined that the first and third trees on the right side of the house are to remain and may be vista-pruned only. The dead tree located between them may be removed, and approved trees may be flush cut. The applicant also proposed planting blueberry bushes and other native species in the area. With all that being said, Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with standard conditions, including the proposed blueberry/native planting plan and the requirement that the first and third trees remain and be trimmed only Dave made a motion to issue a -3 determination with all applicable DCR approvals being obtained for work below the high-water mark or on DCR property. BW 2nd the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to issue a -3 determination with all applicable DCR approvals being obtained for work below the high-water mark or on DCR property.

ENFORCEMENT ORDER FOLLOW-UP:

Barbara and Robert Albertson, 57 North Gate Island Road, Map 17C Lot 28. Dave made a motion to ratify the Enforcement Order. BW 2nd the motion to ratify the order and Commission voted unanimously to ratify the order. The Commission discussed work that exceeded the approved Notice of Intent, including replacement of the retaining wall with new Goshen stone, additional dock work, and a new-looking drainage pipe extending through the wall and discharging toward the reservoir. The property owner explained that the original wall could not be reconstructed with the existing stone because much of it was concrete and the remaining stone was insufficient. The Commission directed the owner to retain a qualified contractor with camera

and/or locating equipment to determine the source and route of the drainage pipe. The Commission requested advance notice so a member may observe the inspection. The owner must also submit an amended Notice of Intent accurately showing the Goshen-stone wall, all dock work, the proposed well and slurry-pit work, and any other changes from the original approval. No additional dock work may occur until the amended filing is approved, and a copy of the applicable Chapter 91 license must be provided. Dave made a motion to continue the Enforcement Order follow-up until the next meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to grant the continuance.

Hare Island Road enforcement discussion. The Commission clarified to the property owner that the tree-removal RDA had not been approved and had been continued pending tree marking, high-water-mark delineation and a follow-up site visit. The Commission also discussed fill/topsoil that had been spread after the owner was directed not to disturb it pending documentation and review. The owner was instructed to file all required applications and obtain approvals from the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, DCR and any other applicable agencies before any further work. No additional work is authorized until all required permits are issued.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Conservation Commission reappointments. The Commission began discussion regarding postponement of Conservation Commission reappointments by the Select Board. Due to the nature of the matter, Bruce made a motion to enter executive session under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(1), to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health of an individual, or complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The motion was seconded and approved. Dave stated that he was the individual involved, waived the 48-hour notice requirement and did not object to the executive session. The Commission announced that it would not return to open session.

ADJOURNMENT:

The open meeting ended upon the Commission's entry into executive session. No return to open session was anticipated.