



**TOWN OF  
MONTAGUE  
MASSACHUSETTS**

TOWN HALL  
One Avenue A  
Turners Falls, MA 01376

CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
(413) 863-3200 ext. 112  
Planner@montague-ma.gov

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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, April 10, 2025 6:30 PM**

**Annex Meeting Room, Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via Zoom  
Meeting was recorded**

**6:30PM: ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Mark Fairbrother (Chair), Anthony Reiber, Sean Werle, Justin Fermann, Al Averill, Donna Francis. Absent: Margaux Reckard, Toby Carter

STAFF: Maureen Pollock (Staff Liaison, Planner/Conservation Agent)

ALSO PRESENT: Tim Raven

*MOTION by J. Fermann to accept the meeting minutes of March 13, 2025 with minor spelling correction., Seconded by S. Werle. VOTE: Mark Fairbrother (AYE), Anthony Reiber (AYE), Sean Werle (AYE), Justin Fermann (AYE), Al Averill (AYA), Donna Francis (AYE). MOTION PASSES 6:36pm*

Update: **MassDEP Release Notification and Notice of Responsibility to First Light MA Hydro, LLC** regarding observed sheen on water surface of the Connecticut River below the Turners Falls Dam.

This is a second case; a sheen was also reported in 2024. On March 12, 2025 DEP inspected the sheen near gate 1 and notified FirstLight that they are the owner and responsible. DEP provided FirstLight with options to clean the site and avoid liability. The Conservation Commission, Montague Select Board, Health Department and Fire Department were sent copies of the DEP letter.

**Eversource WT-11 TRRP Project – Request for Mitigation Suggestions**

The Agent reports that the DPW is exploring how to replace the culvert on Meadow Road. It will be costly. A feasibility study will be needed before a cost can be determined. The Agent provides some background information for the public. Eversource will submit a NOI in the coming months. Eversource will be converting wetlands as part of that NOI. Under the Wetlands Protection Act there is a way to offset this work with a mitigation project. An email from Eversource referenced typical projects like culvert replacement and land protection projects. The Montague Conservation Commission is considering several ideas including the Meadow Road culvert. The Agent will ask the DPW if they have any priority projects.

Falls Farm Violations– Old Sunderland Road (Parcels #50-0-18), property owner: James Arcoleo; Old Sunderland Road (Parcel #50-0-05, property owner: Falls Farm LLC; and Meadow Road (Parcel #50-0-04), Montague, Property owner: Falls Farm LLC

Mark Fairbrother takes this topic off of the table, but allows for public comments. Tim Raven, abutter,

expresses concern about the woodlands.

**Other Topics Not Anticipated:**

The Agent updates the Commission about a turtle crossing project on Montague City Road, which was brought to the Commission by a resident in 2024. The Agent reached out to the resident and together identified the area of turtle fatalities. A plan to create turtle crossing signs was developed between the Planning Department, DCR, Sheffield School teachers and RiverCulture. Students created artwork and RiverCulture paid for 10 lawn signs. The turtle crossing signs will be placed along the tree belt through July. Abutters, the DPW and Selectboard were notified of the project.

Al Averill appreciates that Sheffield students were involved.

*MOTION by A. Reiber to ADJOURN. Seconded by J. Fermann VOTE: Mark Fairbrother (AYE), Anthony Reiber (AYE), Sean Werle (AYE), Justin Fermann (AYE), Al Averill (AYA), Donna Francis (AYE). MOTION PASSES 6:36pm*