



TOWN OF
MONTAGUE
MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN HALL
One Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, November 13, 2025 6:30 PM
Annex Meeting Room, Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and via Zoom
Meeting was recorded

6:31PM: ROLL CALL PRESENT: Mark Fairbrother (Chair), Al Averill, Anthony Reiber, Sean Werle, Margaux Reckard, Justin Fermann, Toby Carter, Donna Francis. ABSENT: None.
STAFF: Maureen Pollock (Staff Liaison, Planner/Conservation Agent)
ALSO PRESENT: First Generation Investment Group. Veaceslav Falceanu

MOTION by M. Reckard to Approve the Meeting Minutes from July 10, 2025 with minor edits. Seconded by A. Reiber. VOTE Mark Fairbrother (AYE), Al Averill (AYE), Anthony Reiber (AYE), Sean Werle (AYE), Margaux Reckard (AYE), Justin Fermann (AYE), Toby Carter (AYE), Donna Francis (AYE). MOTION PASSES (8-0) 6:35pm.

PUBLIC MEETING: RDA #2025-04 - Request for Determination of Applicability, filed by First Generation Investments Group to determine whether regrading and paving of a new parking area in buffer zone only at 11 Tenth Street (Assessor's Map/Parcel 03-0-048) is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act.

A site visit was conducted on the afternoon of 11/13/25. The applicant shows a map of the parking area of the Tenth Street project which includes 2 four-unit houses with eight parking spaces and sidewalks. The plan also shows the planting scheme, which contains native species of trees and shrubs. No trees will be cut. The site is cleared and considered degraded. This project is considered "infill" development.

Al Averill attended the site visit. He reports that the proposed parking lot is on a highly permeable surface (gravel). His concern is about possible car "leaks" and petroleum. Averill brought an auger to examine the soil. It appears that over the years there has been "dumping and disturbance." He recommends to keeping the topsoil in place which will help filter petroleum and other car-related runoff. Under the topsoil is sandy soil, which is not a good filter.

A variety of invasive species cover the property. The new planting scheme includes native species.

Justin Fermann asks if there is any construction at the end of the driveways. The applicant answers "no"; only lawn.

Sean Werle asks why the Commission is discussing conditions. "If we issue a negative determination can the Conservation Commission issue conditions on plantings?"

D. Francis asks about the 50' buffer? Fermann answers "the isolated wetland" and indicates on the map. Reckard clarifies "the portion within the buffer zone is the corner of the parking lot, correct?"

Werle comments that they can issue the Negative Determination but can't tell them what to plant. The Agent says it's appropriate to talk about the overall project. Fermann agrees that "friendly suggestions" for plantings are appropriate. Silt fences are shown in the plan.

M. Reckard mentions the dumpsters. The Agent mentions that there is ample space for both dumpsters and vegetation. Dumpsters will be on pavement surrounded by a fence. The current location is good for the hauler.

Werle suggests a Negative Determination #2. The Agent reads that description.

The applicants introduce themselves and their enthusiasm about the project. They are currently building housing on Silver Street in Greenfield.

MOTION by S. Werle to issue a Negative Determination Box 2 to regrade and pave a new parking area in buffer zone only at 11 Tenth Street (Assessor's Map/Parcel 03-0-048) subject to the Wetlands Protection Act. Seconded by T. Carter. VOTE Mark Fairbrother (AYE), Al Averill (AYE), Anthony Reiber (AYE), Sean Werle (AYE), Margaux Reckard (AYE), Justin Fermann (AYE), Toby Carter (AYE), Donna Francis (AYE). MOTION PASSES (8-0) 6:55pm.

The Agent asks the Commission if she can sign on their behalf. Members agree.

NEW BUSINESS: The Agent informs the Commission that the Town is developing a 10-year Open Space & Recreation Plan. There will be a Virtual Public Meeting at 6pm on November 18. There is a survey on the project page of the Town website. <https://montague-ma.gov/p/1589/>

OLD BUSINESS: The Agent provides an update on maintenance for Montague City Road Drainage Improvement pursuant to the previously approved Order of Conditions DEP #229-0254. Sediment is infiltrating back into the stream. The DPW will do periodic maintenance. The DEP has been informed.

The Town is in the 90-day appeal period for the FEMA Floodplain update. The maps haven't been updated since 1982. Town staff met with State and Federal Agencies. The Montague Plains are indicated as "Flood Plains" which the Town will dispute. The Montague Plains are protected but the Town may opt to formalize a trail. Averill asks about the dispute process. The Agent replies that the Town would hire an engineer but is "starting with an email." Averill thinks it "sounds like a mistake." Fermann agrees.

The Town has reached out to Brian Yellen about the possible violations at 0 Rod Shop Rd (Parcel #12-0-052). Something will be submitted.

MOTION TO ADJOURN by D. Francis. VOTE Unanimous. (8-0) 7:06pm