

Town of Leyden Conservation Commission
Meeting 08-18-25
7:00 p.m.

Commission Attendees

Evan Abramson
Andrea Rasmussen -- Zoom
Don Sadowsky
Karen O'Neill
Janell Howard
Mark Stinson, dep

Guests:, Robert Snedeker, James O'Keefe, Erica Jensen
By Zoom: James Selzer

Administrative matters

- Mail:
 - Cowan widening: our order of conditions accepted by landowner and is with the registry of deeds, it's been registered.
 - Mark Stinson: who will be in charge of monitoring compliance with the OoC?
Answer: the ConCom
 - The drawing of the culvert is required by the OoC before work can be done.
- Approved 7-21/25 minutes with corrections

NOI for dam on Simon Keets Road

- We have an NOI
- James Selzer tells us that someone removed boards from the dam. Per Erica it may have been some kids that were there. ConCom: we have no authority over whether the landowners post no trespassing
- James Selzer (present)
- Mark Stinson had some comments on the NOI:
 - Mention of maintenance of the dam implied that the maintenance is exempt. Such maintenance is only exempt for utilities. Delete the entire paragraph mentioning the maintenance
 - NOI didn't specify how the dam impacts all 5 of the resource areas. There are impacts: the water flows through the stream, and the dam reduces that. Also, any time the dam is lowered or raised it changes the water level 80 ft back of the

dam. Stream is 30' wide. Resource areas: bank and underwater are affected.
Approx. 2400 sq ft of bottom 160 sq ft of bank affected

- Erica: dam doesn't appreciably affect the water level because it doesn't prevent all the water from flowing
 - Evan marking up the NOI with corrections
 - No dredging: put zero there
 - No need to check sections 4 and 5
 - Stormwater standards do not apply, no need to say why
 - Need a signature for the ConCom but not DEP
 - 310 CMR 10.54(a)(1) performance standards provide for not impairing certain functions and capacities, but grandfathered in for existing dams
 - Mark: suggest getting Ward Smith, a wetlands scientist to ensure that the NOI is filled out correctly
- Contractor (Robert Snedeker) added a cement abutment, c. 20 sq ft) to assist work, but that increased the footprint of the dam. They are on the riverbank behind the dam. Mark: landowners need to explain how the work complies with performance standard. It's in the riverbank above the flow. It should have had a workplan
 - Any future work on the dam needs approval. It should be in the NOI, e.g., as future work that might be done. O'Keefe: no plans to do maintenance for decades
 - Mark: ongoing conditions of dam maintenance
- Before any more work done on the dam need to put up a sign
- Continuing the hearing on this matter to September's meeting 9/15 @ 7 pm
- Landowners to email the workplan to the Commission to add to the NOI. The ConCom will respond with an order of conditions. Suggest having Ward draft the special conditions

Bernardston-Leyden proposal to merge Conservation Commissions

- Kathleen and Erica opened a Selectboard meeting
- Karen and Evan -- Bernardston has a lot of wetlands issues and development.
- It would greatly increase the length of ConCom meetings because of so many Bernardston issues
- Katherine -- no proposals, there will be a survey, meetings for coordinating group will be posted and are open to the public
- Evan had been interviewed and already said he thought it was a bad idea
- Erica -- we're just at the beginning of the discussion
- Karen -- 6 town regional planning board discussion has itself taken 4 years so far. That workgroup believes this isn't a money saver.
- Katherine --this effort is less about saving money and more about being able to meet the new requirements of the state for municipalities
- Karen -- the 6 town regional planning board got many grants from the State, and the State wants to deal with future entities. She thinks the State should add fewer requirements

6. Penfield CR – updates

Built a shed, which the Commission is happy to look at

RDA for gravel path at Avery Field

- Pickleball court path already built w/o going to ConCom, even though it's in a wetland
- RDA filed after the fact
- However, it's been grass for many decades
- Gravel has some permeability
- Turning 600-700 sq ft of mowed grass into grass covered by TRG
- 0 percent slope
- Suggested response on Form 2: Negative determination #3: the work in the buffer zone will not alter the stream. Approved and signed at the meeting.

West Leyden Road - Dunphy – updates

Will have matting removed as soon as conditions allowed; appears to be going well

Approved annual report

Next meeting

September 15 @ 7:00

AGENDA: 1. Read mail, review correspondence, approve minutes 2. NOI for dam on Simon Keets Road 3. Bernardston-Leyden proposal to merge Conservation Commissions 4. RDA for gravel path at Avery Field 5. Cowan driveway-culvert on Greenfield Road - updates 6. Penfield CR – updates