



**Mayor
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

William Schreefer, Chair
Heather Charles Lis, Vice Chair
Diane Francis, Member
Hung Pham, Member
Nicholas Campia, Member

**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes January 8, 2026
Thursday, January 8, 2026 – 7PM
Johnson Chambers – Town Hall
1 JFK Memorial Drive**

Present: William Schreefer, Chair
Heather Charles-Lis, Vice Chair
Nicholas Campia, Member
Hung Pham, Member
Anita Guo, Assistant Director of Planning and Community
Development
Sarah Feeley, Conservation Planner

Meeting Commences at 7:07 pm.

New Public Hearings

Notice of Intent - 665 Middle Street

Applicant: Town of Braintree Department of Public Works

Stormwater System Improvements - The work proposed is intended to finalize the repair that begun under the Emergency Certification. The Applicant proposes to remove the temporary measures and existing stormwater infrastructure on site and replace them with a continuous 24" X 48" pipe.

Hillary presenting on behalf of the stormwater division of the Department of Public Works. They are proposing to do a repair at 665 Middle Street. She explained that there are currently two 24-inch pipes. They are looking to repair the existing system and will not be making any changes to what was originally there.

Eric Dias is also presenting on behalf of the applicant. He explains that in November the Conservation Commission certified a temporary emergency repair. The pipe going through the property had some failure issues and the manhole cover has surcharged and had water coming through. Now, they are proposing to remove the temporary repair and replace it with a larger manhole and one large pipe, which will eliminate all structures on the property. They will include an elbow to make sure there are no weak points on the property. They will be pulling the headwall discharge back from the existing location. All of the work will be in currently disturbed areas, and it is a repair to an existing line.

Will asks if the current invert is pushing against tailwater and states that it looks like it is going in at the same elevation.

Eric states that they are constrained by the elevation. They will be doing what they can during construction to remove obstructions from the channel.

Hung asks if that channel is a wetland.

Eric states that it is a dug channel within the wetland.

Heather asks if there will be tree removal for this.

Eric states that there will be no tree removal.

Heather asks if the splash pad would be for the amount of water coming through and asks how the temporary repairs have gone.

Eric states the splash pad is for the amount of water coming through and that the temporary repairs have helped, but they cannot leave them there forever. Their goal is to start this as early in the spring as we can and get it wrapped up as soon as possible.

Hung asks if the area would be re-graded.

Eric confirms that when the riprap comes out of the swale it will be grated to the previous condition.

Will asks for public comment.

Abutter asks if the water that comes off the roads that has gasoline on it has been tested. States that there is a lot of wildlife out there he is concerned about.

Hillary states that the water that comes off the road is stormwater and that the water is picking everything up on the way down. She explains that they are working on keeping the water as clean as they can.

Abutter states that the water should be cleaned going through the pipe and that he is concerned about wildlife.

Eric explains that this is intended to be a repair of the system that was already there. All systems this age could use water quality improvements. There is so much water that it cannot be cleaned, but they are working on keeping upstream areas clean. There is no technology to clean this amount of water at this point. He further explains that there will be no change from the existing condition.

Will states that the Commission only has jurisdiction over the application in front of them. The commission cannot enforce large scale stormwater cleaning at this time.

Abutter asks what will be done about the trash and everything that falls into the trench and states that it does not get cleaned.

Eric states that the discharge location is a historic discharge location and that the channel that leads away from this site should be maintained. The problem being fixed now is the destruction of property the emergency order damaged.

Abutter states that his fence is falling down because of erosion.

Hung states that the ditch was supposed to be a stormwater ditch that has not been maintained. It is now a wetland which the town is proposing to maintain and looking at how to further protect the resources.

Will asks what the town hopes to do to help with maintenance in the future.

Hillary states that their general practice is to jet this area with a jet truck, but it did not happen as often as they wanted it to. In the long term, the town is hoping to have an easement here for maintenance.

Hung asks how we can close this out if we do not know the O&M of this project.

Eric states that this is a repair to a part of the stormwater system the Town owns. The O&M will fall under the same manner of all municipal systems.

Hung states that the issue of O&M is part of this.

Hillary states that the later agenda item is related to channels throughout town, including this one. It is more general, but we will jet pipe every 6 months and check it after heavy rain.

Will states that he does not see an O&M as part of the NOI.

Heather states that we could condition that it be inspected regularly and tested and suggests the general practice for the Department of Public Works be evaluated.

Hillary states that it would not be manageable to work out 345 O&M plans (one for each outfall). Cautions against setting the precedent of having specific conditions for each outfall.

Heather states that the Town should routinely inspect the outfall and shall comply with all MS4 requirements and consider upstream improvements. She reads though special conditions.

Will motions to approve NOI for 665 Middle Street with the draft conditions.

Hung motions to approve, Heather seconds. All in favor.

Will motions to close. Heather motions to close. All in favor.

Continued Public Hearings :

Notice of Intent - DEP File #8-0745 - 0 Hancock Street/10 Plain Street Braintree Apartment Ventures, LLC. c/o Andy Huntoon, Applicant

Emily White with TRC presents for 10 Plain Street. The commission requested the stormwater outfall be lifted 3 inches, which we did. We also added a layer of p-stone for the dog parks. She states that the management of the invasive species buckthorn will not have an impact on native species. SLR is running the analysis now for the flood plain study. It will be 3-4 weeks for the final report to be complete once we have the preliminary results. We are requesting questions on the landscaping plans by January 20th.

Heather states that she does have comments on the landscaping plan, and that if there is anything she misses tonight she will email them. She states that some of the species are not native and suggests replacing those with native species. Explains that we want to prioritize areas closest to the river and that they should add a layer of shrubs in areas along the river as a middle layer of vegetation.

Mark Baranski states that there are points where the omission of vegetation is intentional for views for residents. They will take the comments into consideration but still want to preserve view lines for residents.

Heather states that there needs to be a maintenance plan to make it obvious to future landscapers the places that are being naturalized and the places being maintained as a meadow.

Emily states that they will provide plans to property management.

Heather states that they need to see those plans now.

Emily asks the Commission for a continuation to the February 5th meeting.

Heather motions to continue to the next meeting. All in favor.

Other Business

Wildflower Meadow / Watson Park

Hillary presenting as a member of the Department of Public Works but clarifies that this project is not part of stormwater. For background, we are discussing a planted area in Watson Park that was mitigation for the splashpad project. There was a breakdown in communication about the maintenance of the wildflower meadow, and it was cut too short. Now it is overgrown with mugwort. The Town has decided to do a controlled burn. From here, there are two routes for restoration. We applied for a grant, but if we do not get that, we will replant following what was originally planted there and create an O&M plan.

Heather states that she has concerns about the controlled burn after looking into it more, as she is not sure that a controlled burn would be effective against mugwort. There would be an initial positive impact, but it would not last. An ecological landscaping company will come out to check the wildflower meadow, but states that in this case a targeted herbicide safe near water may be more effected. The herbicides could be used after the controlled burn.

Hillary states that the anticipation is to do the controlled burn as soon as we can and that is what they plan on moving forward with.

Heather states that her preference would be to wait on a burn until we can collect more information. She wants to be sure there will not be any unintended negative effects.

Nick asks if the fire department has done exercises like this before.

Hillary states that they would have to talk the fire chief to find that out.

Hung asks if pursuing the biodiversity grant or the controlled burn would happen first.

Hillary states that the grant has already been submitted.

Hung ask if we can do a controlled burn as well as scraping the soil to get all of the mugwort out. Agrees that it makes sense to have an ecological landscaper evaluate the area to make sure the mugwort is being fully eliminated.

Heather states that she understands everyone wants that area to look better. Suggests putting temporary signage or stones around the edge.

Will asks when they want the controlled burn to happen.

Hillary states they want the controlled burn to happen as soon as possible.

Hung proposes burning it then covering it, then evaluating.

Heather states that she can support doing the burn now but would like to research what the next best steps are. She does not think we need to cover it at this time of the year.

Drainage channel NOI

Hillary presenting for the Department of Public Works. Essentially, there are a lot of stormwater drainages that are in deferred maintenance. She has identified drainage channels near resource areas and is looking for a blanket NOI that will list drainage channels near resource areas and set expectations for how we will maintain them.

Will asks if it will be a blanket NOI then individual applications or notification.

Hillary states that it will be notification through the conservation agent.

Will states that it generally makes sense with a list of specific locations and activities. There would need to be restrictions on tree removal.

Hillary states that something they would be open to is an annual report showing where we did work in a given year.

Heather asks Sarah to reach out to DEP to see if they have any recommendations for blanket NOIs. We will have to be careful about the method of removing sediment and what you will do with the sediment you are removing. It will also be important to make sure you are only removing the sediment, not the intact stream bottom.

Will asks if visual inspections will happen before being added to the list.

Hillary states that she has had eyes on all of the locations and asks if the commission is looking for her to specify the type of work at each channel.

Will states that they are not looking for her to specify the work, but would like an idea of what would be done and a limit of what can be done under the blanket NOI.

Next Meeting: February 5, 202 6

Meeting adjourned.

