

Joshua Cohen, Chairman
Kevin Colmey, Vice-Chairman
Robert MacDonald, Treasurer
Paul Degnan, Clerk
Elizabeth Sugameli, Member
Melissa Mayer, Member
Gerald Carmichael, Member

Pequitside Farm
79 Pleasant St.
Canton, MA 02021
Telephone 781-821-5035
rmilani@town.canton.ma.us

Regen Milani, Conservation Agent
Heather Cahill, Office & Recording Secretary

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Friday 8:00 AM to 12:00 NOON

Established in 1963, the Canton Conservation Commission is dedicated to preserving the town's natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations. The Commission owns and manages over 400 hundred acres of conservation land. Most land is specifically set aside for the intrinsic and economic value that natural areas provide to the community – flood control and mitigation, uptake and filtering of pollution, preservation of the unique natural heritage of Canton, water quality and quantity, climate change mitigation, and so much more. In addition, several large properties, including Pequitside Farm, Windsor Woods Conservation Area, and the Earl Newhouse Waterfront at Reservoir Pond, are open to the public for recreation activities such as hiking, walking, snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking, bird watching, animal tracking, nature study, photography, and picnicking. The Commission is responsible for developing and overseeing the Canton Open Space and Recreation Plan, seeking grants for acquisition of open space, and accepting gifts of land or money for conservation purposes.

This year we acquired one new Conservation Restriction for 5.9 acres of open space at the Village at Cedarcrest and one new Conservation Easement for a small open space area at the property being developed at 869 Washington Street.

The Commission also administers the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and Regulations (1972), the Town of Canton Wetland Protection Bylaw and Regulations (1980), the Town of Canton Stormwater Bylaw and Regulations (2007), and the Town of Canton Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Bylaw (2003). The Conservation Commission works directly with developers, town departments, and residents regarding both new and redevelopment projects, including new subdivisions, construction of new single-family homes, building additions, landscaping, and more to help ensure an understanding of the requirements for compliance with state and local laws.

The Commission holds public meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month at Pequitside Farm in the Tavern Room located at the rear of the Edward J. Lynch, Jr. House. Meetings begin at 7:00 P.M. All hearings are open to the public and recorded by Canton Community Television. Copies of current regulations and forms are available on the Conservation Department website <https://town.canton.ma.us/335/About-Conservation-Commission> or at the Conservation Office (781) 821-5035.

In 2019 members of the Commission or staff also served as Selectmen-appointed representatives for the Commission on the following town committees: Community Preservation Committee, Permit Advisory Committee, the Paul Revere Heritage Commission, the Walk, Bike, and Hike Committee, the Water and Sewer Rate and Policy Committee, Wayfinding Sign Design Task Force, Reservoir Pond Advisory Committee, and the Pequitside Task Force.

In 2019 the Commission held 20 meetings with 146 agenda items. The Commission issued a total of 42 new Wetland permits, 11 new Stormwater permits, 25 new Land Disturbance permits, and 40 Certificates of Compliance (Table I). (It should be noted that all wetland projects over 5,000 s.f. in disturbance in 2019 also had to meet the Stormwater Bylaw,

although a separate permit is not issued). The Agent also reviewed 41 Permit Inquiry forms to determine if a permit from the Commission was required for those projects.

TABLE I Breakdown of permits issued and actions taken by the Conservation Commission January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019.

Wetland Permits		Stormwater Permits		Land Disturbance Permits	
Order of Conditions (OOC)	26	Full SMP Permit	11	LDP Permit	25
Duplicate OOC	0	Duplicate SMP	0	Duplicate LDP	0
Amended OOC	4	Amended SMP	0	Amended LDP	1
OOC Extension	6	SMP Extension	1	LDP Extension	4
Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD)	0	SMP violation notice	1	LDP violation notice	1
Determination of Applicability	16	SMP Certificate of Compliance	3	LDP Certificate of Compliance	13
Violation notice	7	Administrative Approvals	1		
Enforcement Order	2				
Certificate of Compliance	24				
Total agenda items	85		17		44
Percent of Commission's work	58%		11%		30%

Fees collected under Wetland Protection Act: \$2,610.00

Fees collected under Wetland Protection Bylaw: \$7,615.00

Fees collected under Stormwater Management Bylaw: \$5,500.00

Fees collected under Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Bylaw: \$16,612.00

Fines charged for violations: \$0.00

The Commission also manages the Canton Community Garden located a Pequitside. There are 27 plots that are rented each year by individual residents to allow them to grow their own personal produce from May to October. Gardens are already reserved for the 2020 season, but if you wish to be added to the waitlist please contact the office.

Other news –This year we added security cameras on the Pequitside campus. Unfortunately we have had some theft issues in the Community Garden and safety is always an issue. The Commission has been working in 2019 to enforce the leash law on Commission owned lands including at Pequitside Farm. Town law requires dogs be on leash at all times including on town properties. We have had many complaints. We would like to continue to allow dog walking on Commission-owned properties but in order to do so we need everyone visiting to respect this law. A reminder that violations start at \$25 per offense. If you see someone with an off leash dog on town property, please contact Animal Control immediately at 781-575-6507.

For almost a decade the Commission's Annual Reports have included updates on plans to renovate Pequitside's Draper Barn for assembly use, and also to redesign the Pequitside campus around this expanding parking and driveways. In 2019 an architectural study by TBA Architects was completed and the barn was assessed by a structural engineer. The Commission and other town officials in the end have determined that the cost of renovating the barn and property and meeting all required laws for this purpose is prohibitive. In addition, several abutters opposed the project as designed. Therefore the Commission is not moving forward with any renovation of the barn. There is still opportunity for historical restoration of the Draper Barn should priorities change and funding become available, but this would not include assembly space.

We want to thank the Canton Community Preservation Committee (CCPC) for funds in support of the above mentioned "Barn Study". CCPC also in 2019 funded engineered site plans for the Earl Newhouse Waterfront improvement project. Working in partnership with the Town Planner our goal is to provide ADA accessibility and improved walking trail connectivity to the trail system at Pequitside Farm at the Earl Newhouse Waterfront (formerly "Pequit Woods"). These site plans have been permitted by Planning, Zoning, and Conservation and we will be asking for the funds to complete the work at Earl Newhouse at the May 2020 town meeting.

We would also like to thank the Canton DPW, in particular William Walsh, Highway Supervisor, Steve Choiniere, Canton Facilities and Grounds Supervisor, Ed Butler, Kevin Brophy, Rob Martin, and Peter Ferry, Building and Grounds Technicians, and Dan Ouzounian and his team in Forestry, all without whose assistance we would not be able maintain and repair our buildings and grounds. We would very much like to thank our 2019 Tax Work-Off Program participants for their invaluable work: Pauline Wademan and Carol Cycelia for helping us create a database of all permits issued by the Commission since 1972, and Christina Vasilopoulos for helping us organize our online LaserFiche public files- tedious but critical tasks. In addition, we would like to thank our secretary, Heather Cahill, for her on-going dedication to the Commission and public.

Finally, the Conservation Commission is now on Facebook and Instagram! Follow us at @cantonmaconservation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Josh Cohen
Chairman

Regen Milani
Agent