



**TOWN OF
STONEHAM**
MASSACHUSETTS 02180

Conservation Commission
(781) 279-2696
jdecourcy@stoneham-ma.gov

**STONEHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 9, 2025 6 PM
Hybrid/Hearing Room Town Hall**

Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski, Dennis Sheehan, AJ Jamogchian

Please join us in person at the Hearing Room 35 Central Street Town Hall or by logging in at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83448949383?pwd=IyVaQOgEoTCjKKh26B4CkaSj26xGpR.1>

Passcode:908766 or Phone: (929) 205-6099

Motion to open meeting by Jeanne Craigie seconded by Jeremy Zasowski roll call yes 7/0 Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Welcome new commission members Jen Enck and Annalisa Bhatia

DISCUSSION

Weiss Farm

May Environmental monitor report. Rich Kirby update.

May environmental report has not been received, Mr Kirby sent presentation in his absence.

Board of Appeals is going to DEP with information per Jeanne Craigie. DEP has approved everything per Domenick Cimina to be non compliant. Megan Day pump levels signed off on by Corcoran and Corcoran may be out of compliance if they don't maintain pump levels. Domenick Cimina states elevation of pump is the issue. Megan Day said Corcoran needs to maintain certain levels, DEP has issued a partial certificate of compliance. Corcoran's position per Domenick Cimina is they are maintaining levels. Vegetation never took, weir is leaking, per Domenick Cimina. BOA is talking to Attorney Galvin about sending a letter to DEP per Domenick Cimina.

Whip Hill

Superintendent of schools would like to use of Whip Hill- August 12,13 &14, 2025 Motion to approve by Jeanne Craigie seconded by Megan Day Roll call yes 7/0 Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Caretaker Update

Jeanne Craigie called around the state, job descriptions found online, Conservator-promote facility, tours, grow Whip Hill. Thistles' grandfather took care of the place. Capital priority issues at Whip Hill, money in trust to start working on building. Not cared for well in Jeanne Craigie's opinion, water damage, signage. Next meeting strike and add things per Jeanne Craigie.

Jeremy Zasowski caretaker with residence living on site, caring for building and grounds. Discussion at last meeting active conservation- bullet points for Conservation steward with educational and training programs. Monitoring for invasive species not just maintaining trails. Is this multiple roles asks Jeremy Zasowski?



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Megan Day discussed subcommittee third role in addition to two roles we have now. Public outreach, friends of group, leading tours, coordinating groups, applying for grants, part time doesn't live on site but can coordinate as property manager with conservation background. When Jim Previte was full time he was paid by the town, retired as tree warden, sharing duties of the house with AJ Jamogchian. House needs to be occupied, third role makes Whip Hill a priority. Manage property, apply for funding, setup 501c3 group Friends. Trust and Town should match funds per Megan Day.

Jeanne Craigie clean slate can build what we envision for the next 25 years. Condition of home doesn't allow good things to happen up there.

Jeremy Zasowski live on site, caretaker and conservation, hard to find.

Hartshorne Home town owns property, friends group runs it. 2-3 year lease. Forestry and conservation environmental scientists at colleges sought.

Caretaker position filled Domenick Cimina as priority.

AJ Jamogchian asked if he is willing to stay on, he responds yes. Originally nights and weekends but now two identical part time positions. Contract would be renewed in August.

Jeremy Zasowski asks about division of labor. AJ Jamogchian said both did everything, divide and conquer.

Megan Day Whip Hill house managed, caretaker of 40 years is retiring.

Jeanne Craigie Town did assessment of house.

Domenick Cimina asks about job description for caretaker, schedule to advertise.

Two resident caretakers, third role as conservation steward per Jeremy Zasowski. Megan Day said were not in a rush to get this posted, Jim Previte was a unique situation. Megan Day believes we should be more proactive about property, subcommittee talked a lot about needs. Trust and Town provide funds for Whip Hill. Dennis Sheehan agrees Town is involved with Whip Hill. Insurance policy, feasibility study paid for by Town, paved street, what does the trust feel is an equitable municipal contribution? There is not a dollar for dollar match, is the Town making adequate contributions. The trust can make a determination that the trust goes to another charity.

Megan Day says Commission decides how trust is spent. A stipend could be determined, contract someone to get this up and running per Megan Day. Dennis Sheehan says a stipend may be clearer. Town knows there are capital needs from architect's report. Capital requests go to capital committee. Dennis Sheehan believes Jen DeCourcy is competent and can help with Whip Hill.

Jeanne Craigie asks about part time status and benefits of Jen DeCourcy.

Dennis Sheehan says Jen DeCourcy is part of equation of how you want Whip Hill to run.

Megan Day capital projects if property is being utilized.

Dennis Sheehan says Jen DeCourcy does spend time on Whip Hill now.

Jeanne Craigie asks about Bob Galvin's email as contracted services, needs clarification per Dennis Sheehan.

Bob Galvin did tour Whip Hill and understands dynamic of building.

Domenick Cimina asks about Conservation agent, what if part of his job was at Whip Hill. Jen DeCourcy is doing the job, asks if Commission can kick in from trust, stipend with living accommodations. 10 hours per week?

Conservation agents' job posting on MACC, environmental monitor, conservation administrator.



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Dennis Sheehan mentions proactive on wetlands versus reactive reply. Competing needs of Town for expanding services and cutting other departments. Domenick Cimina says right now we have Brett Gonsalves and Rich Kirby. Domenick Cimina thinks grants, agent, more experience than Jim Previte.

Scope of work for grant writing, educational programs, conservation educational side, agent, does this skill set exist asks Jeremy Zasowski.

Megan Day mentions land management program, educational program, establish wildlife center is original vision.

Jeremy Zasowski asks about roles. Megan Day asks is this person going to live in the house? Component has fallen away, lots of moving parts, do we contract out or use landscaping company using trust funds.

Richard Jackson says wish list, but third role, need job description for second caretaker. With the money involved a scientist is unlikely.

Megan Day asks about paying for wetland scientist, other towns share Conservation agenda. Wetland scientists are paid \$100/hour. Agents get \$80,000/year per Dennis Sheehan, no benefits. Brett Gonsalves does baseline observations. Full time agents run meetings with motions and recommendations with more resource areas. Conservation administrator coordinates roles. Jeanne Craigie didn't know coordination happened through Jen DeCourcy's role. Megan Day says hours above 20 should be recorded if they are for Whip Hill separately.

Second caretaker role Jim Previte wasn't filled how does that affect AJ Jamogchian, AJ Jamogchian is fine working through transition period. No sense of urgency to replace Jim Previte, feels place is fine. Capital projects discussed, signage is disgraceful and should be fixed per Jeanne Craigie.

Review document of job description, rules for search committee process HR, 4:30pm 6/17/25 SHS Wetlands Restoration update, Jeremy Zasowski thinks there should be more notice about this to the public, Dennis Sheehan said very close to bid documents, design some changes in plan. Dennis Sheehan states far along on juncture, public engagement session. Trail heads such as Dapper Darby may be cost prohibitive. Everyone but Richard Jackson can attend.

Jen DeCourcy, Jeanne Craigie, Donna HR, Megan Day to review job descriptions for meeting on the 17th. AJ Jamogchian may add input. Ellen McBride mentioned friends of group or volunteers per Megan Day. Consolidate feedback and bring to group.

Jeremy Zasowski thinks options for how it could be done. Jeanne Craigie difficult to make vision quickly. Third position setup without residence, once we fill caretaker role. Can trust fund money be a stipend, limited amount to spend in any given year per Megan Day. Jessica Gerke says can spend interest earnings. Jeanne Craigie states over \$500,000 in trust and checkbook. Chimney, roof, inside of fireplace needs to be repaired due to water damage per Jeanne Craigie. Fireplace is not used, but should be cleaned annually per Jeanne Craigie.

Signage update – Jessica Gerke talked to Northeast Metro Tech about collaborating in September kiosk. Commission would pay for materials. DPW has book for signs we can choose from. Jeanne Craigie met with computer teacher about map for Whip Hill at high school with drones and STEM. Add map to kiosk once completed. Jeremy Zasowski engage with community and more educational usage. Historical society put up pictures of house, atrium had vegetable garden. Jen Enck talks about community garden. Jeanne Craigie talks about victory garden by straw point, DCR denied. Middle school used for field of honor and field day. Jessica Gerke says school kids involved in maps, design program at tech school to design history of house and rules of property sign. Over summer solidifying rules to say and history info to read. DPW may install kiosk and print signs.



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Domenick Cimina, Jeremy Zasowski and Jeanne Craigie think we should order authorized vehicles only beyond this point, vernal park ok, white and green signs replaced. Richard Jackson can get sign samples from Brett Gonsalves. Leash, dog waste and park rules consolidated per Jessica Gerke.

Brick wall put up in 1950, Thistles know history, do not want to demolish house. Jen Enck asks if school could record stories and create loop. Megan Day said there is a video that was done about history of house.

300th Anniversary Club update Megan Day August 23, 2025 garden club host tours of house, Friends of Fells will walk from Whip Hill to Greenwood park, zoo open up for free 5-7pm, historical tours of Spot Pond with Paddle Boston/Dolly Wilson, Idle Hands Brewery at greenwood park with field day activities. Courtyard area could have tea/food to celebrate natural resources. Trolley from zoo to Whip Hill and back. Early afternoon timeframe. Jen Enck donation request at 300th anniversary club event at Whip Hill? Funds would go back to 300th Anniversary club per Megan Day.

Gerrior masonry quote, Capuano Construction masons- all exterior work.

Sidewalls, dormer need to be addressed, structural stuff needs to be addressed per Domenick Cimina.

Need second quote from roofing company. Olde Mohawk Historic Preservation, Jackson was recommended but don't know if has been contacted.

House cleaning first asks Richard Jackson? Motion to clean roof first before mason work by Jeanne Craigie seconded by Jeremy Zasowski roll call yes 7/0 Jessica Gerke, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Masonry go with lowest price as there isn't noticeable difference. Jeremy Zasowski suggests we wait to decide. Capuano more experience up high and has been at Whip Hill before, Gerrior more on the ground per Richard Jackson. AJ Jamogchian did good work last time which was at least 10 years ago. Repointed and treated chimney last time it was done. Flashing should be addressed per Domenick Cimina. AJ Jamogchian said underneath casement windows should be dealt with as well.

Jeanne Craigie mentions architects executive summary lists windows.

Gates in courtyard are mounted in brick per AJ Jamogchian.

Domenick Cimina will meet with Jim Previte and mason, Jeanne Craigie suggests matching executive summary.

When is last time Capuano came out asked Megan Day? Jim Previte can be consulted. Records can be reviewed.

Tree Policy

Brookmeadows Tree Replacement plan

Motion to accept LEC plan by Richard Jackson seconded by Jessica Gerke Roll call yes 8/0 Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Review for Jurisdictional Tree Removals: 15 Gould Street, 6 trees have been trimmed over the years. DPW said they could trim but he cut them all down. Large trees were removed, within 30 feet of Sweetwater Brook. Bike path separates it from Recreation park. Trees are jurisdictional. Did consult 2 town departments. Motion to email 15 Gould Street by Jeanne Craigie and seconded by Jeremy Zasowski roll call yes 8/0 Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Commission discussed your situation and while they are pleased you are planting a tree we are looking at a policy that is a 1:1 replacement so it would be great if you could plant more than one tree. Going forward please remember that your property is jurisdictional to the Conservation Commission and we would appreciate it if you would be in touch before your project as opposed to after.

9 Birch Street tree removed and left stump so no replacement necessary. Letter from certified arborist.



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Jeanne Craigie it would be great to get the word out in bullets.

Jessica Gerke mentions living with the wetlands brochure. Signs, social media, website, getting the word out to people who live in Conservation's jurisdiction. Megan Day we have a Facebook page, we can post brochure. Megan Day mentions we could include in a mailing, most successful is when neighbors share with each other.

Feedback from Brady/Galvin

Megan Day asks does tree policy have to go into bylaws? Stand alone part of regulations. Does not need to go to town meeting. Jessica Gerke believes this falls under Conservation Commissions jurisdiction.

Motion to accept tree policy by Megan Day seconded by Jeanne Craigie roll call yes 8/0 Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Matters not anticipated

Jeremy Zasowski tree town usa, do we track trees planted and trees removed? Tree committee per Megan Day has not met recently. DPW planted 25-75 trees last year per Richard Jackson. Ask Brett Gonsalves for input, put on Facebook page. No real authority, committee put together at town meeting. Megan Day is Conservation representative, create policies and plant trees. Has board disbanded?

DCR tree program in state Jen Enck wonders why Stoneham isn't part of it? Provide native species to plant. We are not a gateway community per Megan Day. Jeanne Craigie mentions trees can be planted by DPW. Norman L'Esperance tree at Whip Hill will be dedicated with his family, with a plaque in the ground from Maria Sagarino, 5pm Sunday pot luck in parking area.

Approve Meeting Minutes from May 12, 2025

Motion to approve minutes by Richard Jackson seconded by Jeanne Craigie roll call yes 8/0 Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski

Next Meeting July 14, 2025, 6pm. Tuesday June 17th at 4:30pm.

Motion to adjourn by Richard Jackson seconded by Megan Day roll call yes 8/0 Jessica Gerke, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Craigie, Jen Enck, Annalisa Bhatia, Domenick Cimina, Megan Day, Jeremy Zasowski