

Heath Conservation Commission (HCC)
Public Meeting Minutes
Feb. 11, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 7:10.

Members present: Brian DeVriese, Chair, Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Heather Row, Pam Porter, Sue Draxler.

Others present: Bill Lattrell, HCC Consultant, Anne Emmet, property owner, Maureen O'Malley, community member, Mia Francesconi, Town Coordinator

Review and discuss Emmet Request for Determination

A site plan was presented for changing the position of the proposed garage to make it more accessible for vehicles. The previous location required too sharp a turn for easy entry. A site plan was presented that shows the proposed new location, which is outside the wetland buffer zone but quite close to it.

The consultant asked if the new site requires digging. Property owner said that it does because of the slope. Consultant said that because of this, the new site will require a siltation barrier which, with the owner's permission, he indicated on the site plan. He recommended hay wattles as being an easy, effective and inexpensive material for the construction of the barrier.

Consultant concluded by recommending that the HCC render a negative 2 determination for the site.

A motion for a negative 2 determination was made by Pam Porter and seconded by Heather Row.

Chair, Brian DeVriese recused himself from the vote because he did some of the design work on the house and site.

Vote passed with 4 yeas and one abstention.

Anne Emmet and Lyra Johnson Fuller left the meeting.

Discussion of National Grid 1019W1 project landscaping proposal:

National Grid has made a request for suggestions for the planting on Avery Brook Rd. Consultant noted that his planting was required in order to replace habitat lost in the pole project underway along the road and restore forage for wildlife. The cultivated High-bush Blueberries proposed by National Grid are not good for birds. The bushes produce berries that are too big for many of them to consume.

Consultant listed the following options as more appropriate to support wildlife: winter berry, native high-bush blueberries, aronia, viburnum, high-bush cranberry (a variety of viburnum) and choke berry. He named Nasami as a source for native plants.

Pam Porter noted that these plants were recommended in condition of the determination issued at the onset of the project.

National Grid is also looking for a recommendation for a landscaper to handle this part of the project and the project manager proposed that the town of Heath might hire one of their choosing and then submit to bill to National Grid. Both the Consultant and the Town Coordinator stated that this is not appropriate and that the project needs to be handled by National Grid.

Review and approve past meeting minutes.

There were none available.

ConCom consultant's report –

- I. Consultant reported answering questions asked by David Cameron, a wetland consultant who is considering submitting a bid for the Burnt Hill-Catamount Trail mitigation work. Consultant expressed a high degree of confidence in Mr. Cameron's experience and expertise. Town Coordinator said that three wetlands' consultants were contacted about the project but that so far none has submitted a bid. Mr. Cameron is so far the only one that has expressed interest.
- II. Ned Wolf contacted the consultant about the siting of a solar panel he is having installed. The consultant reports there are no wetlands issues related to this project.
- III. The Consultant reports on having signed off on some building permits, largely in Mohawk Estates.
- IV. It was noted that a record of all contacts for consultation and building permits is submitted with the Consultant's yearly request for the payment of his stipend.

Chair Report:

Chair reported on correspondence with Parks and Rec Chair, Michael Cucchiara, in which Mr. Cucchiara declined an invitation to attend the HCC meeting, which was offered because of the planned discussion issues pertaining to the Burnt Hill-Catamount Trail mitigation. Mr. Cucchiara wrote that he could not attend such a meeting without the presence of legal representation.

Chair shared this correspondence with the Select Board who, he reports, did not share Mr. Cucchiara's view on the need for legal representation. Further, it was made it clear by the Select Board Chair that the mitigation is under the jurisdiction of the Select Board, not Parks and Rec. Future communication on the issue will be directed to the Select Board.

Adjournment:

There being no further items for discussion, a motion to adjourn was made by Heather Row and seconded by Sue Draxler and passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Porter, Member
HCC