

Mount Holly Conservation Commission
Meeting of July 1, 2025
Draft Minutes

Opening

The June meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission was held at the Town Office on Tuesday, July 1, 2025. Phil Crane called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Members attending in person were Phil Crane, Jeanmarie Fitzgerald, Peter Smith, Alex Yuster, Phil Leonard and Dave Martin.

Agenda and Minutes

The agenda document was approved. Minutes from the June 3 meeting were approved as presented.

There was a brief discussion about membership. Alex will follow up with Birbir Nilsen to see if he is interested enough to apply for a spot on the Commission. Phil C. asked about the state Conservation Commission group and about nearby CCs. Dave said that Ludlow has an active Recreation Commission and Director.

Discussion of Agenda items

Dave began discussing the Recreation Committee. Star Lake has taken up much energy, but other recreational matters are underway. Dave is engaged with marking trails on land he owns jointly with Andy Schulz. This is located on Shunpike Road and was formerly part of the Syria Farm. The vision for trails is wider than just on that property. Alex spoke of lands located on Tiffany and Old Tiffany Roads, and the group spoke about trails near the Revolutionary Soldier grave marker near the NW corner of Mount Holly.

We discussed several Star Lake matters. Jeanmarie began with needs for the Recreation Area, including improved access, landscaping, a play area, funding, and recruiting local talent to accomplish desired improvements. Dave suggested formulating a statement presenting "Here's what we'd like to do now." Phil C. said that some of the trees in that area need attention and/or removal. Then we reviewed "to do" items from June 3 regarding Star Lake. We discussed taking up the wetlands issues we have encountered through elected officials. This will include seeking a slot at the coming Select Board meeting, and possibly contacting State Senator Brian Collamore. Phil C., Dave and Alex will take part in this process.

Under "Other and New Programs" Alex outlined her interest in working on wildlife crossings, including interactions with Shrewsbury and other neighboring Commission Commissions and with the Conservation Trust. She also mentioned education about invasives, and the *Mount Holly Bulletin Board* group in Facebook. Phil C. brought up the possibility of enlarging the membership of the Commission, now at 7 but as many as 9 earlier on.

Action Items

- Alex to follow up with Birbir Nilsen to see if he wishes to apply for a spot on the Commission.
- Recreation Committee to continue developing trail marking possibilities.
- Alex to send out a summary of the Star Lake meeting to attendees, using Sue's summary and updates from Jeanmarie and Phil L.
- Phil L. to continue on permitting, cleanups, hand pulling and bottom barriers.
- Commissioners to collaborate on short-range ideas for the Recreation Area.
- Investigate needs and strategies for trees in the Recreation Area.
- Phil C., Dave and Alex to pursue political outreach re. Wetlands issues.

Next Meeting

Our next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 5, at 6 pm in the Town Office.

Adjournment

Adjournment occurred at 7:10 pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Phil Leonard, Clerk