

Lincoln Conservation Commission (LCC) Public Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2026

Approved: February 18, 2026

This Public meeting was held virtually, pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 which extends through June 30, 2027, the ability of public bodies to meet in a fully remote or hybrid manner.

Members Present: Ari Kurtz (Chair), Mark Masterson, Joe Miller, Kathleen Shepard, and Ross Tucker

Members Absent: Becca Fasciano, Laura Regrut

Conservation Staff: Michele Grzenda, Conservation Director, Stacy Carter, Conservation Planner

The meeting opened with Mr. Tucker reading the Commission's Land Acknowledgement: *The Lincoln Conservation Commission gratefully acknowledges that we are meeting on the unceded land of Indigenous Peoples including the Agawam, Massachusetts and Pawtucket. We acknowledge the truth of violence, displacement, and forced migration perpetuated on these people. We are working to build practices and opportunities that will honor and support the continued struggle for equality, justice and liberation of Indigenous Peoples in and around our community. We also strive to preserve and protect these lands which are currently under our care.*

7:07 p.m. – Public Participation - The Chair invited questions and comments about items not otherwise on the agenda. No one participated.

7:08 p.m. Save Lincoln Wildlife Discussion – Save Lincoln Wildlife (SLW), an advocacy group of Lincoln residents, is working toward a ban on rodenticides in Lincoln. SLW member, Trisha O'Hagan, presented a slide show which included information about the citizen petition that SLW filed and that will be discussed at Annual Town Meeting. In addition, Ms. O'Hagan informed the Commission what the problem with Anticoagulant rodenticide (AR) is, the effects it has on our natural predators, and alternatives to ARs. The Commission expressed strong support for this initiative. Motion by Mr. Kurtz support the home rule petition warrant article at Town Meeting; seconded by Mr. Masterson; roll call vote: each member responded Aye.

7:39 p.m. Public Presentations: Lincoln Road Culvert and Mt. Misery Boardwalk

- Lincoln Road Culvert - The deteriorating stone box culvert at Stony Brook under Lincoln Road constricts flow, blocks aquatic passage, and shows structural problems with debris accumulation and missing masonry. Conservation staff are working with Charles River Watershed Association on grant applications for design and permitting, with construction funding to follow. The Town received a \$149,000 grant for FY26 for survey work, wetland delineation, and initial assessment design; this work is ongoing. In January, the Conservation Department applied for a \$150,000 MassDOT grant which, if awarded, will allow the Town to advance the design and complete permitting.

Replacement is a critical priority due to a planned water main upgrade in 2026–2027. Coordinating these projects would reduce costs by avoiding duplicate excavation, traffic control, and roadway work while minimizing disruptions to residents and emergency services. MassDOT funds would advance work from DER's Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program, taking Lincoln Road from approved conceptual design to 75% design and permitting, resulting in permit-ready plans for construction. Pierce Hill Road and Tower Road culverts will be addressed in future years.

The Lincoln Road replacement is part of a coordinated effort to restore aquatic connectivity in the Stony Brook subwatershed. Weston is advancing downstream projects at Church Street and Viles Street with MassDER and CRWA. Replacing the culverts at Lincoln Road, Pierce Hill, and Tower Road would

extend these improvements upstream, maximizing ecological benefits and creating a longer continuous resilient stream corridor. The Commission was very supportive of this initiative. No members of the public commented.

- Mt. Misery Boardwalk Project - Conservation staff submitted a funding request to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) on behalf of the LCC to design and permit a 1,000-foot boardwalk connecting the Mt. Misery parking lot to the Lincoln Canoe Landing. The existing trail is flooded through much of the year and is otherwise uneven and covered with tree roots, creating significant accessibility and usability challenges. A boardwalk would provide an important improvement to this segment of trail, as the area is part of the regional Bay Circuit Trail, serves as the only connection between Lincoln's Canoe Landing and the rest of Mt. Misery, and provides an important trail connection along Route 117 to Concord's Nine-Acre Corner. Improving the connection between the Mt. Misery parking lot and Canoe Landing was identified in the Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee's (BPAC) 2024 Master Plan as a "Key Initiative," with the trail recognized as both an important connection and a network gap.

Phase I of the project would involve designing and permitting the boardwalk, for which staff received a quote of \$96,100. Staff were anticipating submitting an application for MassTrails funds to cover the majority (80%) of the cost, with the request to the CPC for \$21,142 to provide the required 20% match for MassTrails funding including a 10% contingency for rising costs. The Commission recently learned that CPC did not support funding this project, so unfortunately the project will be on hold until another source for matching funds can be found. Staff will reconvene with BPAC in the summer to discuss next steps.

8:13 p.m. Administrative matters

- Review and Approve Minutes from 1/7/26 - Motion by Mr. Masterson to approve; seconded by Mr. Miller; roll call vote: each member responded Aye.
- Matlock Farm – Request to Remove Trees (Parcel 134-30-0) – Matlock Farm, a licensed farm using Town conservation land at Flint Fields, has requested permission to remove three hazardous trees that are dropping limbs into the field and creating a hazard for haying equipment. The trees include two dead ash trees and one mostly dead black birch that is leaning into the field. Motion by Mr. Kurtz to allow Matlock Farm to remove the three hazardous trees as discussed; seconded by Mr. Masterson; roll call vote: each member responded Aye.
- Lincoln Community Center Request to Remove Tree – The Community Center Building Committee (CCBC) requests permission to remove a large multi-stem white pine that is located on the east side of the under-construction Community Center. The tree is located within Riverfront Area (approximately ~170-ft from the stream), and CCBC believes that it is hazardous. The tree is old, very exposed, and multi-trunk pines tend to break at the joining point in high winds – CCBC estimates that approximately 40 feet of the trunk could hit the new building (being constructed) if it were to fall. CCBC proposes replacing the tree with a 3” caliper native tree. Motion by Mr. Tucker to allow the removal of the double trunk pine tree as a minor plan change to Order of Conditions #203-0988, with the requirement of the planting of a mitigation tree; seconded by Ms. Shepard; roll call vote: each member responded Aye.

8:31 p.m. Unpermitted Activities in Buffer Zone: 76 Old Sudbury Road

This item is to discuss unpermitted activities that have occurred in Buffer Zone at 76 Old Sudbury Road. Ms. Jamy Buchanan Madeja, Esq., representing Mr. Buckland, stated for the record the documents she and her client submitted for review: (1) “Timeline and Proposal for 76 Old Sudbury Road”, (2) letter dated 1/21/26 to LCC from Buchanan & Associates, Re: 76 Old Sudbury Road/Lincoln, MA/Buckland, (3) sketch submitted by Mr. Buckland on 1/23/26 showing “Current Edge of Lawn (approx.)” which Mr. Buckland drew in green, and (4) Affidavit signed by Mr. Buckland dated 1/23/26.

At the Commission's 10/29/25 meeting, the Commission discussed an Enforcement Order that staff issued to the owner of 76 Old Sudbury Road, Art Buckland. Staff conducted a site visit on 10/23/25 at 76 Old Sudbury Road at the request of the landowner to review proposed invasive species management. Staff observed that a large area of vegetation had been cleared in the 50-foot Buffer Zone up to the boundary of Bordering Vegetated Wetland, and that area had been converted to lawn.

At the 10/29/25 LCC meeting, Mr. Buckland attended and disagreed with some of Conservation staffs' findings. Specifically, Mr. Buckland stated his belief that the Enforcement Order is inaccurate regarding how much lawn conversion actually occurred in buffer zone. He requested that the Commission delay their decision on this Enforcement Order until Mr. Buckland and staff have time to go over the files on the property to get a better sense of what's going on.

Staff have since met with Mr. Buckland and his attorney in the office to review files. Mr. Buckland also provided a site plan dated 1/25/16, and there has been a number of email correspondences with Mr. Buckland. On 11/24/25, Conservation staff visited the property (with permission) to measure the current lawn area and compare it with a site plan from 1/25/16 that showed the lawn line that existed at the time. Staff have put together a sketch using the 1/26/16 site plan titled "Change of Lawn over Time" dated 12/1/25, that shows the change in lawn area over time for the property – this site plan shows:

- The surveyed edge of lawn from 1/25/16 in green.
- The "Proposed Erosion Control Barrier & Limit of Work" in yellow (where erosion controls were installed during the construction of the new house).
- The approximate edge of lawn as seen from staff photos taken at a site visit in September 2024 in blue.
- The current edge of lawn as measured by staff on 11/24/25 in red. The lawn appears to have expanded since it was surveyed in 2016, and has certainly expanded since it was grown in in 2024.
- Areas in orange that appear to have recently been cut, but not converted to lawn. One of these areas includes a patch of native winterberry within Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, and the other is a large patch of approximately 2,000 sq.ft. in Buffer Zone.

Staff sent a memo dated 12-3-25 requesting that Mr. Buckland respond to the following staff observations: (1) the differences that appear in the size of the lawn within Buffer Zone between 2016 and 2025; (2) several trees appear to have been cut during this time; (3) an area of brush in Buffer Zone and wetlands was cut; and (4) a portion of Mass Audubon property in the Buffer Zone was cut, and staff are in receipt of a 1/21/26 letter from Mass Audubon to Mr. Buckland stating that all mowing, clearing, or other land-altering activities within this area cease, and that the land be allowed to return to its natural condition.

Mr. Buckland stated that the erosion control barrier (ECB) were not installed as shown on the approved plan. The barrier was insalled in 2017, and Mr. Buckland believes that the ECB was placed in a different location. Second, Mr. Buckland continues to maintain a very mature lawn as shown in the green line. Mr. Buckland believes that staff incorrectly drew the 2025 lawn line. He does not believe the lawn exists to the wetland edge as staff showed. Mr. Buckland disputes that he cut a 18" oak tree which staff believe shows on the 2016 plan (shown as BM2 on the plan).

Ms. Madeja showed 2021 and 2019 photographs of a small portion of Mr. Buckland's lawn and garden area near the granite bound delineating a corner of the MAS property. Mr. Madeja believes that 2019 photos shows that there was no oak tree but there is a lot of garlic mustard.

Ms. Madeja shared the sketch "Current Edge of Lawn (approx.);" prepared by Mr. Buckland, and he requested the Commission allow him to recreate a garden and woodpile as shown on this plan.

Mr. Buckland stated he removed a lot of garlic mustard and mile a minute vines in the Buffer Zone. Mr. Buckland read from Mr. Burke's NOI narrative from 2014 which stated "the lawn been there for decades outside the wetland area".

Mr. Kurtz asked whether Commission members feel the lawn is grandfathered and what is the current edge of lawn. Mr. Buckland explained that he wishes to keep what is shown on the “Current Edge of Lawn (approx.)”.

Although Mr. Buckland stated that the current edge of lawn is similar the 2016 lawn line, Ms. Grzenda pointed out that lawn line drawn by Mr. Buckland on the “Current Edge of Lawn (approx.)” sketch appears to more closely match the red line on the “Change of Lawn over Time” dated 12/1/25. Mr. Miller stated that he agrees with Ms. Grzenda that the 2025 line staff drew in red looks to match the yellow line that Mr. Buckland drew on his sketch as the existing lawn line. He also asked what methodology the staff and Mr. Buckland used to delineate these current lawn lines. Staff stated that they tape-measured the line on the east and west portions of the backyard using known locations (fences and bounds) observed on the property. The southern boundary of the lawn follows the wetland delineation flags. Mr. Buckland disagrees the lawn exists where shown in red.

Mr. Tucker and Mr. Miller believe that the 2016 lawn line is grandfathered, but expressed concern that the current lawn is larger. Mr. Buckland offered to have a surveyor survey the current edge of lawn and show that on a plan with the 2016 line drawn for comparison. Mr. Kurtz agreed that this is an important next step.

Next, Mr. Kurtz expressed concern about the recently cut brush area and suggested that the Commission issue an Enforcement Order acknowledging this cutting was done without a permit and require either (1) Mr. Buckland cease cutting of these areas and allow the area to grow in naturally or (2) Mr. Buckland file a Notice of Intent for a long-term invasives management plan for his property.

Mr. Buckland stated that he removed a number of invasives including Mile-A-Minute Vine. Ms. Madeja read from Mr. Buckland affidavit. Ms. Carter stated that she did not give Mr. Buckland verbal permission to remove invasive plants in Buffer Zone. The Commission has an invasive species removal policy which allows staff to administratively approve certain projects but it’s is always in written form. Ms. Madeja objected to issuance of an Enforcement Order for the invasive species work done and hopes the Commission can administratively approve the work through an Invasive Species removal plan. Ms. Grzenda reminded the Commission that vegetation was also cut in a wetland and Ms. Madeja acknowledged that a filing of an NOI for vegetation control in a wetland is appropriate.

In regards to a proposed garden and wood pile, Mr. Kurtz requested that a sketch of the approximate location and details in terms of what it entails (i.e. will it be flush with the ground, approx. size, any irrigation needs, any fertilizer use?) be submitted for the Commission’s administrative review.

Ms. Grzenda summarized next steps: (1) Mr. Buckland will hire a surveyor to delineate the current edge of lawn by March 30, 2026; (2) Commission is amenable to administratively approving a small garden on the lawn contingent upon details discussed being submitted for review and approval; (3) Commission will discuss the brush cutting at the next meeting; (4) Commission will discuss the yard waste pile that was improperly placed in the wetland resource area, and Ms. Madeja stated that it’s been satisfactorily removed; (5) There is still some uncertainty about whether Mr. Buckland will cease maintaining Mass Audubon property.

The Commission will place this matter on a future meeting once the survey has been received.

10:08 p.m. Admin Matters

- Food Project Request to Sublicense to Codman Farm and Nubia, Inc. – The Food Project requested permission to sublicense land to Codman Farm and Nubia, Inc. Staff drafted a revised license for the Commission’s review that included sublicensing language. Motion by Mr. Kurtz to approve the proposal by The Food Project to sublicense through 2027; seconded by Mr. Miller; roll call vote: each member responded Aye.
- MassDOT Enforcement Order Update – Mass DOT submitted a number of updates and discovered that some of the improperly placed woodchips was deposited on private property. DOT anticipates removal of

the inpropertyly placed woodchips in the spring, once landowner permission is sought. DOT continues to work on a draft policy to educate future vegetation removal contractors on WPA rules.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.