

ALTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

ALTON TOWN HALL

March 26, 2026

Members:

Gene Young, Chairman

Russ Wilder, Vice Chairman

David Mank

Tom Diveny

Tara Lamper

Ken Sheehan

Drew Carter, Selectman's Rep

Others Present:

Dana Huff, Bree Rossiter

Members Absent:

Drew Carter, Selectmen's Representative

Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved as printed.

Presentations/Consultations:

Dana Huff, Bree Rossiter, discuss water sampling plans for the Alton Power Dam/Wentworth Pond draw-down

D. Huff has picked up from Bob Craycraft 8 sets of sampling bottles for the sampling of the Merrymeeting River during the draw-down. He will pick up sample bottles for contaminant testing from Eastern Analytical tomorrow (3-27-26). Lake Winnepesaukee Alliance will provide equipment to measure water clarity. Samples will be taken at the site of the stream gauge just upstream from the old power turbine building or from the bridge to Jones Field. Several experienced people have volunteered to help take samples. The idea of placing a staff gauge at the Route 28 bridge over the Merrymeeting river was discussed. LWA could provide a staff gauge for installation on one of the bridge abutments.

Approval of Minutes:

Russ Wilder moved and Tara lamper seconded a motion to approve the minutes of March 12, 2026. Motion passed with 5 yea, Tom Diveny abstained.

PERMITS AND APPLICATIONS

(Any permit or application that has been signed off by the Chair or Vice-Chair is entered here for the record, unless any Commissioner has questions or comments)

Planning Board/ZBA Department Head Review Agenda Items:

P26-08 - Jones & Beach Engineers, Inc., Erik Poulin, Agent for Rand Hill Realty, LLC, Owners, Map 49 Lots 4, 5 & 5-1; 426 Rand Hill Road *Proposal: To construct a self-storage facility with 2 storage buildings including parking and utilities.*

COMMENT: Aquifer Protection District is only shown on the Overview Existing Condition Plan (Sheet C1). It should be shown on the Sheets C2 and C3. Bioretention Basins receive discharge from oil/water separator and are unlined – designed to discharge to groundwater in the Aquifer Protection District. From the Town's 2023 Master Plan: Alton's Zoning Ordinance includes an Aquifer Protection Overlay District that applies to activities within the stratified drift aquifer areas mapped by USGS. The Ordinance provides for groundwater recharge, prohibits the disposal of hazardous

waste and solid waste other than brush and stumps, and provides for additional review for any onsite wastewater disposal beyond that typical of a single family home. However, several other land uses typically prohibited in an aquifer protection overlay district would be allowed in Alton if allowed in the underlying zone. These include storage of road salt, snow dumps, junkyards, gasoline stations and other uses involving petroleum products in bulk. Alton's important aquifer areas would benefit from strengthening the Overlay District to prohibit these uses and to require conditional use permits for uses that involve the handling of toxic and hazardous materials in greater than typical household quantities. Requiring a conditional use permit would enable enforcement of performance standards, also known as best management practices, to ensure that the underlying groundwater is protected from contamination.

By Russ Wilder, 3/9/26

P26-09 - Apex Land Solutions, Ryan Heath, Agent for Sand Street Investments, LLC, Owner Map 9 Lots 10 & 10-1 Route 11/Henry Wilson Highway *Proposal: To allow construction of an HVAC business and a truck repair garage, with individual well, septic, parking and utilizing a shared driveway.*

COMMENT: The site lies within the Protected Shoreland under the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA) and the Town's Aquifer Protection Overlay District as noted on Sheet 1. From the Town's 2023 Master Plan: Alton's Zoning Ordinance includes an Aquifer Protection Overlay District that applies to activities within the stratified drift aquifer areas mapped by USGS. The Ordinance provides for groundwater recharge, prohibits the disposal of hazardous waste and solid waste other than brush and stumps, and provides for additional review for any onsite wastewater disposal beyond that typical of a single-family home. However, several other land uses typically prohibited in an aquifer protection overlay district would be allowed in Alton if allowed in the underlying zone. These include storage of road salt, snow dumps, junkyards, gasoline stations and other uses involving petroleum products in bulk. Alton's important aquifer areas would benefit from strengthening the Overlay District to prohibit these uses and to require conditional use permits for uses that involve the handling of toxic and hazardous materials in greater than typical household quantities. Requiring a conditional use permit would enable enforcement of performance standards, also known as best management practices, to ensure that the underlying groundwater is protected from contamination.

By Gene Young, 03/09/26

Wetland Permit By Notification (PBN):

2026-00650 PBN Lakes Region Conservation Trust PBN M 79, L 16, Rattlesnake Island – *Complete removal of 6' x 3' x 3' concrete pad associated with a docking structure originally installed in 2001 pursuant to NHDES Permit 2001-00388 that was replaced/relocated in 2025. The concrete pad is located 1-2 feet east of the existing dock along the shoreline of Rattlesnake Island on Lake Winnepesaukee.*

The Commission has no objections to this application

Standard Wetlands, Dredge and Fill Applications:

2026-00714 STDWET Thompson 2016 Trust, M37 L8, 8 Coast Lane - *Repair of existing vintage boathouse and raising of its roof to the state allowed height of 18" above the dock. All work will remain within the existing and grandfathered footprint of the vintage boathouse.*

R. Wilder moved and G. Young seconded a motion to send the following comment to DES: The Commission has no objections to this application, however, it should be noted that the Town of Alton has a 15' height limit above the full lake level of 504.32'. A special exception for up to 20' can be applied for to the ZBA. Motion passed with 6 yea.

2026- 00563 STDWET Hopkins Irrevocable Trust of 2016, M18 L38-2, 24 Tranquility Lane – Repair existing permitted breakwater resulting in approximately 386 sq ft of temporary impacts. Also propose replacing existing permitted 196 SF dock attached to the breakwater which will result in 148 sq ft of temporary impact and 48 sq ft of permanent impacts. Propose removal of approximately 275 sq ft (16 CY) of ledge from southern side of existing boathouse for safer access and navigation to and from the structure.

After discussion, the Commission found no issues with this application.

Shoreland Permit by Notification (SPBN):

2026-00695 SPBN Michael Harrison, M42 L18, 193 Trask Side Road – Plan is to install an inclined elevator to access the lake. A porous walkway will be installed to access the lift from the house. Silt sock to be installed. Impact of 450 sq ft with 30 sq ft net change in impervious area.

G. Young moved to comment: What provisions are being made for pathways from the docks to the base of the elevator? Assuming that the elevator is for use by persons with some degree of mobility challenge, paths should be installed that are safe for passage from the docks to the elevator. Seconded by R. Wilder, motion passed 6 yea.

Shoreland Permit Applications:

2026-00356 SP Sandstreet Investments LLC, M9 L10 & 10-1, Rte 11/Henry Wilson Highway – proposing to construct a commercial building and associated parking within the shoreland protection area associated with the Merrymeeting River in Alton.

Russ Wilder moved and G. Young seconded, to comment: Both Lots 9-10 and 9-10-1 are in Alton's Aquifer Protection Overlay District (See note on Existing Conditions Plan).

From the Town's 2023 Master Plan: Alton's Zoning Ordinance includes an Aquifer Protection Overlay District that applies to activities within the stratified drift aquifer areas mapped by USGS. The Ordinance provides for groundwater recharge, prohibits the disposal of hazardous waste and solid waste other than brush and stumps, and provides for additional review for any onsite wastewater disposal beyond that typical of a single-family home.

- The Shoreland jurisdictional lines (50, 150 and 250) being shown on the drawings with the proposed development would be helpful (they are shown on the existing conditions plan only).
- What provisions are being made to preserve the public access path shown on the current conditions plan?
- Will there be parking provided for the public to access the ROW?
- Lots 9-10 and 9-10-1 are severely infested with Japanese Barberry (an invasive plant species). There should be no fill removed from the site because of the Barberry.

The motion passed with 6 yea.

Reoccurring/Unfinished Business & Projects:

(Incomplete projects may not be discussed at every meeting)

- 1) Water Quality testing and monitoring**
- 2) Property Management, Monitoring, and Reporting**

3) Social Media Accounts

4) Current Year Budget

5) Trails Committee

The Belknap County Conservation District has offered two interpretive signs for the “Wood in Streams” project at Hurd Brook. The Trails Committee agreed to accept the signs and install them in well-travelled locations along the stream.

K. Sheehan noted that he had walked the David Lawrence trail at Gilman Pond and found a large pine tree down along the trail with roots having damaged the trail. The Trail Committee will determine what is necessary to repair the damage to the trail tread and make plans accordingly.

6) OneDrive

7) Master Plan ConCom Action Items

Russ Wilder commented that, according to Bill O’Neil, Chairman of the Planning Board, the Master Plan Implementation Committee should be restarted after a new Town Planner is hired. Tom Diveny, Planning Board member, stated that several candidates are being interviewed.

8) Current and Future Conservation Projects

Russ Wilder reported that the Alton Trustees of the Trust Funds want to move ahead with the conservation of a 41-acre parcel (Map 14 Lot 14) of the Clough property along Chestnut Cove and Fort Point roads and adjacent to the Lakes Region Conservation Trust’s Trask Swamp Preserve.

9) Alton Power Dam, Mill Pond

Discussed in “Presentations/Consultations” above.

New Business: Registration for New Hampshire Land Trust Coalition on 04/10/26 (Gene Young, Russ Wilder, Ken Sheehan and David Mank)

Tom Diveny moved, Tara Lamper seconded, a motion to reimburse G. Young, R. Wilder, K. Sheehan, and D. Mank \$80 each for registration fees to attend the “Saving Special Places” conference. Passed by a vote of 6 yeas.

Commissioner Reports:

Chairman Report

The chair reported that Bree Rossiter is willing to join the Commission, and moved to invite her to apply to the Board of Selectmen to be appointed to a 3-year term as a member of the Commission. Tom Diveny seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Report

Russ Wilder reported that on March 5th he and Tom Diveny had attended the Lake Winnepesaukee Alliance Salt Summit in Moultonborough. It was well attended and provided information on how to reduce application of road salt while providing for public safety. On March 19th, he attended the Belknap County Conservation District’s 2026 Conservation Issues/Needs Assessment Conference and provided input on water quality and wildlife habitat protection. He also noted that on April 22 the Forest Society is sponsoring Earth Day activities at Mount Major. He mentioned that this event could be promoted through the Conservation Commission’s Facebook page.

Member Reports

Notice of Intent to Cut Timber:

Correspondence:

- **2025-03187 SP Gallant – Approved**
- **2026-00650 RMFI Lake Region Conservation Trust**
- **2026-00218 RMFI Turgeon request**
- **2026-00311 SP Ketzler – Approved**
- **2026-00384 SP Austin – Approved**
- **2026-00419 PBN Balducci – Approved**
- **Alton Power Dam Drawdown letter from Dam Bureau**
- **Loon Preservation email**
- **New England Forestry Consultants letter**

Date and time of next meeting:

April 09,2026 @ 6:00pm

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Young