

Conservation Commission Meeting  
Virtual Meeting  
August 17, 2023

This open meeting of the Sharon Conservation Commission was conducted remotely consistent with An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted during the State of Emergency, signed into law on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and as amended and extended through March of 2025. These provisions allow public bodies to meet remotely if reasonable public access is afforded so the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. For this meeting, the Conservation Commission convened by video/teleconferencing via Zoom, and members of the public were provided with access information so that they could follow the meeting remotely. All votes were conducted via roll call.

The remote meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. Note: this meeting was held at the August 17, 2023 Water Management Advisory Committee Meeting.

Conservation Commission Chair, Peg Arguimbau opened the meeting by reviewing the ground rules for the meeting. Roll call was taken of members and staff present and included: Chair, Peg Arguimbau, Alan Westman, Stephen Cremer and Susan Drisko. Vice Chair, Meredith Avery, Keevin Geller, and Jon Wasserman were not present. Staff present included Josh Philibert, Conservation Administrator and Jana Katz, Conservation Clerk.

David Crosby, Chair of the WMAC led the meeting. WMAC members present included: Chair, David Crosby, Vice Chair, Christopher Pimentel, Secretary Rory McGregor, Anne Carney, David Hearne, Lealdon Langley, and David Brookfield.

DPW Superintendent Eric Hooper was present as well as Robert Terpstra, Water Division Supervisor.

Additional persons in attendance via zoom:

Sam Schonfeld  
Adam Velthaus  
Frank Xia  
Lori Bihler  
Jonathan Hittie  
Betsy Schneider  
Arnold Pedowitz  
Marina Nillni  
Katie Gorman  
George Cheauneuf  
Matt Avars

<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Discussion Item</b>	Update on design plan for new treatment system to remove PFAS contaminants in ground water pumped from Sharon #2, #3, and #4 wells. Status of cost information on treatment system options.
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Superintendent Eric Hooper began the discussion, explaining to members and attendees that the DPW has been exploring options for a new drinking water treatment plant to remove per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contaminants from the town's water system for two years. The DPW has been working with Environmental Partners to identify available options for

constructing a permanent treatment facility for removing PFAS from ground water in Sharon. Partial funding options include ARPA, Federal earmarks and the Commonwealth's revolving fund. Water from three wells in Sharon need treatment (#2, #3, #4). The DPW considered six locations narrowing down considerations to three places. Potential building sites are: 2 Moose Hill Parkway, 3 Farnham Road, and 4 Tree Lane. Some constraints include FEMA flood plain issues, proximity to wetlands, proximity to residences, locating the facility on town land, and access to the facility.

Accessible off Moose Hill Parkway, Well #2 was initially considered as the ideal place for the new water treatment plant. Three sites at that location were assessed. One was not feasible because it would place the building in the FEMA flood plain, triggering additional design requirements (If a building is constructed within the FEMA flood plain, the entire lowest floor plus an additional foot would need to be out of the flood plain area. This option would require 15 ft of fill to meet that requirement.). A second potential option was considered unsatisfactory after a cost assessment. The third alternative at this site would have placed the entrance within 100 ft of a riverfront area and in a flood plain.

Well #3, located near Farnham Rd was also considered as it falls outside the riverfront area and wetland setbacks. However, due to the municipal yard waste site already in proximity of the well, Farnham Road was not selected as the best option because of the impact it would have on an already disturbed neighborhood.

Located off Tree Lane, two plans were proposed for construction near Well #4. One would place the building around the corner from the existing well on land purchased from the MBTA 59 years ago. Building access would require crossing a river front area, a wetland setback, and a FEMA flood plain. The last option would put the building between the existing well station and Tree Lane. Wetland setbacks and river front area would remain a concern.

Cost assessments were performed for potential projects at Well #3 and Well #4 locations. Tree Lane project totaled \$6 million less.

A representative from Environmental Partners shared her screen and continued the discussion by restating that the plant is a necessity and a no-build alternative is not an option. She provided a more in depth depiction of assessed alternative plans at each of the wells' locations and related challenges. Cost estimations range from \$41.9 million for the plant on Moose Hill Parkway, to \$36.4 million on Tree Lane. The Farnham Road site would cost roughly \$42 million.

WMAC Chair Crosby invited Conservation Commission Chair Arguimbau and members to ask questions regarding the presentation. Arguimbau praised the explanation of potential wetland and resource impacts. Crosby had also asked for feedback on two options that would place the plant at the Tree Lane location. The first would put the facility along the street. The second would encroach further into the wetland. Arguimbau explained to everyone present that the commission would have to take everything into consideration during a formal public hearing process. She invited members and Philibert to join in on the discussion.

Philibert voiced concerns about ongoing maintenance and emergency repair costs as well as related environmental impact. Cremer echoed some of Philibert's concerns. Westman asked for

more information regarding the use of subsurface exploration and geo technical reports when evaluating site alternatives.

Hooper stated his plans to file formally with the ZBA and Conservation Commission with plans for a building site located near Well #4 at Tree Lane. Arguimbau explained the hearing and permitting process timeline. Crosby opened the meeting up to members of the public.

Betsy Schneider addressed the meeting regarding the Tree Lane site and how it would negatively impact the neighborhood. Bori Bihler asked a question about Moose Hill Parkway. Adam Vetlhaus seconded Schneider's sentiments and then asked for further clarification regarding funding sources. Matthew Tavares identified himself as a direct abutter to the proposed plans at Well #4 with increasing concerns about the location choice. Katie Gorman expressed concern about unsafe traffic conditions around the commuter rail and Tree Lane during construction. Frank Xia and Eric Hooper discussed the financial impacts the development could have on the neighborhood in relation to the cost shared by the entire town. Julia Tavares noted noise from the train once the land is cleared for the building is a concern for her as a direct abutter to the proposed Tree Lane site.

After there were no other comments, the Chairs thanked everyone in attendance for their time and effort.

<b>9:01 PM</b>	<b>Motion to Adjourn</b>
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<b>The Conservation Commission members adjourned as the WMAC meeting moved onto the next agenda item.</b>
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