

## **Conservation Administrator's Report**

**Jo-Anne Crystoff, Conservation Administrator and Agent**

**January 2021**

**The State of Emergency** instituted by the arrival of Covid-19 continues to effect work in the conservation office. The Commission continues to meet remotely. Town Hall is closed to the public. The Commission no longer has discretion regarding opening public hearings during the State of Emergency and is required to adhere to the timelines in the Wetlands Protection Act regulations open a hearing within 21 days of receipt of an application.

**The Enforcement Orders against John Hillier** for work done in a Resource Area and the buffer zone without a permit on Central Avenue has come to a resolution after nearly two years. The Commission issued an Order of Conditions for the Notice of Intent submitted to the Commission in resolution of the Enforcement Orders.

**Treatments for Ayer's ponds** are being considered for summer 2021 and a Request for Quote has been issued by the Commission. The Commission hopes to continue treating weeds with a maintenance-level program pending approval of the warrant article at Town Meeting for funding this work.

**Regulations** to accompany Ayer's Wetlands Protection Bylaw have been approved by the Commission and will be file with the Town Clerk's office on February 1, 2021. The new regulations provide performance standards for work in an undisturbed buffer zone and include a 50' no-touch zone.

**A joint meeting** of the Commission and the Planning Board was held in order to refine the process of both boards working together on Open Space Residential Development subdivisions.

Commission meeting agendas continue to be full to overflowing. Time control plans have been put in place to fit agendas into time-limited Zoom meetings. The amount of new development coming to Ayer that requires Conservation Commission permits is straining our capacity to manage a large number of permit applications and oversight.

Please contact the Commission office with any questions at 978-772-8249 or [concom@ayer.ma](mailto:concom@ayer.ma)