

Conservation Commission
Monthly Report
May 2022

The Commission continues its varied work. In May, we processed several Requests for Determinations of Applicability for small homeowner projects. We were also contacted by Catania Oils about a field change to their expansion project which is under an open Order of Conditions. While the Commission did not have any issues with the proposed change, we asked that the project manager consult with DPW Director Dan Van Schalkwyk because of potential impact of the change to stormwater calculations.

The Commission continued to receive inquiries about what seemed to be a low water level in Long Pond with concerns that our re-installation of a new flow control device (aka 'beaver deceiver') may have had an adverse effect. Part of this perception on the part of some Pond View Estates residents had to do with their community dock which was now considerably higher over the water than previous years. Director Van Schalkwyk took a look and we were able to advise Pond View Estates that their dock needed some maintenance so that its pole brackets would allow the dock to slide up and down with the water level of the pond. It appears that when the beaver damming activity last fall thwarted the beaver deceiver and raised the pond level, when the water level dropped this spring with the new installation, the brackets were askew and did not allow the dock to readjust properly. Mystery solved!

On May 24, the Commission joined the Planning Board at their regularly scheduled meeting for a joint review of revised Open Space Residential Development subdivision guidelines. The guidelines are intended for adoption as regulations by the Planning Board at a later date. The draft guidelines were developed over the course of several meetings with two members of the Planning Board (Kranz and Diskin), two members of the Commission (Schmalenberger and Gugino), and Town Planner Mark Archambault.

On May 20, Jess Gugino joined a site walk at Pirone Park with Parks Director Jeff Thomas, Parks Commission Chair Jason Mayo, DPW Director Van Schalkwyk, and project managers for the proposed demolition/remediation and for the proposed rebuild of Kiddie Junction. In order not to slow down this project once it begins, the Commission was then able to advise the Parks Department of the kind of Conservation permitting, and timing, that would be needed for the two phases of the project. Parts of the project are within the Buffer Zone to Grove Pond.

This is Jess signing off as Interim Conservation Office Administrator – in enthusiastic anticipation and welcome of Heather Hampson taking over June 6 as the Commission's new Conservation Agent!

Submitted by Jess Gugino, Conservation Commission Member/Clerk, and Interim Administrator.