



## City of Cambridge Conservation Commission

147 Hampshire Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Ph. 617.349.4680

*Jennifer Letourneau, Director*

*jletourneau@cambridgema.gov*

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### Public Meeting – Monday, May 11, 2026, at 7:00 PM Zoom MEETING MINUTES

The following meeting minutes were taken by Lena Frappier and are respectfully submitted.

Present Commission Members: Jennifer Letourneau, Director; David Lyons, Chair; Kathryn Hess; Lorie Graham; Khyati Saraf; Jim Gerstle; Juliet Simpson, Associate; Rob Vandenabeele, Associate

Absent Commission Members: Elysse Magnotto-Cleary, Vice Chair; Erum Sattar

Attendees: Lena Frappier, DPW; Kara Falise, DPW; Christopher Newhall, Eversource; Simon Hildt, Epsilon Associates; Chuck Eck, Eversource; Glen Call, MWRA; Julie Sullivan Thakur, MWRA; Luke Smith

David Lyons, Chair opened the meeting.

Jennifer Letourneau reviewed the meeting agenda as Green Cambridge NOI was postponed to June 15 due to abutter notification issues.

Congratulations and introductions:

- Jim Gerstle appointed as full member.
- Kathryn Hess begins new term.
- Rob Vandenabeele and Juliet Simpson welcomed as new associate members.
- Both Rob and Julie provided 60-second introductions summarizing conservation, ecology, and horticultural backgrounds.

#### **7:04 – Notice of Intent**

**Eversource Greater Energy Project**

**DEP File #123-328**

**Magazine Beach: Transmission Lines Under the Charles River**

Continued from prior hearing with below updates.

- DEP issued file number 123-328 with no technical comments.
- Boston Conservation Commission issued an Order of Conditions for the Boston segment.

- Jennifer summarized Boston’s questions and Eversource’s answers on:
  - Spill prevention plan
  - Environmental monitoring
  - Soil management procedures
  - Stabilization methods during drilling
  - Construction passes and sequencing
  - Truck pathways
  - Contingency planning
  - Other permitting (Article 97, DCR, etc.)
  - Monitoring for inadvertent returns under the river

Boston’s Special Conditions:

- Submission of final Inadvertent Returns Contingency Plan before work begins.
- Submission of LSP scope of services before work begins.

Discussion with Eversource Representatives (Chris, Simon, Chuck):

- Final inadvertent returns plan will be completed once drilling contractor is selected.
- Plan will cover all potential inadvertent return scenarios (land and river).
- Methods discussed: pressure adjustments, minor trajectory changes, containment booms, turbidity curtains, possible localized cofferdams.
- Drilling anticipated to begin in November pending remaining permits (401 WQC, ACOE, Chapter 91) and last roughly 5 months.
- Soil/debris management: screening cuttings, LSP sampling, disposal at licensed facilities.
- Noise/vibration: Eversource will coordinate with schools and neighbors; mitigation measures available (sound blankets, communication protocol).

One member of the public was present with no comment.

**7:31 – Motion:** Kathryn moved to close public comment.

**Second:** Khyati

**Vote:** 5 – In Favor, 2 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Yes

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – No objection

Juliet (Associate) – No objection

Public comment closed unanimously.

**7:32 – Motion:** Kathryn moved to issue an order of conditions with the special conditions discussed.

**Second:** Lorie

**Vote:** 5 – In Favor, 2 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Yes

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – Abstained

Juliet (Associate) – Abstained

The commission unanimously approved to issue an order of conditions with special conditions. Jennifer will issue the Order within 10 business days.

**7:34 - Request for Determination of Applicability  
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)  
Blow-Off Valve Assembly W15-19-A,B Leak Repair  
Across from 777 Memorial Drive, associated with the Charles River**

Project Summary:

- MWRA investigating a suspected leak at an 8-inch valve on a major 48-inch water main.
- Work involves soft-dig excavation followed by vacuum excavation to avoid utility conflicts.
- Within 25-ft urban riverfront and bordering vegetated wetland.

Site Protection & Restoration:

- Erosion controls: silt fence, straw wattle, hay bales, triple-layer protection near excavation.
- No vegetation removal needed.
- Restoration will use the native seed mix specified by staff.

Access & Pedestrian Safety:

- MWRA will obtain DCR’s construction access permit.
- Temporary detours for pedestrians/bikes likely for safety; DCR will review.
- Estimated work duration: 1–2 weeks.
- Excavation depth approx. 5–8 feet.

No public comment present.

**7:47 – Motion:** Lorie moved to close public comment.

**Second:** Kathryn

**Vote:** 5 – In Favor, 2 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Yes

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – No objection

Juliet (Associate) – No objection

Public comment closed unanimously.

**7:49 – Motion:** Lorie moved to issue a negative determination of applicability with special conditions

**Second:** Kathryn

**Vote:** 5 – In Favor, 2 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Yes

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – No objection

Juliet (Associate) – No objection

The commission unanimously approved to issue a negative determination with special conditions.

**7:51 – Approval of Meeting Minutes- March 9, 2026, March 23, 2026, April 13, 2026**

**Motion:** Kathryn moved to approve the minutes.

**Second:** Elysse

**Vote:** 4 – In Favor, 3 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Absent

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – No objection

Juliet (Associate) – No objection

The commission unanimously approved the meeting minutes

**7:55 – Administrative Topics**

- Green Cambridge NOI confirmed for June 15.
- Kathryn joining new CSO Working Group.
- Fresh Pond Advisory Board seat open — Rob volunteered and was selected.
- Jennifer will notify Water Department contacts.
- Jennifer will schedule onboarding/orientation for new associate members (policy review).
- Brief mention of upcoming CPA cycle and potential project suggestions.

**8:03 – Adjournment**

**Motion:** Jim moved to adjourn meeting

**Second:** Kathryn

**Vote:** 4 – In Favor, 3 - Absent

David – Yes

Elysse – Absent

Erum – Absent

Kathryn – Yes

Khyati – Absent

Lorie – Yes

Jim – Yes

Rob(Associate) – No objection

Juliet (Associate) – No objection

Meeting adjourned.