

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
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Executive Director

**BERKSHIRE CONSERVATION COMMISSION GROUP MEETING**

**January 5, 2011 7:00 PM**

**1) Welcome and introductions**

Attendees:

Terry Eucker, Berkshire Conservation Agent  
Thomas Saksnaug, Sandisfield Conservation Commission  
Ben Barrett, Egremont Conservation Commission  
Ken McInerney, New Ashford Conservation Commission  
Stacy Parsons, Lanesboro Conservation Commission  
Lauren Gaherty, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Terry provided an overview of the BCCG, and attendees introduced themselves.

**2) Review of the November 3, 2010, Meeting Notes**

**3) Member issues/Discussion**

Terry said that the attorney general's office now says they will be doing statewide workshops and to watch their webpage. She offered to help facilitate one in Berkshire County.

Lauren Gaherty said that BRPC and Pittsfield have been contacted about hosting a stormwater workshop. Terry offered to work with them and suggested a field component to observe a site under construction.

Ben had questions about new maps the commission from received MA Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (MNHESP) showing certified vernal pools in town one of which was on his property and he did not give permission for it to be certified. Others also commented on the new maps they had received and the number of new pools. Terry said she did not think one could be certified without someone seeing the pool but she would check with MNHESP on it and see if a person can find out who certified a pool on their land.

The group also discussed a riverfront project where the applicant attempted to get a perennial stream classified as intermittent and was denied by the commission. The applicant appealed to DEP but later withdrew the appeal stating they did not want to set any precedents. Terry said that DEP told her that the applicant was not going to win the appeal and she explained that the applicant would not withdraw otherwise because the change made a significant difference in the number of lots they would have on the site.

Ben said he would like to see a way that information on the Wetlands Regulations could be given to new property owners when they have a closing on their land. The group discussed various ways to notify new owners of potential wetland issues such as pamphlets, mass mailings with the tax bill, and town newsletters.

A discussion was had about the importance of registering an Order of Conditions so that new owners will know of wetland issues and possible on-going conditions. Terry described a problem when the owner filed the Order and neglected to attach the special conditions and reminded the group that commission can file for the applicant. Stacy described a project where a new owner forced the seller to abide by a continuing condition to fix problems on the site before they would pay the full selling price to the owner. Terry reminded the group that commissions should not feel pressured to issue a Certificate of Compliance just because an owner is in a sudden hurry to sell. If the work is not complete, especially monitoring of replication areas the owner and seller can reach a financial agreement like in the case Stacy described and proceed with the sale.

#### **4) Training Workshop: Training Topic - Hands on Exercise (7:15 - 8:30)**

##### **Invasive Species.....What are they, why are they a problem and what are some of the ways to control them?**

Terry provided a workshop on invasive species with definitions, the environmental and economic impacts they create, and why they are a problem that needs to be addressed. She also showed everyone numerous websites to get reliable guidance on which species are considered invasive, how to identify them, which have similar looking species that mean we need to properly do identification. Also sites with information on control methods for invasive species in our area, and suggested monitoring to ensure the work was successful, and suggested conditions for permitting. She said that the Westfield River Watershed group was working on developing a guidance document for review of invasive species control projects under the Wetlands Protection Act and they are hoping encourage the state to adopt it as guidance.

Workshop materials are available at: [www.berkshireplanning.org/conservationagent/BCCG](http://www.berkshireplanning.org/conservationagent/BCCG)

#### **5) Next Meeting**

Attendees agreed that the next meeting should be held at the BRPC offices, at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, February 2, 2011. Topics suggested were enforcement and herbicides for lake and pond management.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.