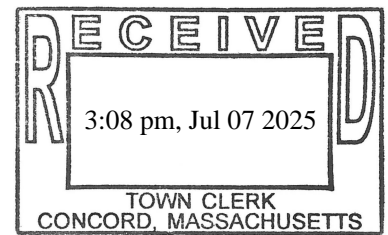


Warner's Pond Task Force
Short Term/Interim Actions Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2025



Pursuant to the notice filed with the Town Clerk, a public meeting of the Warner's Pond Task Force No Action Subcommittee was held on Thursday, January 14, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., via Zoom. The following Subcommittee members were present: Mark Howell, Bill Kemeza, and Bert Comins.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00pm.

Discussion on Subgroup Proposal

The Subgroup discussed the latest draft proposal and considered adding the word "enhanced" to the phrase "new recurring management plan" as a recommendation from Toby Berkman (Consensus Building Institute). They also discussed the potential for invasive species to appear in the watershed after dam removal. Mr. Howell suggested that the pond and bordering wetlands would remain susceptible to invasive vegetation regardless of the chosen course of action.

The Subgroup discussed the potential benefits of a more organized pond management plan as an alternative to major capital investments such as dam removal or dredging. They argued that this approach could be more affordable and may improve conditions in the pond without incurring large expenses. They also considered the affordability of their proposed solution in comparison to other options being considered.

Wording in the proposal regarding the management of invasive species in a pond and watershed was discussed. The Subgroup agreed to focus on achievable improvements rather than complete eradication, and to emphasize the targeted nature of their approach. They also decided to highlight the affordability of their proposal compared to other options. Mr. Kemeza planned to incorporate these changes into a final draft.

The Subgroup discussed the second bullet point about not precluding dam removal or dredging, agreeing to rephrase it as a more positive statement about considering improvements in the future. They also discussed the potential for fish passes to be designed. They agreed to present their recommendations as the best possible outcome, even though, individually, not all members may agree with this.

Removal of the Talbot dam and the implications for the Warner's Pond dam was also discussed. The Subgroup recommended a feasibility study on the construction of a fish passage be done if the Talbot dam is removed and there are no plans to remove the Warner's Pond dam. They also discussed the potential for modifying the Warner's Pond dam to achieve seasonal drawdown and support the fish population. The team decided to focus on the feasibility of a fish passage (nature like fishway) rather than a fish ladder.

The team discussed the frequency of meetings and the potential creation of a Warner's Pond Committee. They agreed to hold a stakeholders meeting at least once a year, with the possibility of increasing frequency if deemed necessary. The idea of a Warner's Pond Committee was suggested as an option for the NRC and DNR to consider, but not as a firm recommendation.

Mr. Kemeza discussed the potential costs for pond restoration, including estimated annual costs of \$56,000 and a one-time cost of around \$1 million. He suggested that the community preservation committee could contribute to the one-time costs. Mr. Howell agreed with these estimates, but suggested they be labeled as 'estimated costs' to avoid being seen as a budget. Mr. Kemeza also proposed the idea of a pump station, which could cost around \$2 million, and suggested the possibility of using temporary equipment or gravity to lower the pond. Ms. Clifford pointed out that the Warner's Pond Committee also had similar recommendations. Mark agreed to change the description at the top to 'potential estimated costs'.

Karlen, a member of the Finance Committee, asked about the timeline for finalizing the project recommendations, to which Bill responded that they aim to have a final recommendation by March, following a public meeting in late February. The team also discussed the possibility of a public meeting in February and the subsequent task force meetings to reach a consensus. Mark ended the conversation by expressing his appreciation for the team's flexibility and looking forward to the next meeting on Thursday.

Public Comment

Karlen Reed asked about the timeline for finalizing the project recommendations. Mr. Kemeza responded that they aim to have recommendations finalized by March, following a public meeting in late February.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47pm.