



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
**730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476**  
**Phone: 781-316-3000**

**webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us**

## Conservation Commission Minutes 02/28/2008

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
 MINUTES  
 FEBRUARY 28, 2008

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the second floor conference room of the Town Hall Annex. Present were Nathaniel Stevens, David White, Charles Tirone, William O'Rourke, Catherine Garnett of the Commission. Ellen Reed and Tim Sullivan of the Commission were not in attendance, as was Associate Member Ezra Benjamin. Mary Beth Dechant, Steve Murphy and John Reinhardt of the Mystic River Watershed Association attended, as well as Roly Chaput and David Stoff.

7:30 p.m. - COMMISSION BUSINESS

7:45 pm – PRESENTATION - Mystic River Watershed Association on water quality in Arlington's natural waterbodies

The Find it and Fix it program sampled multiple pipe outlets into streams, rivers and lakes in Arlington and tested the water quality, bacteria, nutrients, oxygen, chlorophyll, and more.

The worst conditions were found at:

- 1) Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, lots of erosion and Japanese Knotweed along the Mill Brook.
- 2) Spy Pond, there were high bacteria counts at the huge stormdrain outlet from Route 2, where an immense sand bar has accumulated in the western-most corner.
- 3) The DPW yard at Grove St, a grate inlet covering a stormdrain to Mill Brook was covered in trash, plant debris and litter. Mr. Chaput reported that this grate is cleaned once a week.
- 4) Of the 123 outfall pipes in Arlington tested, the worst problems were found at:
  - a) a big green pipe in the Winchester Country Club into Herbert Meyer Brook with slime coming out of it
  - b) the DEP issued a Notice of Noncompliance for bacteria for the entire Mill Brook last summer
  - c) two pipes into Alewife Brook, one at the end of Sunnyside Ave and the other at Massachusetts Ave had high bacteria counts.

Ms. Beckwith reported that the MWRA has two (20 and 24 inch wide) sewer lines along the Mill Brook alignment and they are currently being repaired by being relined.

The overall water quality is high in Arlington for nitrogen and phosphorus, two nutrients found in water due to broken or illegal hookups of sewage, overuse of fertilizers, or soil erosion. The town has a program in place to investigate and repair the sewer and stormdrain pipes, but it's a big job. A few years ago the pipes outletting near Henderson St bridge over the Alewife were tested and repaired.

A test for chlorophyll in waters represents the amount of algae. A test near the Boys and Girls Club in Spy Pond, in August 2007, came out low, even though there was a bloom of cyanobacteria in the cove near Princeton Rd in September.

They also reviewed water quality in the Upper Mystic Lake for habitat quality for herring and found that oxygen levels were probably too low to support much of a herring population.

They asked the Commission to join the Watershed Association.

White/O'Rourke motioned for the Conservation Commission to join the Mystic River Watershed Association for \$60; motion passed unanimously.

### COMMISSION BUSINESS (cont.)

O'Rourke/Garnett motioned to approve the 12/6/07, 1/3/08, 2/7/08 minutes with minor edits; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tirone reported on the work at Brattle St. by the townhouse project and the MWRA at the pump station. The work at the pump station will remain 35 feet back from the brook. The hose from the trailer will now go into a sewer pipe, as it was draining fresh water in order to keep pipes from freezing in the trailer.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Corinna Beckwith  
Administrator