



Town of Deerfield

Deerfield Municipal Offices
8 Conway Street
South Deerfield, MA 01373
Ph: 413-665-1400
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Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Group

Minutes

February 12, 2026

Members Present: Carolyn Shores Ness, Pete Law, Tim Hilchey, Celia Yazwinski, Denise Mason, Alex Galloway

Others Present: David Johnson (resident), Meghan Siudzinski (FCD), Kyla Power (FCD)

Call to Order at 4:00 pm

Meeting recap

The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Core Group meeting focused on reviewing a conservation district proposal to be included in the town's MVP ECO OneStop application, which will address flood mitigation through nature-based solutions along Bloody Brook. The group prioritized two culvert projects - the Pleasant Street culvert and the Captain Lathrop culvert - for potential funding. They discussed the concept of creating a "sponge community" to better manage water retention and flooding, with suggestions to implement pervious pavements in municipal projects and parking lots.

Public Comment: David Johnson, who lives at 112 N. Main St, raised concerns about Kelleher Dr. culvert issues, asking for clarification that the lower Kelleher culvert was replaced years ago. Carolyn pointed out that the MVP discussion is about the Pleasant St. culvert, which is inadequate, and causes water backup at the lower Kelleher culvert. David also expressed concerns about potential damage to his home due to construction and suggested that residents in the area document their properties before construction begins. The group discussed the need for soil studies and agreed to implement a preventative program during future construction.

Minutes: Pete made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded Tim – passed by majority vote (Denise abstained).

Bloody Brook Restoration Project Review (ECO OneStop Grant)

The committee reviewed a 4-page document with Meghan and Kyla from the Franklin Conservation District outlining a proposed project for restoring town-owned properties along Bloody Brook, which would be submitted as part of Deerfield's MVP application rather than as a separate Conservation District submission. Meghan explained that the project, involving local company Bound Design, would span 2-3 years and cost



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approximately \$545,000, with funding primarily coming from MVP rather than requiring a town match. The committee discussed how the project would address water quality and public health goals, with specific focus on restoring the town-owned portion of Bloody Brook between North Main and the train trestle, while also potentially extending work to nearby residential and commercial properties.

They reviewed two culvert projects: Pleasant Street, which was identified as the top choice due to its critical location and connection to existing grant work, and Captain Lathrop, which was selected as the second priority due to its collapsing condition and importance for sewer utilities. The discussion concluded with a plan to move forward with these two projects as sub-proposals within the town's MVP proposal, with the conservation district serving as a partner and/or subcontractor.

Riparian Zone Management and Training

The group discussed riparian zone management and wetland uptake potential, noting that a 10–20-foot corridor around the brook would be ideal but some areas fall short of this standard. They explored training opportunities for DPW staff, including developing trainers and maintaining marked areas during mowing season, with April 15th identified as the optimal time for mowing. The discussion also covered invasive species management, particularly knotweed, and potential collaboration with MassDOT for training programs, though this remains unconfirmed pending calendar coordination. Finally, they discussed procurement concerns, questioning whether public bidding would be required for this state grant project. More inquiries would be made to seek answers regarding procurement.

Vote: Denise made a motion to approve the prioritization of the Pleasant St and Captain Lathrop culverts for the MVP ECO OneStop grant application, Tim seconded, unanimously approved.



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Sponge Community and Culvert Planning

This part of the meeting focused on prioritizing culvert projects and discussing the town's efforts to become a "sponge community" to address flooding and drought issues.

Participants explored examples from other cities and discussed implementing pervious pavements in various town projects, including the Frontier parking lot. The group also considered the possibility of introducing bylaws to require pervious pavements in municipal-related projects.

Nature-Based Solution Project Discussion

The group also discussed nature-based solutions, including wetlands capacity and engineered plans. Participants clarified the location of a site on North Main Street and discussed issues with stormwater flow and pump stations. They also touched on the need for consultation with the Historic Commission regarding signage and the importance of air circulation requirements in buildings. The group agreed to address questions and concerns during the next public comment period.

MVP Next Meeting and Planning

The group scheduled their **next MVP meeting for March 10th at 4 PM** with a hard stop at 5 PM, and agreed to add a public forum debrief to the agenda. They discussed the possibility of presenting slides about the Sponge community at a future meeting. The group also addressed concerns about water quality and infrastructure, including a discussion about a culvert and its condition. They agreed to schedule a site visit for a project on River Road and to potentially reschedule a meeting from February to March 26th.

- Alex: Schedule and post the next meeting for March 10th at 4pm, with review of the preliminary MVP application as the first agenda item.
- Alex: Look into (with Denise) which board or process is responsible for considering bylaw changes related to requiring pervious pavement for new/reconstructed parking lots in town.

Carolyn: Follow up at the upcoming conference with MassDOT contacts regarding potential riverbank training for highway departments and report back to the group.



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- Alex: Schedule a site visit with RDA and post the related project for the next meeting (March 26th).

Next steps

- Alex: Check with Andrew Smith regarding whether the town needs to go through public procurement/bidding to contract with Bound Design for the MVP grant project.
- Kyla and Megan: Coordinate with David (resident) to provide contact information and determine if he is interested in participating in the residential native plant project under the innovative grant.
- Alex: Add public forum debrief to the agenda for the next meeting.
- Alex: Put "sponge community" discussion on the agenda for the next meeting, including potentially bringing in slides or materials for further explanation.

Adjournment (4:55 pm): Tim made a motion to adjourn, Denise seconded, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted, Greg Snedeker