

November 14, 2025

Dear Tim Pearson and Conservation Commission,

Thank you for soliciting input on the question of unpermitted use of public lands on Long Lake Park.

As a resident in the Long Lake neighborhood (57 Orchid Drive) and a regular walker along Lake Shore Drive, I am impacted by whatever decisions you make.

My perspective about the Long Lake and Long Lake Park is that the areas managed by Littleton's Conservation Commission should be maintained as conservation areas with the focus on wildlife, native species of plants, and the health of the lake. Views of the lake is via Lake Shore Drive (rather than a trail), which is now designated as a 20 mph safety zone, and access is via the beach/boat ramp which is managed by the parks and recreation department.

During the October 21, 2025, Conservation Commission public meeting we heard several residents with homes located across the street for the lake state that they "take care" of the land between the road and the lake. And it certainly appears, by the grass lawns that have popped up in certain areas, that "taking care" includes mowing/removing tree seedlings and native flora, raking/blowing leaves which then cannot protect overwintering insects, and shaping the natural lake edge to their whims. But these are public lands, it is not their right, nor conducive to a natural setting, for them to mow, add fixtures (docks, chairs), move rocks, cut down trees/shrubs, trim trees/shrubs to improve their views, do plantings (hedges/flowers), or store items (canoes/boats/kayaks).

Protruding unpermitted docks from the public land limits access to the lake (for most of the residents), disturbs the natural flora, impacts the species that the lake supports and changes what should be a natural setting around Littleton's Long Lake.

Most of the docks were put in or maintained by the people who live across the street from the public land, essentially, they are expanding their yards at the expense of the rest of the residents of Littleton. Furthermore, they are restricting access to the public and modifying the lake shore to their taste. If you allow the current docks to remain (permitted or not), to be equitable, the option to erect docks from public land should be offered to everyone living in Littleton. I don't think anyone wants that!

Several years ago, there were two public fishing docks located in front of the containment pond (over the years, they fell apart). That could be replicated with strategically placed public docks or boardwalks giving limited direct access to the lake. You could consider establishing a Conservation dock to support the work of Littleton conservationists.

The parking platform that someone built on public land should be removed or repurposed as public parking during daylight hours (there should not be overnight parking).

Until the trees and native plants re-establish themselves you might need to put up barrier fences to prevent unauthorized mowing and tree trimming.

Thank you for taking my input into consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily M. Squires

57 Orchid Drive

Littleton, MA