

# Halt of Worthington pond work sparks criticism

By JOAN LIVINGSTON

**WORTHINGTON** — Some residents here are criticizing the Conservation Commission because of that board's attempts to halt the expansion of a pond on Chucklebrook Farm owned by Thomas Pariseleti.

About 13 people last night told the selectmen they were concerned about the commission's enforcement order, which had stopped construction at the pond site last Friday.

The commission had voted unanimously to issue the order because of two onsite violations of the Wetlands Act — the contamination of a stream, which flows from the existing pond, with silt from the work area and the stockpiling of soil excavated from the construction site in a wetland area.

After meeting with Pariseleti Sunday and reviewing his plans to correct the measure, the commission lifted the order Monday. However, the project remains on hold pending an investigation by the Army Corps of Engineers.

## Critical of role

Some residents at the meeting were critical of the role they felt Sally Sheperdson, secretary of the

Conservation Commission, had played in the enforcement order.

"One person (Sheperdson) has exerted influence over the board," said Lois Ashe Brown of Elderberry Lane, who asked that Sheperdson's appointment be revoked. Brown said that Sheperdson has only lived in town for six months and is not a landowner, yet she can call a halt to an expensive project involving heavy equipment.

"She has polarized the town!" Brown said.

"I think that's absurd," Selectman Stephen Kulik commented. He noted that there are seven members of the commission and he advised the group to talk to them about their actions.

Selectmen also noted that an official's appointment cannot be revoked, but added that an official may be asked to resign or may not be reappointed for another term.

Sheperdson, contacted at her home following the meeting, however, declined to comment about the matter.

## Town 'got along well'

"This town got along well for 200 years without a Conservation Commission," Brown said. She stated she feels the same way about the

Board of Health, of which she is a member.

Kulik noted that officials are sworn to uphold state statutes and if they choose to ignore or fail to obey these laws, they could be setting the town up for an expensive lawsuit. The Conservation Commission's primary purpose is to uphold the Wetlands Act.

However, Brown said that common sense must be also considered by officials. She claimed the talk at the general store is "Worthington used to be a nice place until cockey, new people moved in here."

Patricia Nugent of Huntington Road questioned the criteria that selectmen have used to appoint town officials. Kulik said that an interest to serve on the part of the resident along with some expertise in the area is their primary criteria.

He said that when Sheperdson was considered, four members of the commission "pushed" for her appointment because of her background in environmental affairs.

In other business:

- Selectmen discussed with trustees of the Glen Grove Sanctuary the continuing abuse of the Dingle Road brush dump, particularly the depositing of trash and metal by residents

and out-of-towners.

Selectmen will try to devise a barrier for the site that is more effective than the snow fence and gate that now protect it. They will also determine who should legally be in charge of the area, town officials or the trustees.

Currently, the brush dump is open Saturdays from 2 to 4 p.m., with one of the trustees acting as an attendant.

- The State Department of Revenue has certified the town's free cash figure to be \$66,352. If approved by voters at a special Town Meeting to be held Oct. 21, some of this money will be appropriated to several accounts whose annual appropriations were cut this fiscal year.

These accounts include Town Office (\$750); Town Hall maintenance (\$250); library (\$400); maintenance for Center, North, and Ringville Cemeteries (\$2,100); Fire Department (\$1,000); and Huntington Ambulance (\$1,000). The rest of free cash would remain as available funds throughout the year.

- Selectmen signed a \$29,000 contract for design services with Reinhardt Associates of Springfield for the new fire station.