

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**
2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 Thursday, January 12, 2012

4 7 p.m.

5 Town Hall Basement Conference Room

6 45 South Main Street

7 Wallingford, Connecticut

8
9 **MINUTES**
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11
12 **Present:** Chairman Jeff Borne; Vice-Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Dianne
13 Saunders; Dianne Lendler; Tom Pietras; Jim Pyskaty; Carl Arsenault; Erin O'Hare,
14 Environmental and Natural Resources Planner.

15
16 **Not Present:** Commissioners John Lathrop and Ken Ryan.
17

18 Chairman Borne stated a matter would be taken up concerning a matter at Tyler Mill
19 Preserve that is time sensitive, and so Robert Beaumont, Vice-Vice-President,
20 Wallingford Historical Society, and Chairman of the Public Utilities Commission,
21 would present regarding certain tree damage resulting from Tropical Storm Irene.
22 Mr. Beaumont showed a slide presentation of the damage area located east of the
23 bridge upstream from the dam. He expressed concern that some trees are ready to
24 crash onto the cribbing which has historic significance. This area is one of the few
25 places in town where there is evidence of a mill. He said the water has come
26 through the main channel and the damaged trees that have fallen have begun to
27 form a natural dam.
28

29 Ms. Saunders said the tree damage is getting worse week by week. She said once
30 snow and ice form, the tangle of trees will fall. She suggested trying to find a way to
31 get this fixed before the cribbing is damaged in the heart of the park.
32

33 Ms. O'Hare said she had spoken to John Gawlak, Director, Parks and Recreation and
34 Henry McCully, Public Works Director, as possible funding sources to remove the
35 trees from the top of the cribbing at the dam, and in the process, remove the
36 bittersweet which is wrapped around the trees.
37

38 Mr. McCully indicated he would send out Steve Palermo next week with Ms. O'Hare
39 to observe the damage. Ms. O'Hare said Mr. McCully suggested using their tree
40 contractor if the cost is less than \$4,000.
41

42 Vice-Chair Heffernon suggested having a trail sign or booklets to highlight the history
43 of the Mill. Chairman Borne suggested the possibility of setting up a sub-committee
44 with the Historical Society.
45

1 *Chairman Borne requested Ms O'Hare obtain a quote on the cost of removing the*
2 *trees from the top of the cribbing at the dam at Tyler Mill Preserve.*

3
4 ***MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Heffernon second by Commissioner***
5 ***Arsenault, to pursue vegetation removal at the Tyler Mill dam, first priority***
6 ***to be the south side with the cribbing ; the second priority be the north***
7 ***side at the dam to be pursued with Public Works and that the***
8 ***Conservation Commission to request an allocation of up to \$2,000 from***
9 ***the Open Space Fund Resources Management to be coupled with the***
10 ***Parks and Recreation Department money. The motion passed***
11 ***unanimously.***

12
13 Mr. Beaumont left the meeting at this time.

14
15 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

16
17 **A. Minutes, December 8, 2012**

18
19 On page 2, line 4, Vice-Chair Heffernon said it should be Woodhouse "Avenue" not
20 "Road."

21 On page 2, line 35, Vice-Chair Heffernon said this should read "footstones installed."
22 Page 3, line 7, "Red Trail Tree Damage-nothing to report," Vice-Chair Heffernon said this
23 should read "reported as cleared."

24 Line 39, "Environmental Literacy Grant", Vice-Chair Heffernon said this should read "a
25 lot of work had been done."

26 Commissioner Arsenault said on Line 46-47-"all but one responded differently" should be
27 "only one responded differently."
28

29 ***MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Heffernon second by Commissioner Pyskaty***
30 ***to accept the December 8, 2011 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion***
31 ***passed unanimously.***

32
33 **2. Property Management**

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35 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

36
37 **1. Ravine Restoration (west of Field 7A).**

38
39 Ms. O'Hare said Ferrucci and Walicki have been asked to quote again to repair the
40 ravine as an add-on to trail work on the Pink Trail.

41
42 **2. DEP Recreational Trails Grant Program**

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44 **a. Work progress – report, Trails Committee**

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46 Vice-Chair Heffernon reported the work has been completed. She said the Committee is
47 now in the process of going out with a punch-list to check on all of the work.
48

1 Ms. Saunders spoke about the invasive species near the concrete bridge near the Red
2 Trail treated for multi-flora rose. She said the proposal was to cut the multi-flora rose
3 and return in the Spring to spray. Ms. Saunders said she and volunteers went out this
4 past weekend and marked silky dogwood, regular dogwood and two aspen. She said
5 they also marked where the invasives were. This was before they knew the contract was
6 limited to 2,500 sq ft. at a cost of \$5,000.

7
8 She suggested this be taken on as a demonstration project and suggested the area to
9 be done is the two sides of the trail from 30 feet in. Ms. Saunders wrote up a proposal
10 to have the Contractor remove a fallen tree covered in bittersweet and multi-flora and
11 the autumn olive. Ms. Saunders suggested this project be prioritized because of the
12 cost.

13
14 *Ms. O'Hare will follow through on it.*

15
16 b. Pink Trail – major crossing

17
18 The idea of installing ramps on the banks for horseback riding was revisited but it is a
19 low priority.

20
21 c. Parking lots, entranceway, kiosks

22
23 Ms. O'Hare said a request to prepare base map for the entranceway on Northford Rd. by
24 the Engineering Department has been sent.

25
26 *When completed, she will take the map will be taken to the Water/Sewer Division to*
27 *finish.*

28
29 Ms. Saunders asked why the soccer fields on the east side of Woodhouse Avenue were
30 not being designated as parking areas for Tyler Mill trails improvements as many hikers
31 hike from that area. She discussed a safer area for people to access the Blue Trail from.
32 She showed photos of the area on the edge of the soccer field.

33
34 *Chairman Borne liked the idea and suggested the Committee look further into it.*

35
36 **3. Boundary marking – Nothing to Report.**

37
38 **4. Signage re: hunting – report, D. Saunders.**

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40
41 Ms. Saunders said rabbits were poached on December 26, 2011. She said a DEEP
42 representative is scheduled to walk the entire perimeter to verify signage placement
43 which will help with enforcement because one old yellow sign stating "Attention –
44 Hunting is Permitted on This Property" was found in the middle of a farmer's field.

45
46 Ms. Saunders said she was not allowed to take the sign down, but was advised by a
47 DEEP representative to take the sign down.

1 *Ms. Saunders will ask the DEEP for more signs for her to post.*

2
3 **B. Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road**

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5 1. State of CT DEEP Recreational Trails Grant – application status
6 Ms. O'Hare said the DEEP indicated today that the status of the application will not be
7 known until the end of February 2012. The former date was Dec. 31, 2012.

8
9 **C. Invasive Species Eradication – Nothing to report**

10
11 **D. Volunteer Work Program – report, K-Ryan**

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13
14 1. "Quinnipiac's Big Event" volunteers.

15
16 Vice-Chair Heffernon said Mr. Ryan had gotten in touch with Quinnipiac University and
17 was informed they will send 10 students April 14 to work on the edge of the soccer field
18 at Vietnam Veteran Memorial Park at the beginning of the Yellow Trail.

19
20 She said geo-fabric and six tons of gravel will be put down on some of the muddy areas
21 of the trail.

22
23 Ms Saunders suggested along with wheelbarrows, putting wooden planks or plywood on
24 the ground to transport the gravel from the parking lot to the trails.

25
26 Vice-Chair Heffernon will find out from Henry McCully, Public Works Director the cost of
27 the geofabric which is to be purchased with Commission budget monies.

28
29 2. Eagle Scout project.

30
31 Vice-Chair Heffernon reported an Eagle Scout may be interested in a vernal pool project
32 on the vernal pool trail.

33
34 **3. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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36 **A. CT Trails Day, June 2 & June 3**

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38 Chairman Borne noted that Connecticut has more activities on Trails Day than any other
39 state.

40
41 Vice-Chair Heffernon suggested doing Trails Day at Tyler Mill Preserve in June and
42 having "Celebrate Open Space" day in the fall. Mr. Arsenault suggested featuring the
43 Interpretive Trail on Trails Day. Stewards of Tyler Mill Preserve can man stations on the
44 trail providing information.

45
46 *Vice-Chair Heffernon said she will work on submitting the information for the statewide*
47 *booklet by the deadline, the end of January.*

1 The Commission selected Saturday, June 2 at 9 a.m. for Trails Day with Sunday, June 3
2 as the rain date.

3
4 **B. "Celebrate Open Space"**

5
6 *Vice-Chair Heffernon will see if the Land Trust wants to co-sponsor a day in the Fall.*
7 Vice-Chair Heffernon said she walked Tyler Mill trails with the Mayor to show recent
8 improvements.

9
10 *She will be discussing the idea of a possible Police sting operation with the Mayor.*

11
12
13 **C. Trout Brook Valley Preserve – Aspetuck Land Trust – field trip re:**
14 management.

15
16 Ms. Saunders presented information about a possible field trip to Aspetuck Land Trust in
17 Easton where staff manages a very large preserve.

18
19 *She will arrange a Sunday trip.*

20
21 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

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23 **A. One-year extensions of leases – status**

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25 Ms. O'Hare said this was completed with the Law Department and everyone, except one
26 farmer extended their leases for a one-year term.

27
28 **B. Sugarbush bid - status**

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30 Ms. O'Hare said the sugarbush bid was sent out and was advertised on Thursday. She
31 said the bid opening is scheduled for January 24, 2012 at 2:15 p.m. which is also the
32 date of the regularly scheduled Town Council meeting.

33
34 She will request the Mayor consider this item for the Town Council's consent agenda.

35
36 ***MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Vice-Chair***
37 ***Heffernon authorizing Ms. O'Hare and Mr. Arsenault to review the bids,***
38 ***relative to sugarbush and make a recommendation to the Purchasing***
39 ***Department to select the bidder. The motion passed unanimously.***

40
41 **C. Bid Proposal for One-Year Term.**

42
43 Ms. O'Hare reported the bid proposal for the nine hayfields for a one-year term was sent
44 to Purchasing and will hopefully be advertised next week.

45
46 Mr. Arsenault reported he installed some rebar on the edge of Field 1D in an attempt to
47 deter vehicles from entering the edge of this field.

1 **5. OPEN SPACE USERS GROUP** – Meeting, Park & Rec. Dept., Feb.
2 27, 5:30 p.m.

3
4 Chairman Borne urged the Commissioners to attend this meeting. Vice-Chair Heffernon
5 will ask John Gawlak, Parks and Recreation Director to extend an invitation to the Police
6 Department.

7
8 Mr. Pietras left the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

9
10 **6. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

11 **A. “Celebrating the International Year of Forests** – report,
12 Chairman Borne.

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15 Chairman Borne said he had attended the workshop/conference in November 2011 at
16 Yale University. He said the Winter Storm Alfred was the main topic.

17
18 Chairman Borne said other discussion topics included: how to continue to protect
19 Connecticut’s forests and diminishing funding for open spaces.

20
21 **B. State of CT DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base** - revised map,
22 Dec. 2011.

23
24 Ms. O’Hare passed around the revised map to the Commission. She said the State had
25 made the revisions which are based upon biological reports people sent in to DEEP from
26 around the State.

27
28 Ms. O’Hare said she received no notification by the State that the map had been
29 changed.

30
31 **C. National Woodlands**, publication, Autumn 2011

32
33 Ms. O’Hare passed around a copy of the publication to the Commission which arrived
34 unsolicited in the mail.

35
36 **D. CT Land Conservation Council** – appeal

37
38 Chairman Borne said this applies to the Land Trusts and gives them a chance to all
39 interact.

40
41 **E. CT Siting Council** – proposed revision re: Conservation Commission
42 Comments

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44 Ms. O’Hare said she received these proposed revisions the Friday after the December
45 Commission meeting. She said the revisions on proposed siting applications state that
46 the Conservation Commissions cannot comment unless they are a recognized intervenor.

47
48 **F. CT Federation of Lakes** – newsletter, Dec. 2011

1 M. O'Hare said the Inland Wetlands Commission pays a \$25 a year subscription to this
2 newsletter which is published four times a year. She passed around a copy to the
3 Commission. *Ms. Saunders said she would scan the newsletter and e-mail copies to the*
4 *Commission.*

5
6 **G. "Economic Value of CT's State Parks,"** article
7 Nothing to report.

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9 **H. "CT Woodlands,"** Winter 2001-12 CFPA – Nothing to report.

10 **7. OPEN SPACE PLAN - Update**

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12
13 Ms. O'Hare said the plan, from 1999, is in need of updating. She suggested the
14 Commission spend 15 minutes at each meeting discussing and updating each section.
15 Chairman Borne said this Open Space Plan is part of the Town of Wallingford Town Plan.
16 He noted the Commission also has its own Open Space Plan. He suggested incorporating
17 the two plans.

18
19 Ms. O'Hare said there is usually a public hearing and adoption and, subsequently the
20 Planning and Zoning Commission would consider incorporating the plan as an addendum
21 or attachment to the Plan of Conservation and Development.

22
23 *Ms. O'Hare will pursue this 15-minute updating idea.*

24
25 Ms. Heffernon spoke about the Environmental Literacy Program which will be having a
26 Kick-Off on Saturday, February 4, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m at the Library. She asked for
27 volunteers to staff the table. She said there will be activities for the children.

28
29 Chairman Borne entertained a discussion on the Tyler Mill Preserve Trail Improvement
30 Project on work already contracted for removal of 2,500 sq .ft of invasive species.
31 Previously the area of multi-flora roses located by the Red Trail at the parking area on
32 the north side of Tyler Mill Bridge was selected for treatment.

33
34 Ms. Saunders discussed her proposal to focus work along the trail and include removal
35 of a downed log covered in bittersweet, etc. She flagged the area and native plants to
36 be avoided. She showed photos. She proposed a Stewards demonstration project for the
37 area.

38
39 *Ms. O'Hare will forward a detailed scope to the Contractor as mowing is to be done as*
40 *the first step in the winter.*

41 **8. Next Meeting – February 9, 2012**

42 **9. ADJOURNMENT**

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44 **MOTION: A motion was made for adjournment at 10:10 p.m. The motion**
45 **passed unanimously.**
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1 Respectfully submitted,
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3 Cynthia A. Kleist
4 Recording Secretary
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