

**Conservation Commission  
Town of Wallingford  
March 11, 2010  
MINUTES**

The Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Conservation Commission was held on, Thursday, March 11, 2010, in the Basement Conference Room of the Town Hall Municipal Building, 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Seated from the Commission were Chairperson Jeffrey Borne, Vice Chairperson Mary Heffernon, John Lathrop, Carl Arsenault, James Pyskaty, Kenneth Ryan, Tom Pietras, and Dianne Saunders. Town staff people present were Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner, and Recording Secretary Sonja Vining.

Chairman Borne called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**A. February 11, 2010 – Regular Meeting**

Several changes were made to the Minutes:

Page 2, first paragraph, last sentence should read, "She stated that she had talked to Mr. Pepe and explained to him that what he was doing was not allowed without a permit. The matter was referred to Ms. O'Hare and Mr. Borne".

Page 3, Section 3, third sentence should read "The Commission has been aware of the issue since November 2007".

Page 4, Section B1, fifth sentence beginning "It was decided..." should be deleted.

Page 5, Section C1, second paragraph, second sentence should read "John Gawlak will compose a letter stating that parking is not allowed in that field and that the activity must stop".

Page 5, Section F1, first sentence should read "Ms. O'Hare reported that she received correspondence from Roman Mrozinski, NRCS, regarding the grant for one canoe access ramp at Fireworks Island and one at Community Lake".

Page 6, Section 6, first paragraph, last sentence should read, "Ms. Heffernon is to itemize a list of trouble spots on the Pink Trail some of which would include the mapping of the ravine between Fields 7C & 7D, invasive species, and the stream crossing".

Page 6, Section 6, last paragraph, second sentence should read, "There was discussion of if it should come out of the Conservation Commission budget or the IWWC budget".

Page 6, Section 6, in the Motion, correct the spelling of the word Commission.

Page 6, Section 7, Item 4, first sentence should read "Ms. Saunders, Ms. Heffernon, Mr. Ryan, and Ms. O'Hare attended and agreed the DEP gave an excellent presentation".

**MOTION:** Ms. Heffernon to approve the Minutes of the February 11, 2010 meeting as corrected.

**SECOND:** Mr. Lathrop

**VOTE:** Unanimous

**C. Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road**

**3. Proposal: rocket launching class program**

Robert Bertekap appeared before the Commission to request permission to conduct activity in the Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road. He submitted to each Commissioner a detailed proposal for the rocket launch activity. The Commission decided it would let the Parks & Recreation Department know that they

have no issues with the proposed activity. Proposed dates that were acceptable to the Commission for that site were May 1<sup>st</sup> or May 2<sup>nd</sup> with rain/wind dates of the weekends of May 8<sup>th</sup> or May 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:**

### **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

#### **1. Sugaring use – report**

Several Commissioners have visited the site off Anderson Road. Ms. O'Hare read correspondence sent to her from Adam Mantzaris, Corporation Counsel and she read her reply memo forwarded to him. Ms. O'Hare indicated that Mr. Pepe came into her office today to review a map showing the area he would like to tap. Ms. Heffernon reported that she discussed this issue with the Mayor who had some concerns with allowing motor vehicles into that area. The Commission discussed several issues such as: any bid specs created would have to be very specific and clear and insurance would be required. Chairman Borne suggested running this as a pilot program. One specific area would be offered and it would be a one-year lease. This would put it in the 5-year cycle. After further discussion it was decided that the issue would be turned over to the Farmland Lease Committee to work out the details. There was some brief discussion about the lease amount. Ms. Saunders pointed out that the Farmland Lease Program's main purpose is stewardship not revenue.

#### **2. Deer management – aerial survey, Feb. 17 – results**

Ms. O'Hare briefly reviewed the report submitted to John Gawlak from the DEP on the aerial survey results. Each Commission Member had been forwarded a copy of the report at the time of completion. The Commission discussed options such as hunting or not hunting. The general feeling of the Commission was that at this time they would not take any action but they would monitor the situation.

#### **3. Ravine restoration (west of Field 7A) – report**

Mr. Pietras has been in contact with Rob Baltramaitis, Assistant Town Engineer, to schedule an appointment to walk the site and Mr. Vitali and Mr. Kern from the IWWC have expressed interest in attending that site walk. Mr. Pietras is working on coordinating the site walk.

#### **4. DEP Recreational Trails Grant work – status**

Ms. O'Hare and Don Roe will work on contracting the work out.

#### **5. Entranceway – Water Division permitted activities – contract**

Ms. O'Hare indicated the IWWC approved the Water Division's application. She reported on how the Commission and Roger Dann could work together to coordinate the treatment of the invasive species this spring. Ms. O'Hare would contact the Purchasing Department to work out the details of how to handle the purchase order for the two parties. The Commission would be expected to write the bid specs and a wetlands permit would be required for this activity.

#### **6. "Dayton Swamp" – CT Botanical Society site visit, Sept. 5, 2010**

Ms. Saunders scheduled this event with Penni Sharp of the Society.

### **B. Farmland Lease Properties Program**

#### **1. Lease Bid Proposal – Fields 1A, 1C, 7E, & 7F**

- a. Bid opening, March 16, 2 p.m.
- b. Bid award, approval, & Town Council request for approval Mar. 23

Ms. Saunders briefly reviewed the proposed Farmland Lease Program presentation that has been prepared by the Farmland Lease Committee for the Town Council meeting, March 23rd. Plow and disk vs. zone tillage was discussed as well as hay vs. vegetables. The Commission discussed how bids with Exceptions would be handled.

The bid opening is on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The Farmland Lease Committee is scheduled to meet on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 p.m. in the conference room. The Commission scheduled a Special Meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. in the basement conference room to discuss any Exceptions and to agree on a recommendation to the Town Council for the awards.

Ms. Saunders asked the Commission to consider leasing out Fields 4C and the Galko field both for no-till haying, to prevent the takeover of golden rod. Controlled burning does not eliminate golden rod, she stated.

2. Field 4A – proposed lease revision

The Farmland Lease Committee recommended revisions for specifications for Field 4A. Ms. O'Hare is to prepare the bid documents for a 7-year bid.

3. Fields 5A, 6B, 6C, 7A, 11A & 11B – Public Works Dept. assistance – status

Ms. Saunders reported that in Field 5A screenings have been placed at the entrance by Public Works although stone was preferred. Stone has been placed at the entrance to Field 7A. There was discussion of a dangerous ditch in the area of the gate to Field 6B that needs immediate attention from Public Works. Ms. Saunders showed photos of Fields 11A & B where there has been severe damage done by motor vehicles.

4. Field 11A & B

- a. snowmobile trespass – report
- b. truck trespass – report, D. Saunders

Discussed above under Item 2.B.3.

**C. Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road**

1. Girl Scout project – report, K. Ryan

Mr. Ryan believes that the Girl Scouts are underway as planned. They were told that the bridge needs to be anchored in some way. There has been not activity on site yet.

2. Walking Path Concept Plan (phase two) contract – status

Nothing new to report.

3. Proposal: rocket launching class program

Discussed earlier.

**D. Ferguson Woods**

1. Trail system improvement – contract – status

Nothing new to report.

**E. Bertini Park**

1. Trail system improvement – contract – status

Nothing new to report.

**F. Invasive Species Eradication**

1. Long-term invasive species management program – update, D. Saunders

Nothing new to report.

**G. Volunteer Work Program**

Nothing new to report.

### **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

#### **A. Reports**

#### **B. Other**

Nothing new to report

### **4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**MOTION:** Mr. Ryan to re-elect Jeffrey Borne as Chairman and Mary Heffernon as Vice Chairperson.

**SECOND:** Mr. Lathrop

**VOTE:** Unanimous

### **5. OPEN SPACE PLAN, 1999 – update**

Nothing new to report.

### **6. OPEN SPACE USER GROUP MEETING, Park & Rec., March 8 – report**

Chairman Borne reported on the meeting stating that some issues discussed were creating open space in the Tyler Mill Preserve and clearing out old foundations. Ms. Saunders had presented on her volunteer group. Ms. Heffernon, Mr. Lathrop and Ms. O'Hare were also in attendance.

### **7. BUDGET 2010 – 2011 - report**

The budget was presented to the Mayor by Ms. Heffernon and Ms. O'Hare on March 3rd.

### **8. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT FUND – report**

Ms. O'Hare stated that she had met with the Finance Department to get clarification on how the accounting works for the Open Space Management Fund. She reported her findings on how the fund works and who has access to the account.

### **9. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS**

1. CT Farm Bureau conference, "Farming & Inland Wetlands Forum", Mar. 4 – report, D. Saunders

Ms. Saunders submitted for the record, information from Attorney Janet P. Brooks, entitled, "The Farming Exemption Within the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Act".

2. CT Association of Wetlands Scientists, conference: "Wetlands: Impaired to Pristine", Feb. 23 – report, Chm. Borne and T. Pietras

Not taken up.

Ms. Heffernon reported that she met with Adam Mantzaris, Corporation Counsel, on some encroachment issues. Tree appraisals are being gathered relative to the Stoney Brook tree removal issue. The North Turnpike Road issue is in court. The Wisk-Key Wind Road matter resulted in a suit in small claims court. The police have been notified of the issues at Lufbery Park but have not had any luck in catching anyone in the act. The Engineering Department will be asked again by Ms. O'Hare, on behalf of the Commission, to post boundary markers so it is clear to the police as well as the public.

Ms. Heffernon submitted a draft of the Annual Report for 2009. If Commissioners have comments or corrections they will e-mail them to Ms. Heffernon.

Mr. Arsenault reported that he represented the Town at a meeting of the National Scenic Trails Commission, March 9<sup>th</sup>. The meeting included Town Planners from all over the State including Wallingford Town Planner Linda Bush. He stated that there was discussion of the National Scenic Trails

Commission seeking letters of support to encourage funding. Mr. Ryan reported he serves on the Community Connections Board to promote trail use by those near the trails. Mr. Arsenault stated that he cleaned out the blue bird boxes at the Fresh Meadow property. He reported his findings.

Ms. Saunders told the Commission of an experience she recently had with some suspicious activity in the area of Tyler Mill. She believes there are people cutting trees from the Preserve. The police have been notified and the Legal Department will be contacted to send a letter to the people suspected of being involved.

**10. NEXT MEETING** - April 8, 2010

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Ms. Heffernon to adjourn.

SECOND: Mr. Ryan

VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonja Vining  
Recording Secretary