

1 Wallingford Conservation Commission
2 Regular Meeting
3 April 14, 2011
4 7 p.m.
5 Town Hall Basement Conference Room
6 45 South Main Street
7 Wallingford, CT

8
9 **MINUTES**

10
11 **PRESENT:** Chairman Jeffrey Borne; Vice-Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Tom
12 Pietras; Carl Arsenault; Dianne Saunders; Dianne Lendler; John Lathrop; James Pyskaty;
13 Erin O'Hare Environmental and Natural Resources Planner. Absent: Commissioner
14 Kenneth Ryan.

15
16 Chairman Borne called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

17
18 **1. Approval of Minutes**

19 **A. Minutes, March 10, 2011 and March 18, 2011.**

20
21 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Heffernon second by Commissioner Lathrop**
22 **to approve the Minutes of March 10, 2011 and the Special Meeting Minutes of**
23 **March 18, 2011, as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

24
25 Regarding the minutes of March 10, 2011, Ms. Heffernon said page 1, line 13 should
26 read "Commissioners" not Commissioner. On page 1, line 47, Ms. Heffernon said
27 Commissioner Carl Arsenault was also present. On page 3, line 24, Ms. Heffernon said
28 "Mother Nature's Child" was the film the Conservation Commission was co-sponsoring at
29 the Library. She said the three environmental films were being co-sponsored by the
30 Recycling Committee in the Library as is the upcoming Recycling Art Contest. Ms.
31 Heffernon said she believed the Commission voted to renew their membership to the
32 Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) at the March 10, 2011 meeting.

33
34 On page 2, line 44, "*Staff will contact VoAg about issue and Commission can pay for*
35 *gate,*" Ms. Saunders said the Commission did not have to pay for a gate because there
36 is already a gate in place. She said VoAg needs to monitor the gate. Ms. Saunders said
37 the Commission would pay for the gate if it were a double gate. Ms. O'Hare asked if it
38 was the Commission's job to decide what type of gate. Ms. Saunders said she believed
39 the Commission approved to pay for a double gate if VoAg would build it.

40
41 *Chairman Borne requested Ms. O'Hare follow up on this issue before June.*

42
43 Regarding the March 18, 2011 Special Meeting minutes, Ms. Heffernon said she believed
44 a vote was taken to award the bid. Mr. Borne said the minutes should read "the
45 Commission voted unanimously to award to Ferrucci & Walicki." Also at the bottom of
46 the page, "Acting Recording Secretary Erin O'Hare, Environmental and Resources
47 Planner" should be inserted at the bottom of the page.

1 **2. Property Management**
2 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

3
4 1. Ravine Restoration (west of Field 7A) – report.
5

6 Mr. Pietras said he and Ms. Saunders went out on March 19 to the Cook Road fields and
7 Field 7A. He said they walked the ravine and observed some erosion. He said the
8 vegetation in the field is holding the soil better than it previously did, but there are still
9 some ruts in the field. There is still erosion during storms. Mr. Pietras recommended
10 cutting up logs, throwing them into the channel and throwing hay bales in front of the
11 logs rather than bring in rocks.
12

13 Chairman Borne asked Ms. O'Hare if a wetlands permit would be needed. Ms. O'Hare
14 said one would need a permit to do anything within 50 feet back from a river and, if the
15 slope is over 50 percent, a 100 foot area would apply. Mr. Pietras said these are not
16 trees, but felled logs. Ms. Saunders said the logs would be put into the ravine. Mr.
17 Pietras said the benefit will be that some of the sediment will be trapped and some of
18 the velocity will be knocked down and allow some vegetation to develop in those
19 channels. He said this is probably one or two days work with laborers.
20

21 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pietras second by Ms. Heffernon to**
22 **install several check dams, (no more than six) into the eroding channels**
23 **located between Field 7A and the deep ravine. The fallen trees in the area will**
24 **be used for log check dams. Work is to be completed as Add-On work to**
25 **existing Tyler Mill bid not to exceed \$1,000. Twenty staked hay bales will be**
26 **put into the log check dams. The motion passed unanimously.**
27

28 *Staff will seek the Mayor's authorization for funds out of the Open Space Resources*
29 *Management Fund.*
30

31 2. DEP Recreational Trails Grant Program
32 a. Work progress – report, M. Heffernon
33

34 Ms. Heffernon said the Trails Committee and Chairman Borne met last Saturday with
35 Mark Kasinkas of Ferrucci & Walicki to prepare for the presentation to the Inland
36 Wetlands Commission (IWWC). It was agreed there would be no culverts just foot
37 bridges. Ms. Heffernon said Mr. Kasinkas had a good report with drawings specifying
38 exactly what would be done in the wetland and upland areas. She said this report was
39 presented to the IWWC and it was well received. Ms. O'Hare said she and Ms. Heffernon
40 will be meeting with Mr. Kasinkas on Monday to go over the project punch list.
41

42 b. IWWC application – Chairman Borne indicated the revised
43 application was approved at the April 6 IWWC meeting with the condition of approval
44 that the Environmental Planner is to be responsible for proper installation of the five
45 footbridges approved.
46
47

48 **B. Farmland Lease Properties Program**

1
2 1. Lease Cycle 2012-2016.
3

4 Ms. O'Hare said for a few months, the idea of possible lease renewal has been
5 discussed. She presented the final letter on the issue forwarded to Sal Amodeo,
6 Purchasing, on April 13. She noted that Don Roe, Program Planner, contacted the Dept.
7 of Environmental Protection which informed him that because the properties were
8 purchased with assistance, they have to go out to bid. Ms. O'Hare said for those eight
9 properties, we are proposing to restrict the qualifications for the bidders. Both pertinent
10 actions require a bid waiver from the Town Council.

11 Ms. Saunders said there should be a two-week time period to resolve this issue because
12 we are under a short time frame for August. She said we need to have everything
13 turned around for final bidding. *Ms. O'Hare is to meet with Mr. Amodeo within two*
14 *weeks.*

15
16 2. Farmland Lease Committee – report, D. Saunders.
17

18 Ms. Saunders said she prepared a small report (dated 4/15/11 – distributed). She noted
19 that 7A is proposed to change. She said we need to know the direction to go with the
20 leases as far as the maintenance issues and boundaries are concerned. Ms. Saunders
21 said the recommendation is that the farmland lease use maps show the entire lease
22 area, and on that, delineate crop areas where the farmers can actually plant or harvest
23 crops, as well as critical habitats and access. She said the report recommends anything
24 else that is in the lease area be considered a maintenance area subject to some generic
25 administrative protocols for maintenance.

26
27 Ms. Saunders said the big recommendation is the Commission authorize Ms. O'Hare, or
28 us if she does not have the time, to submit revised maps to the Law Department that
29 will effectively amend the leases for the respective fields without being re-bid. The rest
30 of the maintenance issues will be addressed in the re-bid. She said the Committee's
31 Document, Administrative Protocols for Maintenance (distributed tonight) must also be
32 formally adopted.

33
34 Ms. Saunders said in the recommendations, we are asking for basic maintenance. She
35 said the problem is that many of the leases don't have anything regarding maintenance
36 in them. She said some of the newer leases with zone tillage are very restrictive but
37 they don't mention regular maintenance as trimming limbs for horseback riders. She
38 said what we are stating in the report is the generic protocols would apply to all the
39 leases unless the specific lease says something different. Unless the lease says
40 otherwise, the lessee would be able to perform mowing or trimming as needed to
41 control woody growth and weeds. This would include native trees up to three inches in
42 diameter that abut or extend over or into cropped areas, lanes, roads, or gates. She
43 said the lessees would not be able to plow, harrow or disturb the soil in non crop areas.
44 Ms. O'Hare questioned why the Committee would want to control tree root growth. This
45 will be revised.

46 Chairman Borne suggested verbiage be added in Item # 10 of the proposed
47 "Administrative Protocols for Maintenance" (submitted tonight) stating "unless

1 specifically authorized by the Environmental Planner" so there is flexibility should
2 something occur they know they have to talk to the Environmental Planner.

3
4 Chairman Borne said this was a great guide and if there were ever any issue on a field
5 we can refer to this and take it up with the farmer. Ms. O'Hare said she felt very
6 strongly that critical habitats should be no where near lease area and lessees should not
7 have management over critical habitat.

8 Chairman Borne suggested that Ms. O'Hare review this document and if the Commission
9 wants to ask more questions, a Special Meeting can always be set up.

10
11 Mr. Pietras noted that when he and Ms. Saunders walked Field 7A, they determined it
12 was worthwhile to put the field out to lease. He said the field was held out until the
13 erosion problem could be corrected and suggested putting in permanent vegetation such
14 as a hay crop. Commission Borne said he thought this was a great idea. Ms. Saunders
15 said the back and south end could be hay with an option of using zone tillage in the
16 front, or the farmer could propose an option for pasture if they come in with a plan to
17 restore the pond and establish the pasture at their cost.

18
19 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner**
20 **Lendler to put Field 7A out to lease for all hay, all pasture, or zone tillage in**
21 **front and hay in rear. The motion passed unanimously.**

22
23 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner**
24 **Pietras to proceed with Items 6, 7 and 8 of the Farmland Lease Committee**
25 **report submitted tonight on the fields with the condition the Administrative**
26 **Protocols may be voted on at the next meeting in May.**
27 **The maps must be updated by May 30, 2011. The motion passed unanimously.**
28 *Commissioner Borne instructed Commissioner Pietras and Ms. O'Hare to construct a map*
29 *of this change.*

30
31 Ms. O'Hare went on the record stating she did not support adopting Items 6, 7 and 8 as
32 presently worded. She pointed out the language just approved did not cover the issue.

33
34 3. Fields 1A, 1C, 5A, 7E and 7F

35
36 This matter was discussed as part of the above action.

37 38 **C. Invasive Species Eradication**

39
40 1. Long-term invasive species management program – D. Saunders – Nothing
41 to report.

42
43 2. Site for annual expenditure.

44 Ms. O'Hare reported the eradication work completed at the entrance to Tyler Mill,
45 (\$1,995) funded from the Open Spaces Resources Management Fund. The Commission
46 agreed this year's work should follow-up on this work for the second year of treatment
47 and should include the two inland spots pointed out by Ms. Saunders. *Ms. O'Hare will*
48 *get a quote.*

1
2 **D. Volunteer Work Program** – Nothing to report.

3
4 **3. Property Acquisitions**

5 A. Report – Nothing to Report.

6
7 **4. Open Space Plan 1999**

8
9 Ms. Saunders indicated while researching, she found some conflicting data. *The*
10 *Commission directed Ms. O'Hare to inquire when Linda Bush, Town Planner, anticipates*
11 *beginning work on the next Master Plan.*

12
13 **5. Public Outreach**

14
15 **A. Earth Day – April 22, 2011**

16
17 Ms. Lendler talked about photography students taking pictures of open spaces and then
18 exhibiting the photos. She said the photography class will take place after April 22.

19
20 **B. Film event, "Mother Nature's Child", Wallingford Library, April**
21 **29, 7 p.m.**

22
23 Ms. Heffernon said the Commission is co-sponsor of this event. She said the film is
24 about connecting with nature. She said the third film in the environmental film series is
25 a week from Monday night called "The Eleventh Hour."

26
27 **C. "Celebrate Open Space" Day.**

- 28
29 **1. Site, dates, roles.**
30 **2. Publicity.**

31
32 Ms. Heffernon will head up the Committee and select a date and a site for Celebrate
33 Open Space Day. The Commission also talked about possibly conducting Spring and Fall
34 hikes and farm tours. *Chairman Borne gave Ms. Heffernon a month to come up with*
35 *ideas for Open Space Day.*

36
37 **6. Budget FY 2011-2012**

38 **A. Program for Professional Natural Resources Services**

39 Ms. O'Hare distributed copies of the proposed work elements for this line item, approved
40 by the Mayor to the Commissioners.

41
42 **B. Town Council Budget Hearing, April 11, 6 p.m.** – Nothing to report.

43
44 **C. Town Council Budget Workshop, April 14, 6 p.m.**

45 Ms. Heffernon reported that before the Town Council meeting convened she had gained
46 consensus that there were no questions for the Commission regarding the proposed
47 budget.

1 **7. 2010 Annual Report**

2
3 Ms. Heffernon said she had submitted the 2010 Annual Report she had recently
4 completed to the Town Council but as of yet has heard no feedback.

5
6 **8. Open Space User's Group Meeting, Park & Rec., April 12, 5:30 p.m. –**
7 **report.**

8
9 Ms. Lendler said she, Ms. O'Hare, Ms. Heffernon, Mr. Arsenault, Ms. Saunders Don Roe
10 and Mayor Dickinson attended the meeting. She said Ms. Saunders presented a report
11 on invasive plants and wildflowers. Ms. Lendler spoke about an informal group calling
12 themselves "Stewards of Tyler Mill."

13 Ms. Lendler showed the Commissioners the orange vests which volunteers would wear
14 on the trails when conducting various tasks. This work is conducted under the auspices
15 of the Commission. *Ms. Lendler will provide Ms. O'Hare written information.*

16
17 **IN OTHER BUSINESS:**

18
19 Ms. O'Hare told the Commission she received a request from Yale School of
20 Environmental Studies graduate student who wants to study animal/plant web
21 dynamics, how animals influence plants and vice-versa in old fields. Ms. O'Hare said the
22 Yale student is requesting four experiment areas, three at Fresh Meadow Swamp at
23 Cheshire Road and one at Field 4C off Whirlwind Hill Road. She said the student will be
24 mowing these areas to determine BMP's for goldenrod management. She wishes to
25 begin the project in mid-May and end the project in September.

26
27 The Commission approved the requested use with several conditions of approval which
28 Ms. O'Hare will document for the student.

29 **9. Election of Officers**

30
31 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Heffernon second by Commissioner**
32 **Arsenault to appoint Jeffrey Borne Chairman of the Conservation Commission.**
33 **The motion passed unanimously.**

34
35 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Lathrop second by Commissioner**
36 **Arsenault to appoint Mary Heffernon as Vice-Chair of the Conservation**
37 **Commission. The motion passed unanimously.**

38
39 **10. Correspondence/Reports**

40
41 **A. Community Garden, Vietnam Vets Memorial Park – report.**

42
43 Ms. Saunders said there are plans discussed at the Open Space Users' Group meeting to
44 widen the road and increase Park and Recreation Dept. parking and construct a
45 turnaround at the back. Ms. O'Hare indicated an expansion of the garden was planned.

46
47 John Lathrop displayed a young tamarack sampling.

1 **11. Next Meeting - May 12, 2011.**

2

3 **12. Adjournment**

4

5 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Heffernon seconded by Commissioner**
6 **Pyskaty to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.m. The motion passed**
7 **unanimously.**

8

9

10 Respectfully submitted,

11

12 Cynthia A. Kleist

13 Recording Secretary

14

15

16