

**Conservation Commission
Town of Wallingford
May 13, 2010
MINUTES**

The Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Conservation Commission was held on, Thursday, May 13, 2010, in the Basement Conference Room of the Town Hall Municipal Building, 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Seated from the Commission were Vice Chairperson Mary Heffernon, John Lathrop, Carl Arsenault, Kenneth Ryan, Tom Pietras, James Pyskaty, Dianne Saunders, and Diane Lendler.

Town staff people present were Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner, and Recording Secretary Sonja Vining.

Absent: Jeffrey Borne, Chairman

Acting as Chairman Mary Heffernon called the meeting to order at approximately 7:04 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. April 8, 2010 – Regular Meeting

One change was made to the Minutes:

Page2, Section 2A.3 – 3rd sentence to read, “Mr. Roe will work on updating the report”.

MOTION: Mr. Lathrop to approve the Minutes of the April 8, 2010 Regular Meeting as corrected.

SECOND: Mr. Ryan

VOTE: Unanimous

2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:

A. Tyler Mill Preserve

1. Ravine restoration (west of Field 7A) - report

Mr. Pietras reported that he has contacted Roman Mrozinski, Southwest Conservation District, and asked that he meet and walk the sight to look at the erosion and develop a plan. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 19th at 3 p.m. in Field 7A. Mr. Pietras believes that the best way to handle it would be to draft a plan and submit it to the IWWC.

2. DEP Recreational Trails Grant work – status

The Trials Committee will set a date to walk southern Tyler Mill to update trouble spots on trails since 2006.

3. Entranceway – invasive plant eradication – status

Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner, reported that the Water Division did the mapping. She visited the site Monday. The Mayor has authorized the money. The project has received administrative approval from Chairman Vitali of the IWWC. Ms. O'Hare discussed the treatment of fragmities and Japanese knotweed.

4. Sport gun incident and policy – report

Ms. Saunders reported that there is not much the police department can do. There was discussion about if an ordinance (as used in other towns) should be pursued in this case or not. The Commission feels that there is a real safety issue involved for people hiking the trails when the activity is going on and paint from paint balls is unacceptable.

MOTION: Mr. Pyskaty made a motion that the Commission recommends to the Parks & Recreation Department that it pursue the creation of an ordinance regarding sport ball activity on Town Open Space.

SECOND: Mr. Lathrop

VOTE: Unanimous

B. Farmland Lease Properties Program

1. New lease awards – status

Ms. Saunders reported that the lease award process is going well. Ms. O'Hare indicated that the Law Department is preparing the lease for Fields 4A and 19A.

2. Use of barbed wire on Town properties – report

Ms. O'Hare stated that she contacted the Law Department regarding the use of barbed wire. Both the Risk Manager and the Law Department advised her that barbed wire is not allowed on Town property except properties used to raise livestock. This pertains currently to Fields 4A and 19A.

3. Field 2A – trespass – report

The incident of trespassing in Field 2A where a car had to be towed out was discussed. It was reported that the lessee has decided not to pursue damages.

C. Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road

1. Walking Path Concept Plan (phase two) contract - status

Ms. O'Hare reported that the contract is expected to go out next week.

D. Ferguson Woods

1. Trail system improvement – contract – status

The request for quote has been sent out.

E. Bertini Park

1. Trail system improvement – contract – status

The request for quote has been sent out.

2. Project Adventure Ropes Course – report

Ms. O'Hare reported that John Gawlak, P&R, met with the Mayor and he likes the idea. A final decision should be made by the end of June, at which time more details would be available. The Rotary is to fund the activity. The Commission has some questions that it would like answered, such as, where the pavilions will be and where the low ropes will go. The Commission wants to be sure that everything gets taken down so it does not create a safety hazard. Ms. O'Hare will work on getting some more details on this activity.

F. Lufbery Park

1. Frisbee course – status

Ms. O'Hare reported that John Gawlak, P&R, has told her that this is going to happen. Funds are being solicited at this time. The course would be on the existing trails. Ms. O'Hare will get some further details such as when the course would open and if it is free to use.

G. Fireworks Island/Quinnipiack River & Community Lake Park

1. Canoe/kayak ramps – maps, status

Ms. O'Hare stated that the maps have just been submitted to the IWWC for permit approval. The ramps will be installed by the NRCS.

H. Beseck Mountain

1. Timber removal trespass – report

Ms. O'Hare discussed the small claims suit filed and the settlement of \$1,200 made in the case. The Commission, along with Ms. O'Hare, expressed their disappointment in the settlement amount. Ms. O'Hare was asked to contact Adam Mantzaris to discuss how that settlement amount was calculated and make it clear that in the future the Commission would be seeking a much higher settlement.

I. Invasive Species Eradication

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

Ms. Saunders reported that the invasive management program is on going. The most impacted foundation in Tyler Mill Preserve has been cleaned and invasives cut. Other areas are being monitored.

J. Volunteer Work Program

Mr. Ryan reported that the Fresh Meadow Girl Scout project is complete. The bridge ended up costing \$262. Mr. Ryan will send out a note of appreciation to the Girl Scouts.

3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

A. Reports

None

4. COMMITEES – Discussion of FOI requirements, functions

Ms. O'Hare stated that she has put together all of the functions of all of the different Committees. She expects to have an answer by the next meeting as to what would be required.

5. OPEN SPACE PLAN, 1999 – update

Ms. Saunders started to review the Open Space Index spreadsheets and found that the index has some errors that need to be corrected.

6. CELEBRATE OPEN SPACE DAY, May 2 – report

Open Space Day was a success in terms of turn out and weather. Ms. O'Hare led the hike with natural history comments.

7. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS

1. Requests to Law Dept.

All requests are to be directed to Janis Small, Town Attorney.

2. Purple loosestrife project – Tilcon – status

Ms. Heffernon reported that six (6) plants have been dug up invoice for materials is being processed, and the project is ongoing.

3. Town snow disposal site

Ms. O'Hare reported that a resident of Wallingford contacted the DEP about the Town dumping snow in the Quinnipiac River off of Garden Road. The DEP stated that the Town is not allowed to dump in the river because of the concentration of dirt and salt being dumped at one time in one area. Henry McCully asked the Commission if they had any suggestions as to where the snow could be dumped. The Commission discussed the issue and would suggest the old dumpsite near the landfill as a possible area for the snow to be piled.

4. CFPA Annual Meeting, May 20, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Guest Speaker, Dr. David Foster, Director, Harvard Forest, “2010 Wildland and Woodland Vision for the New England Landscape”

Ms. O'Hare stated that the speaker at this event is originally from Wallingford. Mr. Foster was involved in the development of the curriculum of the proposed Choate Environmental Center.

8. NEXT MEETING – June 10, 2010

Ms. Heffernon stated that Trails Day is Saturday, June 5th.

Ms. Saunders discussed an issue that has been occurring in Tyler Mill. There has been a jump created over an old well along with a new trail that has been made. Ms. Saunders witnessed the ATV and quad activity there and submitted photos to the Police Department. She has not received any feedback from the Police. This jump needs to be taken down because it is a safety hazard where someone could be seriously injured. Ms. Saunders has seen some building materials in the area and believes that possibly the people responsible for the jumps intend to build ramps too. Public Works has been notified of the location of those building materials and will pick them up. Ms. Saunders indicated that Public Works worked quickly to put up a barricade and tape off the area temporarily. The well will be capped with a concrete slab permanently by Public Works. Ms. Saunders commented that she was very pleased with the response of the Town. The Mayor along with Public Works responded quickly and have done a very good job in preventing what could have been some serious accidents. Ms. Saunders feels signage should be installed at all the foundation ruins to deter activity on them. Sign verbiage will be worked on.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Pyskaty to adjourn.

SECOND: Mr. Arsenault

VOTE: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonja Vining
Recording Secretary