

1 **Wallingford Conservation Commission**

2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 **Thursday, October 8, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.**

4 **Town Hall, Basement Conference Room**

5 **45 South Main Street, Wallingford, Connecticut**

6 **MINUTES**

7 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Dianne Saunders, Jeff Borne, Carl Arsenault, Tom
8 Pietras, Dianne Lendler, Jim Pyskaty; Heidi Orsini and Matthew Orsini representing Katherine Orsini,
9 working on the student trail proposal on Scard Road.

10 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chair John Lathrop;

11 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7 p.m.

12 **1. Neal Property, Scard Road/George Washington Trail – student trail proposal**

13 Mrs. Orsini said she, Mr. Orsini, and Katherine walked the property on Scard Road. She said the property is
14 flat and there is a wire fence. Mrs. Orsini showed photos of where they walked the property. She said
15 Katherine's idea is to start the trail by the Town property sign. She said there are tires and garbage to be
16 cleaned up and the biggest task will be clearing in front of the walkway. She said there is an old wall and
17 the property was marked with tape. She also stated there was a large amount of brush.

18 Mr. Orsini said a lot of the property has some small trees including a small maple tree, which may have to
19 be removed to make the trail and to not intrude on the wetlands.

20 Mrs. Orsini said Katherine plans to blaze the trail to George Washington Trail Road the first year. She
21 suggested the Commission conduct a site visit first and said that Katherine will begin her work in early
22 spring.

23 Mr. Orsini recommended making a pile of trash and then having Public Works clean up.

24 The Commission decided to conduct a site visit on Saturday, Oct. 10, 2015 at 9 a.m. Meeting on Scard
25 Road at the Town sign.

26 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

27 **A. Minutes, Special Meeting, Sept. 17, 2015**

28 On page 1, line 25 "the" site instead of "two" sites. Commission decided no parking area for this project.

29 First sentence take out "backlog of other projects".

30 Page 2, line 19, Trails Committee will visit the site not the Commission.

31 Page 2, line 28, Water Division will repaint the fence.

32 Page 4, line 2, Chair Heffernon, not Ms. O'Hare, said the town now owns the property.

1 **A motion by Commissioner Lendler second by Commissioner Arsenault to approve the Special**
2 **Meeting Minutes of Sept. 17, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.**

3 **3. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

4 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

5 1. Stewards of Tyler Mill, D. Saunders

6 Commissioner Saunders said she spent the month trying to get permission to stain the kiosks from the
7 Public Works Dept and didn't hear back so the Stewards will stain the kiosks at a cost of \$92 for two cans
8 of stain, Jomax and Clorox. Commissioner Saunders said the Stewards will install a few plants and next
9 week repair the footbridge at the rear of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park which goes to the Yellow Trail.

10 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Borne second by Commissioner Pyskaty to fund up to**
11 **\$100 to clean the posts, kiosks posts and guardrails and re-stain.**

12 **Vote: unanimous**

13 2. Restoration of portions of Green Trail & White Trail, D. Saunders

14 Chair Heffernon spoke about the fence lying on the ground at the end of parking area at Vietnam Veterans
15 Park . She said Commissioner Saunders took photos and sent them to Mayor Dickinson. She said now
16 there is no way to direct people to the Green and White trails.

17 Commissioner Saunders spoke about four instances of dumping in the last month at Tyler Mill at the
18 Tamarac Swamp Road entrance. Commissioner Borne suggested sending a letter to the Police Dept. and
19 Mayor Dickinson to request extra patrols. Restoration of portions of Green Trail & White Trail, D. Saunders

20 Not discussed.

21 3. Main entranceway area

22 a. Proposed painting of kiosk, guardrails and posts, D. Saunders

23 Discussed above.

24 b. Eradication of Japanese knotweed – contract status

25 Ms.O'Hare said vendor Todd Mervosh of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station, finished spraying the
26 knotweed. Commissioner Saunders said next year should be the last year of eradication in this area.

27 c. Horse trailer parking signage

28 Commissioner Saunders said signage has not been installed.

29 d. Pavement repair

30 Chair Heffernon reported that photos of the roadway in dire need of repair were given to Mayor Dickinson.

31 Commissioner Saunders said she is working on the hunting signs. Ms. O'Hare spoke about the Black Trail
32 and noticed no signs for hunting.

1 Commissioner Saunders said she wants to put "No Vehicle" signage at the entrance of Field 7A and Field
2 7E so that hunters do not drive across the fields and damage them.

3 *Commissioner Saunders will install the sign in this location as suggested.*

4 Chair Heffernon spoke about writing which someone spray painted with orange spray paint on the
5 pavement at the bridge at Tyler Mill.

6 **B. Fresh Meadows – mowing**

7 Ms. O'Hare said this area needs to be mowed and the Commission agreed the area should be mowed and
8 requested Ms. O'Hare ask Public Works.

9 *Ms. O'Hare will ask Henry McCully, Director of Public Works to mow the area.*

10 The Commission agreed if the mowing isn't done by the end of October, an outside contractor will have to
11 be hired.

12 *Ms. O'Hare will get three bids for mowing Fresh Meadows and one quote to mow the entire area and a
13 second quote to mow the Butterfly Meadow and the cottonwoods.*

14 .

15 **C. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Road – contract status, staff**

16 Commissioner Saunders said the large trees in Field 4C were removed this week by vendor All-Habitat
17 Services with a Fecon mower and noted it was treated with pesticides. Chair Heffernon showed a "Notice
18 to Pesticide Buyers" sign she saw in a retail store. Commissioner Saunders said retailers are required to
19 post this notification. Commissioner Saunders showed photos of Field 4C after it was mowed.

20 **D. Beseck Mountain – dumping, staff**

21 Ms. O'Hare said she wrote six residents at the end of the cul-de-sac asking them to report any dumping.
22 She said she also included the recent bamboo statute with the letters. Ms. O'Hare said a Wisk Key Wind
23 Road neighbor contacted her about a resident growing bamboo which encroached on several properties.
24 Ms. O'Hare said she contacted the Community Police regarding the dumping of the bamboo and other yard
25 waste and will meet with them.

26 **E. Beseck Meadow – mowing**

27 Mr. Arsenault said there were no new updates.

28 **F. Doolittle Park – riparian corridor project**

29 Chair Heffernon said an Army Corps of Engineer has determined a permit is not needed. She said the
30 weeds must be taken care of in order to do the digging on the banks. Commissioner Saunders said she
31 could mow the weeds with her triangular brush blade. Chair Heffernon said the banks could be dug in the
32 spring.

33 **G. Other properties**

1 Commissioner Lendler asked about the repainting of the blaze sign at Tyler Mill. She suggested the blaze
2 signs be painted and said she noticed some of the signs were recently re-painted orange on the Orange
3 Trail. She said the Lavender Trail and Pink Trail signs need to be repainted. Chair Heffernon encouraged
4 the signs to be painted. *Commissioners Lendler and Saunders will look into this.*

5 **4. PROPERTY ACQUISITION/PRESERVATION**

6 **A. 75 Tyler Mill Road property – status**

7 Ms. O'Hare said this property is still off limits to the public.

8 **B. Other property, M. Heffernon**

9 Chair Heffernon showed a map of the property for which the owners are requesting the Town obtain a
10 conservation easement. She said a meeting is scheduled with the property owners on Thursday.

11 **5. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

12 **A. Lease field conditions (36 fields) and consideration of certain lease requirements**

13 Commissioner Saunders said the Farmland Lease Committee is going to Field 5A next week and noted the
14 issue with Field 7A has been resolved. Ms. O'Hare and the lessee will meet with some members of the
15 Farmland Lease Committee on Oct. 20 at Field 5A.

16 Commissioner Pietras reported on the meeting with the farmer on Field 7A. The lessee requested the use
17 of the lower end of the field for hay but noticed it was too late but will put in for hay next year. He also
18 noted the farmer put in the corn crop and the winter cover crop and is happy with the field. He said the
19 farmer agreed to cut the woody meadow and did so, and will mow it again.

20 Commissioner Pietras said a secondary access on the field and the main entrance to the field on the north
21 end was discussed. The farmer plans to block this latter area off. Commissioner Pietras said he will meet
22 the farmer out at the field next week to stake and flag the wetlands in the middle of the property.

23 Commissioner Saunders said there is no sightline in the front of the field.

24 *She will memo Public Works asking them to cut back some of the brush at the driveway entrance.*

25 Commissioner Saunders said she and Chair Heffernon eradicated Purple Loosestrife in Field 18A.

26 **B. Field 7A – report on Oct. 7 site meeting with lessee**

27 Discussed above.

28 **C. Farmland Committee**

29 Commissioner Saunders spoke about a farmer cooperative called "Wholesome Wave" which delivers
30 produce to Bridgeport and other communities.

31 Commissioner Arsenault went over some of the comments from the farmer lessees for the field he
32 monitors regarding the installation of stronger locks on the gates, ATV damage, and that horses were
33 using the new section of the White Trail instead of going onto the farmer's fields.

1 **6. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

2 **A. Farm to Table Community Supper**, report

3 Chair Heffernon said this was a wonderful event which took place at the First United Methodist Church
4 on Old Rock Hill Road in Wallingford on Sept. 26. She said the food came from Farmer Joe's Garden in
5 Wallingford. She said there were a few tables set up before the dinner and she and Commissioner
6 Saunders explained the function of the Farmland Lease Committee. She said there were approximately 120
7 people including Mayor Dickinson attending the event.

8 **7. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**, J. Borne & staff

9 Nothing to report

10 **8. PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT** – report, M. Heffernon

11 Chair Heffernon said the POCD Meeting for the public took place at Lyman Hall High School, but only a few
12 people from the public participated. She said another survey is online regarding the POCD on the
13 downtown.

14 Commissioner Borne was pleased the POCD recommend 21% open space for the Town

15 **9. OTHER TOPICS**

16 Chair Heffernon said the Parks and Recreation Commission asked the Conservation Commission to do
17 some tree cutting at Community Lake. She asked Commissioner Saunders if one of her Stewards would be
18 willing to help with the tree cutting.

19 Ms. O'Hare noted that this activity received IWWC administrative approval a while back.

20 Commissioner Lendler asked about Commissioner Ryan's resignation especially his work with students at
21 Lyman Hall High School. Commissioner Saunders said she will be writing up a synopsis of volunteer project
22 ideas for the schools.

23 Commissioner Borne said this vacancy needs to be filled and try to get younger people.

24 Chair Heffernon asked the Mayor to include the Commission in the selection process. Several names were
25 noted.

26 Commissioner Saunders presented her report on the potential invasive plant list from CIPWG. She noted
27 that the entrance to Tyler Mill is nearly clear of knotweed and the stream channel is clear of garlic mustard
28 and Canadian Thistle and is almost clear of phragmites.

29 **10. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

30 **A. CFPA magazine, "Connecticut Woodlands"**, Fall 2015; received 9/21/15

31 Chair Heffernon spoke about a column in the CFPA magazine.

32 **B. DEEP magazine, "Connecticut Wildlife"**, July/August 2015; received 9/21/15

1 **C. CACIWC – 38th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference** – Sat., Nov. 14, 2015, Villa
2 Capri, 906 N. Colony Rd. Wallingford.

3 **D. Deep Notice Of Tentative Determination** to Approve An Exemption to Connecticut General
4 Statutes Section 25-68(d)(b)(Flood Management) And Intent to Waive Public Hearing; Applicant:
5 ConnDOT, re: Bridge replacement, Route 150 over Wharton Brook, Wallingford; received 10/2/15
6 Ms. O'Hare spoke about her sighting of a broad wing hawk who had died on S. Whittlesley Road.
7 Commissioner Saunders said the harriers are still using Field 4C. She spoke about sighting a coyote pup on
8 Field 4C.

9 **11. NEXT MEETING – November 12, 2015**

10 **12. ADJOURNMENT**

11 **A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Commissioner Borne to adjourn the Meeting at**
12 **9: 11 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

13

14 Respectfully submitted,

15 Cynthia A. Kleist

16 Recording Secretary