

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 **Thursday, January 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; Dianne Lendler; Ken Ryan; Jeff Borne;
8 Carl Arsenault; Tom Pietras; Erin O'Hare, Environmental and Natural Resources Planner.

9 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioner Jim Pyskaty.

10 Former Chairman Jeff Borne, acting as Chair, in the absence of Vice-Chair Lathrop, called the Meeting to
11 order at 7:09 p.m. Chair Heffernon arrived at 7:20 p.m.

12 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

13 **A. Minutes**, Special Meeting, November 13, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

14 The following changes in the Minutes, as presented, were requested:

15 Page 2, item 2A-5, "Trail Maps", take out word "laminated" and put in "vinyl".

16 Page 3, under "Management Plan" should read "Audubon CT" not "CT Audubon"

17 Page 3, at the top should be "school bus turnaround" not "main turnaround."

18 Page 6, should be "Mary Heffernon" not "Mayor Dickinson".

19 Page 4, under Stewardship Assignments should be Beseck "Mountain" not Beseck " Meadow."

20 Page 5, the entire discussion about the Landowner's Brochure should be put under "Public Outreach".

21 **MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Arsenault second by Commissioner Ryan to approve the**
22 **November 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

23 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

24 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

25 1. Remaining planned improvements - report, staff

26 Ms. O'Hare reported that the puddles near the intersection of Northford Road on Tyler Mill Road are
27 anticipated to be paved in the spring.

28 2. Gold Trail- IWWC permit - D. Saunders

1 Commissioner Saunders said the permit was approved by IWWC so the last 12-foot section of the
2 boardwalk needs to be installed. Saunders took photos of the boardwalk and passed it around to the
3 Commission.

4 3. Stewards of Tyler Mill- D. Saunders

5 Commissioner Saunders said the Stewards have been working on the entrance in Nov. and Dec. She said
6 they will be finishing extending the Green Trail. She said the logs are in place for the recently installed
7 boardwalk and the Stewards hope to finish within the next few weeks. The trail will be blazed in the spring
8 and a post will be installed to mark the trail head.

9 4. Emergency trail markers – status

10 Chair Heffernon said the trail markers are completed. She said she went back out and did two more GPS.
11 She gave a map to the Police Department and to Billy Celata.

12 Commissioner Lendler suggested painting the words “see other side” on the front of the kiosks so people
13 know to go to the other side of the kiosk to view the trail maps. Commissioner Borne suggested stepping
14 stones be installed around the back of the sign.

15 *Commissioner Lendler will paint “see other side” on the front of the kiosk.*

16 5. Trail maps - status, D. Saunders

17 Commissioner Saunders said the vinyl trail maps have been delivered to Prentice Printers. Commissioner
18 Saunders discussed illegal dumping at Tyler Mill. Ms. O’Hare said the DEEP wants municipalities to collect
19 New England cottontail skulls if any dead rabbits are found in order to qualify for grant monies.

20 6. Maintenance issues

21 Ms. O’Hare said one truckload of debris was picked in in the month of December.

22

23 7. Discussion re: speed limit signs

24 Chair Heffernon said the police will not be putting up the signs.

25 8. Regulations sign -language re: hunting

26 Ms. O’Hare said a resident wrote Program Planner Don Roe possible confusing wording in the hunting rules
27 and regulation sign at the main entrance to Tyler Mill. Commissioner Saunders suggested discussing this
28 issue at the Open Space User’s Group. *Chair Heffernon will ask John Gawlak if Parks & Recreation will*
29 *make up A-frame type signs to display on the opening of the hunting period.* The Commission discussed
30 the placement of the “hunting today” signs.

31 Chair Heffernon spoke about an e-mail from a retired kindergarten teacher who complimented on the
32 cleanliness of Tyler Mill Preserve. Chair Heffernon forwarded the email to Commissioner Saunders who will
33 pass it along to the Stewards of Tyler Mill. Commissioner Borne requested this e-mail also be sent to John
34 Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director.

35 **B. 1250 Whirlwind Hill Road property**

1 1. Mowing

2 Commissioner Arsenault said the farmer has not mowed Beseck Meadow but will attempt to mow this
3 winter, weather dependent. He will determine sapling type growing there.

4 2. Boundary markers & post

5 Ms. O'Hare asked the Commission if the boundary marker and post had been installed on the Whirlwind
6 Hill Road property. This issue will be revisited in the spring to determine if a boundary markers and post
7 need to be installed. Commissioner Arsenault said Jay Brown will provide a mowing quote.

8 **C. Beseck Meadow – mowing**

9 Taken up above.

10 **D. Fresh Meadows**

11 1. Eagle Scout Project – status

12 Commissioner Pietras said he arranged the maps for Zachary Blum, Eagle Scout Candidate. Commissioner
13 Arsenault said no maps have been installed as of yet in the kiosk. *Commissioner Pietras will email Zachary*
14 *Blum regarding his progress and about his maintenance plan.*

15 2. Tessa's Trail sign – installation

16 Commissioner Arsenault said the sign has been installed.

17 3. Trail Plan

18 a. Grant possibilities

19 Ms. O'Hare said although the \$115,000 grant was not obtained, there are other grant possibilities. She said
20 Lenard Engineering's final drawings have been reviewed by staff and plans will be ready for the next grant
21 opportunity.

22 b. Footbridge design work

23 Ms. O'Hare asked the Commission about having Lenard Engineering design construction drawings for a
24 footbridge to be constructed at Fresh Meadows. The Commission agreed to the "add-on" contract idea.

25 c. Visit to observe ADA accessible trails at CT Audubon, Fairfield, CT

26 Chair Heffernon discussed the possibility of the Commission taking a field trip to Larsen Sanctuary in
27 Fairfield. Commissioner Saunders suggested also taking a field trip to Trout Brook trail in Easton the same
28 day. The Commission will re-visit this issue in March.

29 **E. Doolittle Park - riparian buffer plan**

30 Chair Heffernon spoke about having the riparian weeds cut down. She said Roman Mrozinski, Executive
31 Director, Southwest Conservation District, cut the weeds and Public Works removed the weeds. She said
32 there is a planting plan being considered for the spring and Parks & Recreation will assist in costs.
33 Commissioner Saunders said she went out and bagged up all the bittersweet.

1 **F. Wallace Dam property - fishway fish counts**

2 Chair Heffernon spoke about the success of the Wallace Dam property fishway fish counts. Stephen
3 Gephard of DEEP Fisheries, will email fish counts to Commissioner Borne. Commissioner Borne said the
4 fishway has been a success.

5 **G. Invasive Species Eradication**

6 1. Report, D. Saunders

7 Commissioner Saunders submitted her report and said the Stewards continued deadheading to bag and
8 remove seeds on roadside edges, following up on the past two years. She said at the main entrance the
9 Stewards continued to removed seeds on remaining plants; compost piled plant stems, covered bare
10 cleared areas with pine needle/leaf mulch mixture for winter compost. The farmland lease area in adjacent
11 field 7E was mowed by lessee, which included the mugwort along the fields. Commissioner Saunders said
12 the Stewards continued to work on cutting dead Japanese knotweed stalks, and digging out rhizome
13 clumps which were incinerated. She said there was continued cutting of the Purple trail edges on the
14 eastern end and around the adopted trees. Commissioner Saunders said there was a preliminary
15 identification of a new invasive in the swamp on the east side of Moss Rock during the wetland soil walk
16 with Commissioner Pietras and the Kohler Environmental Center students in October. She said this will be
17 evaluated further in 2015.

18 Commissioner Saunders spoke about updating the invasive species management plan for Tyler Mill
19 Preserve which was last updated in October, 2013. She noted that on Wharton Brook in Doolittle Park, the
20 Stewards followed up on Nov. 22, 2014 on the area cut and piled by the Southwest Conservation District.
21 She also noted that cut mugwort was evaluated and most of the cut plants, goldenrod and mugwort, were
22 left for Public Works disposal at the compost area.

23 Commissioner Saunders passed around a Christmas card by Steward Mark Cenari containing a photo of a
24 white-footed mouse storing bittersweet berries and multiflora rose hips in an abandoned bird nest. She
25 also noted that Caryn Rickel is pushing for an amendment to the state statue regarding running bamboo
26 which would clarify the new regulations. She said she submitted pre-legislative comments on the issue to
27 the Council on Environmental Quality in December.

28 2. Contracted work - Tyler Mill entranceway area

29 Not discussed.

30 **H. Volunteer Projects**

31 1. Possible student projects

32 Chair Heffernon discussed the possibility of the Vo-ag students working with farmer Nelson Ceccarelli and
33 Kohler Environmental students working on some future projects. Commissioner Saunders suggested the
34 Vo-Ag students doing some additional soil testing at Tyler Mill Preserve. Chair Heffernon suggested
35 obtaining woodchips and possibly having the Quinipiac students cover Zachary Blum's trail at Fresh
36 Meadows. Ms. O'Hare suggested a natural resource and invasive plant inventory for the Neal property. The
37 Commission discussed doing a trail re-blazing day. Vice-Chair Heffernon mentioned that Billy Celata

1 erected the Lilac Trail sign. Chair Heffernon asked the Commission to email her other ideas and a list will
2 be kept.

3 **I. OTHER PROPERTIES**

4 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

5 **A. Possible property** - report of subcommittee & discussion

6 The Commission discussed possible property acquisition. *Chair Heffernon will set-up a meeting date with*
7 *Mayor Dickinson to discuss this issue.*

8 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

9 **A. Field 5A & Field 7A** - recommendation for bid awards

10 Ms. O'Hare said Nelson Ceccarelli was the only bidder on the re-bid of Fields 5A and 7A. She asked the
11 Commission for a motion to recommend to the Town Council they award the bid for Field 5A and Field 7A
12 to Ceccarelli Farms

13 **MOTION: A Motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Borne to**
14 **recommended to the Town Council that the bid for Field 5A and Field 7A be awarded to Nelson**
15 **Ceccarelli Farms. The motion passed unanimously.**

16 **B. Field 13A** - potential bid proposal

17 Ms, O'Hare said no-one bid on this field but now two farmers have expressed interest in this field. The
18 Commission agreed to re-bid Field 13A using a two-envelope bid. It will be determined if the field needs
19 to be plowed and re-seeded.

20 **C. Farmland Committee**

21 Nothing to discuss.

22 **D. Property issues**

23 Ms. O'Hare spoke hiring a contractor to chop down autumn olive trees on Field 4C. She said Public Works
24 mowed the field but they don't have the equipment to remove the autumn olive trees. Ms. O'Hare said a
25 resident told her about tire tracks on Fields 1A, 1C and 2A. Ms. O'Hare said the resident spoke about
26 installing a possible hunting parking area on Field 1A. She spoke about possibly formalizing the parking
27 area and installing telephone poles with a no parking sign. Commissioner Borne said because this is a co-
28 operative effort with the DEEP, it might be possible to ask them for assistance.

29 *Ms. O'Hare will contact the DEEP and ask them for assistance.*

30 Commissioner Saunders suggested also installing a no parking sign at the top of Field 1C and her design
31 for a parking area on Field 2A was discussed. She submitted a memo on trespass history on Field 2A. Ms.
32 O'Hare also said the resident also noted that all the hunting permit signs were stripped off Woodhouse
33 Avenue. *Commissioner Saunders will contact DEEP to re-install the hunting permit signs.*

34 **5. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

1 **A. Property owner outreach** - M. Heffernon

2 Chair Heffernon spoke about the Landowner's brochure and who should receive the brochure.
3 Commissioner Saunders spoke about an upsurge in the interest in farming and suggested a farm tour for
4 the public. The Commission agreed to set up a date for the farm tour possibly the weekend of Trails Day in
5 June.

6 **6. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

7 **A. Status**, M. Heffernon & J. Borne

8 Commissioner Borne said Ms. O'Hare created a flash drive of the current plan for him but has yet to work
9 on it. Ms. O'Hare suggested a workshop with Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Borne to discuss the
10 format and content and gave them copies of open space-related grant documents.

11 **B. Use of funds for maps**

12 Ms. O'Hare said there was \$6,000 in the budget last February. She said the bulk of the monies was to be
13 used for eradication and Fresh Meadows and discussed the possibility of using the remaining monies for
14 maps for the open space plan. Ms. O'Hare said Milone & MacBroom just got the contract to do the Town's
15 Plan of Conservation and Development. Ms. O'Hare said suggested the open space plan be completed
16 before the Town's.

17 **7. COMMISSION'S LIBRARY** - inventory, D. Lendler

18 Commissioner Lendler said she was asked to organize books and pamphlets in Ms. O'Hare's office. Ms.
19 O'Hare said the idea was to make a citation or a list of the Commission's Library to be passed around.

20 **8. ANNUAL REPORT** - photo shoot, M. Heffernon

21 Chair Heffernon said she wanted to make the Annual Report more expansive for the Town Council. She
22 said she wanted to find the time to get the Town Council members to go out to a hike with the
23 Commission in the spring and to get Mayor Dickinson to go out on a hike. She asked for thoughts and
24 ideas from the Commission to put into the Annual Report. Commissioner Lendler suggested the second
25 Sunday hikes, and the cooperation with the library.

26 **9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

27 Commissioner Borne said the new officers over the past year have brought new energy to the Commission.
28 He nominated Chair Heffernon for a second term as Chair and nominated John Lathrop as vice-chair. Ken
29 Ryan seconded the nomination which was passed unanimously by the Commission.

30 **10. OTHER TOPICS**

31 **11. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

32 **A. State of CT DEEP Notice of Tentative Determination** to Approve an Application for 401
33 WaterQuality Certification - National Railroad Passenger Corporation - railroad infrastructure and service
34 improvements which may possibly result in any discharge to waters of the state (Quinnipiac River,
35 Meetinghouse Brook, Wharton Brook, Padens Brook, and associated wetlands)

1 **B. CACIWC, 37th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference, Nov. 15** - reports of
2 attendees

3 Chair Heffernon spoke about the CACIWC meeting and said it was worthwhile.

4 **C. CT Land Conservation Council- FY14-15 membership dues.**

5 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Lendler to pay**
6 **membership to the CT Land Conservation Council – FY 14-15 membership dues for \$100.. The**
7 **motion passed unanimously.**

8 **D. (Commission copied) - Letter to Tim Sullivan, National Railroad Passenger**
9 **Corporation, from Danielle Missell, Environmental Analyst 2, DEEP,** re: approval of Water Quality
10 Certificate Permit with copy of permit attached.re: replacement or restoration of approximately 35 miles of
11 second track-railroad infrastructure and service improvements involving watercourse crossings and wetland
12 impacts, dated 12/10/14, received 12/15/14 - (in Wallingford, pertains to Meetinghouse Brook, Quinnipiac
13 River, Padens Brook, and Wharton Brook - the latter involves a box turtle crossing); received 12/15/14.
14 Discussed by Ms. O'Hare.

15 **E. DEEP magazine, Connecticut Wildlife,** Nov./Dec. 2014. Received by Commission.

16 **F. (Commission copied) - Letter to Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr.,** from Lucia Chiochio,
17 Cuddy & Feder, LLP, re: Homeland Towers LLC - Proposed Wireless Telecommunications Tower Facility
18 Circle K Farms, Inc., 1022 Clintonville Road, Wallingford, Connecticut, dated December 30, 2014,with copy
19 of "Technical Report to the Town of Wallingford - proposed Wireless Telecommunications Facility",
20 (undated); received 12/31/14. Discussed by Ms. O'Hare.

21 **12. NEXT MEETING - February 19, 2015**

22 **13. ADJOURNMENT**

23 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Commissioner Borne to adjourn the**
24 **Meeting at 9:53 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

25

26 Respectfully submitted,

27 Cynthia A. Kleist

28 Recording Secretary

29 Conservation Commission