

1 WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2 REGULAR MEETING

3 Thursday, January 10, 2013

4 7 P.M.

5 Town Hall Basement Conference Room

6 45 South Main Street

7 Wallingford, CT

8

9 **PRESENT:** Chairman Jeffrey Borne; Commissioners Dianne Saunders; Dianne Lendler; Carl  
10 Arsenault; Ken Ryan; John Lathrop; Tom Pietras; Jim Pyskaty; Erin O'Hare, Environmental and  
11 Natural Resources Planner.

12 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chair Mary Heffernon.

13 Chairman Borne called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

14 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

15 **A. Minutes, December 13, 2012**

16 In the corrections, Commissioner Saunders noted that on page 1, line 15, should read "unsafe"  
17 not "illegal."

18 On page 4, lines 11 & 12, Commissioner Ryan said it should read "the Eagle Scout agreed to  
19 put up a sign commemorating the project" not a fence and "will submit a draft for final  
20 approval".

21 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Lathrop second by Commissioner Pyskaty to**  
22 **approve the December 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion passed**  
23 **unanimously.**

24 Chairman Borne took the agenda in the following order.

25

26 **3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

27 Chairman Borne indicated he would be willing to say on as Chairman as meetings were running  
28 smoother lately and he has more personal time to devote to the Commission's activities. He also  
29 indicated that Vice-Chair Heffernon had indicated to him that she would be interested in staying  
30 on as Vice-Chair.

31 Commissioner Saunders suggested adopting term limits and reviewing the By-Laws.

32 Commissioner Lendler said she was interested in change.

1 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Lathrop second by Commissioner Ryan to re-**  
2 **elect Jeffrey Borne as Chairman and Mary Heffernon as Vice-Chair. The motion**  
3 **passed 6-1 with Commissioner Lendler abstaining.**

4 **7. GROUP FACILITATION**

5 **A. Review of Committee functions**

6 **B. Rules of Engagement**

7 The Commission discussed the Committee functions and rules of engagement. Chairman Borne  
8 said he believed there was no need for an outside facilitator because he felt the meetings have  
9 been running smoothly over the past few months. Commissioner Lendler suggested a separate  
10 meeting be scheduled to discuss issues best addressed outside of the regular meeting.  
11 Commissioner Lathrop said he was against spending Commission monies for an outside  
12 mediator. Commissioner Ryan spoke about employing "Courtesy, Civility, Compromise and Co-  
13 operation" at meetings.

14 Commissioner Saunders said the key element is co-operation. She suggested the roles of the  
15 committees be spelled out and there be protocol for problem solving. After discussion, all  
16 agreed to work on the matter within the Commission.

17 Chairman Borne suggested a Special Meeting to discuss the Committee functions, etc.. *Ms.*  
18 *O'Hare and Chairman Borne will work on this idea.*

19 **2.PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

20 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

21 1. DEP Recreational Trails Grant Program

22 a. Additional contract work (Part A & Part B) – report, Trails Committee

23 Ms. O'Hare said the additional contract work is completed and payment was processed. She  
24 said regarding the original contract work, removal of the multi-flora and log was finally  
25 completed and the payment was processed. Ms. O'Hare said there was \$48,000 from the DEEP  
26 and our match was \$12,000. She said the remainder of the match money will be used to  
27 improve the parking lots, entranceways and kiosks.

28 b. Parking lots, entranceways, and kiosks – status.

29 Ms. O'Hare said she is still waiting for a drawing from the Engineering Department. She said  
30 the Town received as requested an extension from the DEEP to February 3, 2014. Ms. O'Hare  
31 passed around photos that Vice-Chair Heffernon had taken of the kiosks. Ms. O'Hare said one  
32 kiosk is up in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park parking lot but has no signage. She said the  
33 kiosk by Maltby Lane could not be erected because Public Works hit asphalt when they were  
34 trying to dig the holes. She said Public Works is willing to jackhammer holes through the  
35 asphalt in order to allow the contractor to install the kiosk. Ms. O'Hare said the original,  
36 damaged kiosk at the main entrance to Tyler Mill (Northford Road) was temporarily installed by  
37 the contractor. She said the contractor will contact "Call Before You Dig" for both Maltby Lane  
38 and Northford Road locations. Ms. O'Hare said the contractor submitted a quote of \$875 to  
39 repair the damaged kiosk including purchasing metal and installing it on top of the kiosk,

1 repairing the metal framing, covering the back of the kiosk with plywood, adding a plexiglass  
2 door, adding locks and then installing the kiosk. Ms. O'Hare said the labor cost will be \$40 an  
3 hour, materials are \$375 and installation is \$150 for a total of 13.8 hours of work. Ms. O'Hare  
4 said the cost to construct each new kiosk was \$1,160, (which includes installation costing \$150  
5 and materials costing \$475).

6 Commissioner Saunders spoke about installing wording "Park Closes At Sunset" on kiosk  
7 signage, either in large font so it is visible or as a separate smaller sign hanging below the  
8 bigger sign.

9 Commissioner Saunders said people are parking on the access way to Field 8B and also across  
10 the street from the main entrance of Tyler Mill near the mainway and on Water Division  
11 property. *Ms. O'Hare will contact the Water and Sewer Division regarding this matter.*

12 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Lathrop second by Commissioner Pyskaty to**  
13 **accept the contractor's bid of \$875 to construct the kiosk on Northford Road, Main**  
14 **Entrance to Tyler Mill as quoted. The motion passed unanimously.**

15 2. ATV & mountain bike use issue

16 Commissioner Saunders reported ATVs are accessing Tyler Mill from Maltby Lane. Chairman  
17 Borne spoke about attending the CT Forest & Park Association meeting with Vice-Chair  
18 Heffernon regarding ATVs and mountain bikes illegally using the Blue Blazed trails some of  
19 which go through Wallingford. He said there was talk about the possibility of the Town having  
20 an ordinance with a penalty because there is not enough teeth in the law to enforce.  
21 Commissioner Saunders reported severe trail damage from ATVs on the Red and Green Trails.

22 Ms. O'Hare said John Gawlak, Director, Parks and Recreation, will be organizing a meeting  
23 regarding nighttime uses ATV Mountain biker use and abuse of the trails at Tyler Mill Preserve.  
24 Regarding the Port-A-Potty issue, Ms. O'Hare said John Gawlak suggested adding signage  
25 stating "Portable Restrooms Available at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park, See Map For  
26 Location."

27 Ms. O'Hare said she is still waiting for a copy of the turnaround plan for the end of Vietnam  
28 Veterans Memorial Park forwarded to the State of CT. She also spoke about the plan to raise  
29 the dirt at Vietnam Veterans Park for the soccer field that is closest to the stream. She said  
30 wetland permits are needed and construction is now planned for late summer.

31 Ms. O'Hare spoke about the access to the two parking areas for the soccer fields on Woodhouse  
32 Avenue being blocked by Jersey barriers. Ms. O'Hare reported the fields were laser-leveled and  
33 seeded so to forestall the possibility of damage, the barriers were put into place.

34 Commissioner Lendler spoke about the Town not plowing the upper parking lot at Vietnam  
35 Veterans Park. She said people have been stuck there and have had to be towed out.  
36 *Ms. O'Hare will write a memo to John Gawlak regarding this issue.*

37 Commissioner Saunders spoke about three possible locations for footbridges: the quarterway on  
38 the Green Trail; two spots on the floodplain, and one on the trail off of Woodhouse Avenue at  
39 the bottom of the S curve. She suggested using cedar planking as the material and having the  
40 footbridges built in the winter (by Cub Scouts and Stewards) before the vernal pools come to life  
41 in the Spring. Commissioner Ryan suggested this request be submitted to the Trails Committee

1 along with a map identifying the locations to get their input. *Commissioner Saunders will do so*  
2 *and will specify cost.*

3 **B. Fresh Meadow Swamp at Cheshire Road**

4 1. Improvements

5 Ms. O'Hare said Parks & Recreation may be able to contribute some funds towards construction  
6 of the ADA (Americans with Disability Act) trails. She said she asked the Town's ADA  
7 Coordinator, Joan Stave, about trail specifications. The trails should be a minimum 60 inches  
8 wide and the grading should be one-inch for every twelve feet. *Ms. O'Hare will write a memo to*  
9 *John Gawlak and Henry McCully regarding the ADA trail specifications.*

10 Ms. O'Hare said that Program Planner Doe Roe had received notification from the DEEP  
11 regarding new Trails Grant funding. The Commission agreed to re-submit the original grant for  
12 the \$91,000 Trails Grant funding.

13 **C. Invasive Species Eradication**

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

16 Commissioner Saunders reported that work is being done on Sundays with the invasives by the  
17 Stewards of Tyler Mill. She said this spring, the big concentration will be on the Green Trail  
18 because of the garlic mustard invasion into the wildflowers. She said she wants to use a weed  
19 whacker on the garlic mustard plants before they go to seed. She said the Trees of Heaven  
20 and the knotweed have not been treated but will need treatment to eradicate them.

21 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Lendler that**  
22 **the Conservation Commission request Ms. O'Hare to initiate arrangements for the**  
23 **treatment of the invasive Trees of Heaven (approximately 9-10 trees, plus sprouts)**  
24 **and possibly one Paulownia tree in Tyler Mill Preserve, and the Japanese knotweed**  
25 **at the Northford Road entrance to Tyler Mill and two islands in the Muddy River on**  
26 **the east side of Tyler Mill Road across from the talus slope, in from Northford Road,**  
27 **using the annual Open Space Resource Management Fund for this expenditure and**  
28 **accomplishing this work in the late spring, while the trees are leafed out but have**  
29 **not yet flowered. The motion passed unanimously.**

30 **D. Volunteer Work Program** – report, K. Ryan

31 The Commission discussed possible projects for the Quinnipiac University student volunteers. It  
32 was decided that because of various factors, the Commission would not be pursuing this  
33 opportunity this year.

34 The Commission discussed options for constructing a boardwalk trail at the proposed "Gold  
35 Trail" location and it was agreed it should not be built at the wettest time of the year (April) but  
36 the area conditions at that time should be assessed.

37 **4. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

38 **A. CT Trails Day, June 1 & 2, 2013**

1 Ms. O'Hare said Vice-Chair Heffernon submitted CT Trails Day information and the deadline is  
2 February 1<sup>st</sup> to pick a spot. The Commission agreed to support the Land Trust for a hike at its  
3 Spruce Glen property for CT Trails Day.

#### 4 **5. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

##### 5 **C. Field 18A – bid waiver request**

6 Ms. O'Hare said the proposed bid request was forwarded to the Mayor and was put on the Town  
7 Council's Consent Agenda. She said the Town Council agreed to the bid waiver and the proposed  
8 lease and proposed lessee area map attached to it.

##### 9 **D. Mowing quote – tabled.**

#### 10 **B. Farmland Lease cycle – 2013-2017 – status**

11 Ms. O'Hare said she met with the Farmland Lease Committee, (FLC), this week to work on Field  
12 7A and Field 5A exclusively. She said the questionnaire from the FLC is needed and the  
13 Engineering Dept. will work on the maps.

##### 14 **A. Farmland Committee – report.**

15 Commissioner Pietras said the Farmland Lease Committee met on Wednesday. Commissioner  
16 Pietras said the Committee proposes Field 7A to go out to bid in two parts.

17 The FLC will get Ms. O'Hare a report soon. He said the FLC spoke about the Stewards of  
18 Tyler Mill installing three or four check dams at Field 7A to control erosion. He said they are  
19 looking for 10 hay bales for this project.

#### 20 **6. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

##### 21 **A. Southerly property**

22 Chairman Borne said this property is in the process of being appraised.

##### 23 **B. Easterly property**

24 Chairman Borne said the Town is getting another appraisal.

##### 25 **A. Other property**

26 Chairman Borne indicated more information on this property is awaited.

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

##### 28 **B. Dog Park Proposal – Park & Rec Dept. – status**

29 Ms. O'Hare reported that John Gawlak, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, indicated  
30 that the dog park will not be located at Community Lake or at Garden Road and requested the  
31 Commission think of possible alternate locations.

32 Chairman Borne said Vice-Chair Heffernon has tentatively scheduled a tour of the Kohler  
33 Environmental Center at the Choate School on Saturday, January 26 at 1 pm for the

1 Conservation Commission. He said there will be a tour of the facilities and the greenhouses. He  
2 said the Conservation Commission was asked to speak about their responsibilities while there.

3 **A. CACIWC Environmental Conference, Meriden, Nov. 17** – report, T. Pietras.

4 Commissioner Pietras said the Conference centered on vernal pools and trying to preserve  
5 them. He said the Town of Ridgefield Conservation Commission spoke about an environmental  
6 assessment report they did. He said they raised money and did assessments on vernal pools  
7 and forest land in their town. He said another workshop focused on dedicated open space land  
8 and some of the tradeoffs the State is dealing with, including selling to developers. He said  
9 another workshop focused on commissioners working together to improve their work. He said  
10 the Conference was well-attended.

11 **E. Land Conservation Council membership**

12 The CT Land Conservation Council Conference will take place on Saturday, March 23 from 8:30  
13 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. at Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT. The Commission declined the  
14 membership at this time.

15 Ms. O'Hare said she received a memo from Mayor Dickinson's office regarding the Wallingford  
16 Public School's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Innovation Team's informational luncheon meeting scheduled for  
17 Tuesday, January 15 in Room 315 at the Town Hall.

18 Ms. O'Hare passed around the list of properties which have been boundary marked by the  
19 Engineering Department. He said as of Friday, five properties will have been marked.

20 **C. Open Space Users Group Meeting**, - Not Taken Up.

21 **D. CFPA Meeting** re: abating ATV use and eroision on National Scenic Trail, Dec. 18, CFPA  
22 Middletown, - report, J. Borne – discussed above under Item 2, A2.

23 **F. Sleeping Giant State Park**, correspondence re: invasive plant species, Mansion Road –  
24 Not taken up.

25 **10. NEXT MEETING – February 14, 2013**

26 **11. ADJOURNMENT**

27 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Lathrop second by Commissioner Pyskaty to**  
28 **adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

29

30 Respectfully submitted,

31 Cynthia A. Kleist

32 Recording Secretary.

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