

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

2
3 Thursday, February 19, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

4 Town Hall Basement Conference Room

5 45 South Main Street

6 Wallingford, CT

7 **MINUTES**

8
9 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Dianne Saunders; Jim Pyskaty;
10 Tom Pietras (who left the meeting at 8 p.m.; Ken Ryan; Dianne Saunders; Erin O'Hare Environmental and
11 Natural Resources Planner; Zachary Blum and Richard Blum; Glen Whitehouse, Boy Scouts of America
12 Director; Eric Vo, Record Journal.

13 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioners Dianne Lendler; Jeff Borne.

14 Chair Heffernon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and took the agenda in the following order:

15 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

16 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, January 8, 2015, 7:00 p.m.**

17 On page 3, bottom third line, "Public Works" didn't remove weeds it was Parks & Recreation.

18 On page 6A under "Status" should be "M. Heffernon".

19 **A MOTION BY COMMISSIONER RYAN SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PYSKATY TO APPROVE**
20 **THE JANUARY 8, 2015 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. THE MOTION PASSED**
21 **UNANIMOUSLY.**

22 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

23 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

24 1. Remaining planned improvements - report, staff

25 Ms. O'Hare said there was no progress.

26 8. Tamarack project – C. Arsenault

27 Commissioner Arsenault said another 20 trees were posted and noted the requisite 10 day notification
28 period has passed and the trees may now be cut down and he will follow through.

29 9. Ash trees salvaging proposal – C. Arsenault

30 Commissioner Arsenault said the State Foresters are beginning to do salvage cuts on the ash trees before
31 they die. He talked about the possibility of creating openings at Tyler Mill Preserve with salvage cuts with

1 the ash and having the loggers cut them down. He said he wasn't sure if the ash trees are beginning to
2 die at Tyler Mill Preserve.

3 *Chair Heffernon said this should be explored and said she could contact Tom Worthly of UCONN Forestry*
4 *Extension Service.*

5 Vice-Chair Lathrop suggested having a forester come in to do an assessment.

6 Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Arsenault will explore options and report back to the Commission at the
7 March meeting.

8 **B. Fresh Meadows**

9 1. Eagle Scout Project – status, Zachary Blum, Eagle Scout

10 Zachary gave his report and distributed photos of the different stages and of the kiosk he constructed as
11 part of his Eagle Scout project at Fresh Meadows. He said he has completed the project and the paperwork
12 is done. He said his troop doesn't do maintenance for the Eagle Scout projects but because he has four
13 years left, he can organize work parties to clean up.

14 *Ms. O'Hare will ask John Gawlak, Public Works Director, for direction and options relative to the offer of*
15 *maintenance from the tree contractor.*

16 Chair Heffernon spoke about obtaining wood chips for the trail. The Commission endorsed the completion
17 of the project and gave a unanimous consensus of their satisfaction.

18 *Chair Heffernon will send an email to John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, about a non -functioning*
19 *light reported by Zachary.*

20

21 2. Gold Trail, D. Saunders

22 Ms. Saunders said it was too frozen to go back to the Gold Trail but it is first on the list to be done. She
23 said the Gold Trail has been added to the map and on the new Town map.

24 3. Stewards of Tyler Mill, D. Saunders

25 Commissioner Saunders said the Steward's Annual Meeting took place. She prepared an annual report and
26 said the Stewards discussed having a trail blaze day and to finish the little swale for the frogs on the Green
27 Trail, putting in more plantings and cleaning in front of the kiosks.

28 4. Trail maps – status, D. Saunders

29 Commissioner Saunders said she picked up the proofs on Thursday. She showed the mock-ups to the
30 Commission. She said she questioned some of the colors. She suggested going to the Pantone Color
31 Matching website. The Commission discussed corrections to the proofs.

32 5. Maintenance issues

33 Nothing to report.

1 6. Opening of hunting season signage

2 Commissioner Saunders said the price would be \$20 apiece for A-frames with the wording. The signs will
3 be assembled by the Stewards. Commissioner Saunders said four signs would be needed. She said the
4 signs would be reusable. *Commissioner Saunders will bring a mock-up of the signs for the March meeting.*

5 7. Permit Required Hunting map revision

6 Ms. O'Hare said the changes to the DEEP web site hunting maps were made. She said diagonal lines
7 indicating 500 ft. from houses were added and red signs were added which state: "Hunters may not drive
8 in the fields, park in designated lots only". She said she relocated two parking areas and added a road
9 closure on Maltby Lane and a parking area and at Tyler Mill. The Town needs to erect "No Motorized
10 Vehicle Signs".

11 **C. Beseck Meadow – mowing**

12 Nothing to report.

13 **D. Beseck Mountain**

14 1. CFPA flyer, *New England Trail (National Scenic Trail – Connecticut and*
15 *Massachusetts)*

16 Ms. O'Hare passed around the flyer to the Commission. She said there should be signage.

17 2. New England Trail signage

18 Chair Heffernon said Ms. O'Hare was concerned about the condition of the trail on Creekside Road and
19 discussed the possibility of having signage at the end of that trail. She passed around photos of CFPA trail
20 signage and showed a photo of the signage which is currently in place. She said she discussed the
21 condition of the access trail with the CFPA and if grant monies were available.

22 Chair Heffernon went over a report from 2008 regarding the trail and what needed to be fixed.

23 Ms. O'Hare presented a mockup of what she wants the sign to read.

24 3. Trail restoration

25 Nothing to Report.

26 2. Trail Plan – footbridge design work

27 Ms. O'Hare said she is waiting for final design. She said the RFQ was \$5,700. Rob Baltramaitis Parks &
28 Recreation Director, said the span would be 25 ft. wide and noted that 10 percent is for design. Ms. O'Hare
29 asked Baltramaitis to scale this plan down and use a timber bridge. She said this \$5,700 price is based on
30 a pre-fab steel beam truss. Ms. O'Hare asked the Commission for input. Ms. O'Hare said an alternative
31 proposal by Lenard Engineering would be to bring the trail down to near the road where the pipe goes
32 over the stream.

33 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the linear trails around the state, particularly in Manchester, where
34 State and Federal monies were obtained.

1 Commissioner Ryan suggested putting the bridge design on hold until the trails are constructed.

2

3 **E. Volunteer Projects**

4 1. Seed growing – Choate Kohler Environmental Center Students

5 Commissioner Saunders said she spent the remaining \$34 from the Les Mehrhoff Biodiversity Grant and
6 donated some seed and also obtained seed starter plug trays. She said Choate Environmental Center
7 students agreed to start them in their greenhouse. She said these wildflower plants will be placed down by
8 the bridge at Tyler Mill to fill-in and up at the entrance around the rocks in clumps. She said there is
9 enough money for 90 plugs and hand cast the extra seed in May. She said the plants are deer resistant. M

10 Ms. O'Hare noted the area in question is maintained by the Water Division.

11 *Commissioner Saunders will forward a draft of the planting plan and maintenance proposal to Ms. O'Hare*
12 *for submittal to the Water Division.*

13 2. Possible student projects

14 Commissioner Saunders gave Chair Heffernon a list by email. Chair Heffernon distributed her to-do list to
15 the Commission. She said possible student projects could be to clear around posts on Green and White
16 trails; reblaze trails that need reblazing; the Pink Trail crossing; clean up on Fresh Meadows and spreading
17 woodchips at Zachary's trail. Chair Heffernon suggested putting paint on the trees where the boundary
18 markers are (as suggested by Commissioner Saunders) and soil testing at Tyler Mill in restoration areas
19 which was also suggested by Commissioner Saunders.

20 Commissioner Saunders suggested a visit to Trout Brook in April or May.

21 **F. Use of fill containing invasive plants seeds on Town properties**

22 Commissioner Saunders said she is updating the invasive plan and discussed prevention. She suggested
23 the Stewards be contacted when municipal fill is to be deposited on Town properties.

24 **G. Use of drones – D. Saunders**

25 Commissioner Saunders said this issue had come up because a person is flying drones at Ulbrich Reservoir,
26 Vietnam Vets Park and Field 2A. She said she reported this to John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director.

27 **H. Deer stands on Town property, Cooke Road**

28 Commissioner Saunders said she found three deer stands which she believed to be on Town property.

29 **I. Other properties**

30 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

31 **A. Possible property – report of subcommittee**

32 A discussion of possible property acquisition took place.

33 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

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A. Field 5A & Field 7A – award

Ms. O'Hare said Nelson Ceccarelli was awarded Field A and Field 7A. Dianne said Henry McCully put gravel on Field 7A per Ms. O'Hare's request. *Ms. O'Hare will send McCully an memo thanking him for the gravel.*

B. Field 13A – bid proposal – status

Commission Saunders had no update

C. Field 7A – access improvement

Taken up above.

D. Field 9C – fence restoration

Ms. O'Hare said this fence was located at the end of Vietnam's Veterans Memorial Park where the hill was dug out. Ms. O'Hare discussed the design. She said there was a sign that stated farmers field, a gate and a split rail fence where the Green Trail went around. She said this has disappeared and the lollipop turnaround was started but not quite completed. The Commission suggested a split rail fence around the entire perimeter with a red sign stating no access to the field be installed by spring. *Commissioner Saunders will touch base with lessee Augur in this regard.*

Ms. O'Hare will write a memo to Henry McCully, Public Works Director, about installing the split rail fence.

E. Field 2A – parking for hunting, etc. /fencing

Ms. O'Hare indicated there was no progress.

F. Field 1A – parking for hunting

Ms. O'Hare said nothing has been done regarding improvements. Commissioner Saunders said she would do a draft of a map. Ms. O'Hare suggested putting up a sign stating no motorized vehicles.

G. Farmland Committee

Commissioner Saunders said the Committee recommends the sugarbush would go out for a two-year trial with a possible renewal. She said she has been asked to serve on a CT Land Conservation Council on Farmland Leasing in March. She said they will discuss how land trusts and municipalities can meet the needs of farmers. She asked permission to represent the Town and the Commission approved.

H. Property issues

Ms. O'Hare said she is keeping an eye on Field 14A, 205 Main Street. She said there is a court stipulated March 15th deadline.

5. PUBLIC OUTREACH

A. Property owner outreach – status, M. Heffernon

Chair Heffernon said she took the list from the Assessor's Office and culled it down to 200 names. She said she would like a smaller meeting to determine who to send the brochures to. She asked Commissioners Saunders, Pyskaty, Borne and Ryan to attend the meeting.

1 **B. CT Trails Day – farm tour hike**

2 Commissioner Saunders talked about a hay farm tour with a hike possibly in mid-June She suggested the
3 tour start in the back of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park and have a walk up to the top of the White Trail
4 lookout and go back down around the swamp on June .

5 Ms. O'Hare suggested having the Nelson Ceccarelli farm tour on another date. Commissioner Saunders
6 suggested handing out flyers to people who attend the CT Trails Day hike.

7 **C. Film event – co-sponsored with Wallingford Public Library**

8 Chair Heffernon spoke about an Origins movie "The Planet is an Ecosystem of Life, and We Are Part of that
9 Ecosystem", to be possibly shown at the Wallingford Public Library. *Chair Heffernon will set up a date and*
10 *time.*

11 **F. Mailings regarding future land acquisitions , staff**

12 Ms. O'Hare showed a flyer from the Branford Land Trust which highlighted what land they had acquired.
13 She suggested the next time the Commission acquire land, that it be publicized with a colorful brochure.

14 **6. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

15 No updates.

16 **A. Status, M. Heffernon, J. Borne, staff**

17 **B. Mapping**

18 Ms. O'Hare said a list of maps should be drawn up. She said grant monies are available.

19 **8. COMMISSION'S LIBRARY – inventory, D. Lendler**

20 Not taken up.

21 **8. ANNUAL REPORT, M. Heffernon**

22 Chair Heffernon said the four page draft Annual Report is finished. She asked the Commission for input.
23 She showed photos of the Kohler students and the Choate students to be added to the report.
24 Commissioner Saunders suggested including the Vo-Ag students photos in the Annual Report.

25 **9. BUDGET FY 15-16 – proposals**

26 Chair Heffernon solicited ideas from the Commission regarding purchased services. Commissioner
27 Saunders suggested hiring someone to GPS the Town boundaries on the land most encroached upon:
28 Celestial Lane overlook where the trees have been cut down and a deer stand erected. She said GPS would
29 help because once the tags were moved, they would be able to be put back in place. Chair Heffernon said
30 Engineering will have to resurvey the boundary. Chair Heffernon suggested spending the money on the
31 Pink Trail crossing or getting some plants for the Riparian Buffer; the Pink Trail crossing and plants for
32 Doolittle Park She said she sent an email to the QRWA inquiring about grant monies relative to the latter.

1 Ms. O'Hare said she read there was grant monies for riparian buffer restoration. The Commission
2 discussed purchasing boulders and cables and ear-marking \$2,500 for this. Commissioner Saunders
3 suggested a footbridge of rocks using two 30 ft. telephone poles and put railings along the rocks.

4 The Commission suggested spending \$1,000 for plants at Doolittle Park; \$2,000 for GPS boundary
5 markings and \$3,000 for the Pink Trail Crossing.

6 Chair Heffernon said she spoke to Emily Picard and suggested the Commission do a tour at the Vo-Ag
7 before March 18.

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9 **10. OTHER TOPICS**

10 **11. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

11 **A. ATV article**

12 Not taken up.

13 **B. CFPA request – membership renewal dues**

14 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to renew the**
15 **CFPA membership dues. The motion passed unanimously.**

16 **C. Proposed legislation**

17 Mary said Program Planning sends down these proposed legislations and asks if the Commission will
18 support and follow these. She said one of the proposed legislation is bow hunting on Sunday and another
19 proposed legislation is proposed hunting on Sunday. The Commission agreed not to endorse both of these
20 proposals. The Commission was opposed to proposed legislation grandfathering running bamboo which
21 was already planted and to clarify running bamboo being planted within 40 ft. of a residential property.

22 Ms. O'Hare spoke about proposed legislation prohibiting the use of glyphosates in watershed areas. The
23 Commission agreed to track this legislation.

24 **D. CACIWC newsletter, "The Habitat", winter 2015**

25 Distributed by Ms. O'Hare.

26 **E. CT Land Conservation Council – 2015 Conference, Wesleyan University,**
27 **Middletown , CT, Sat., March 21, 2015, 8:30 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.**

28 Discussed by Chair Heffernon.

29 **12. NEXT MEETING – March 12, 2015**

30 **13. ADJOURNMENT**

31 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Commissioner Ryan to adjourn the**
32 **meeting at 9:29 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

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2 Respectfully submitted,

3 Cynthia A. Kleist

4 Recording Secretary

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