

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 Thursday, March 12, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

4 Town Hall, Basement Conference Room

5 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT

6 **MINUTES**

7 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Dianne Saunders; Dianne Lendler; Jim Pyskaty; Carl  
8 Arsenault; Tom Pietras Ken Ryan; Erin O'Hare, Environmental & Natural Resources Planner; Bethany  
9 Goodrich-Carlson, Wallingford YMCA.

10 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioner Jeff Borne.

11 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

12 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

13 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting February 19, 2015**

14 Commissioner Saunders noted that Commissioner Arsenault did attend the Feb. 19, 2015 meeting.

15 On page 2, third line, "Worthy" should be "Worthley".

16 On page 3 under "New England Trail Signage" the street is Cliffside Drive not Creekside Drive.

17 On page 5, under Item "D 9C" should say Commissioner Arsenault not Commissioner Saunders will speak  
18 with Colleen Auger.

19 On the top of page 4 where it says Commissioner Ryan said the bridge design on hold until trail is  
20 constructed, should actually said this was the consensus of entire Commission.

21 **MOTION: A MOTION BY COMMISSIONER PYSKATY SECOND BY COMMISSIONER RYAN TO**  
22 **APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 19, 2015 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. THE MOTION PASSED**  
23 **UNANIMOUSLY.**

24 **B. Minutes, Special Meeting, Feb. 25, 2015**

25 **MOTION: A MOTION BY COMMISSIONER PYSKATY SECOND BY COMMISSIONER RYAN TO**  
26 **APPROVE THE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF FEB. 25, 2015 AS PRESENTED.**

27 **MOTION: A MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ARSENAULT SECOND BY COMMISSIONER RYAN TO**  
28 **WAIVE ARTICLE 1 SECTION 1 TO ADD THE UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM ONTO THE AGENDA.**  
29 **THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

30 **UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM**

31 Ms. Goodrich - Carlson spoke about her Upward Bound middle-school program involving grades 25  
32 students in grades 6 to 8, at the YMCA in Wallingford. She said she wanted her students to get more

1 involved with nature programs in Wallingford. She said they would be starting a garden in the rear of the  
2 Teen House next to YMCA in the spring and wanted input from the Commission to get them involved in  
3 outdoor projects in the wider community. She said the students had worked with the removal of invasive  
4 species in Edgewood Park in New Haven. The Commission discussed ideas including participating in a hike  
5 and expressed interest in working with the students. *Ms. Goodrich-Carlson will look into transportation  
6 and timing with other YMCA staff, and will get back in touch with the Commission.*

## 7 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

### 8 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

#### 9 1. Ash trees status & salvaging prospect, Thomas Worthley, UCONN Forestry 10 Extension

11 Chair Heffernon said Mr. Worthley will attend the April Meeting.

12 Chair Heffernon said she received differing input about the ash trees salvaging. She said Morris Jesup from  
13 the Yale School of Forestry recommended the ash trees be left alone and not to engage in salvage logging.  
14 She said Doug Emmerthol of CT DEEP stated the removal of ash trees is based on infestation of ash borers  
15 and the proximity to the property. She said he asked for a copy of the tree inventory plan and a copy of  
16 the CT DEEP wildlife evaluation plan if available. She said Mr. Emmerthol encouraged the development of a  
17 harvest plan or a full force management plan by a certified forester prior to any harvest.

18 Chair Heffernon said Jeffrey Ward from the CT Agricultural Station recommended the harvest plan be  
19 done. Chair Heffernon recommended first looking at the forest inventory to see exactly where the ash  
20 trees are located at Tyler Mill Preserve.

21 Commission Arsenault said he spoke with State Forester Jerry Miln who recommended a management plan  
22 be written up by Eric Hansen and additional trees other than ash could be taken as well. He said the  
23 management report would have goals and objectives which would be given to the forester.

24 Ms. O'Hare said Don Roe said the Forestry inventory was done in 2006 so it was due to be done again.

25 Commissioner Saunders noted that Bill Austin estimated that 10 to 20 percent of the trees in Tyler Mill  
26 Preserve are ash trees. She suggested using some of the budget monies to create the management plan.

27 *Chair Heffernon will get in touch with Eric Hansen to discuss this issue to come up with a plan for April's  
28 meeting.*

29 *Chair Heffernon will email Doug Emmerthal of CT DEEP about the ash trees.*

#### 30 2. Audubon Connecticut – "Forest Bird Habitat Assessment" - report

31 Commissioners felt this was a well-done, detailed report, and the beginnings of a management plan for the  
32 Preserve.

33 Chair Heffernon would like to see the suggestions for various areas of the Preserve plotted on a large map  
34 of the Preserve.

#### 35 3. Remaining planned improvements – staff

36 Ms. O'Hare said there was nothing to report.

- 1 4. Gold Trail, D. Saunders
- 2 Commissioner Saunders said the footbridge work will be completed as soon as the trail dries up from the  
3 melting snow.
- 4 5. Stewards of Tyler Mill, D. Saunders
- 5 Commissioner Saunders said there were no updates.
- 6 6. Trail Maps for kiosks – status, D. Saunders
- 7 Chair Heffernon said that she and Commissioner Saunders had finished looking over the changes to be  
8 made, and agreed to wait to get the map to the printer until the decision about the Barrett property was  
9 finalized so it could be incorporated into the map.
- 10 7. Opening of hunting season signage
- 11 Commissioner Saunders is still working on this.
- 12 8. Tamarack project, C. Arsenault
- 13 Commissioner Arsenault said work in the Tamarack Swamp could be done this coming Sunday at 9 a.m. if  
14 the swamp is still frozen.
- 15 *Commissioner Saunders will e-mail Chair Heffernon with names of people who would be interested in*  
16 *participating.*
- 17 9. Visit to Lyman Hall High School Agricultural, Science and Technology – set date
- 18 Chair Heffernon said the dates of April 20 or April 22, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. were offered to visit Lyman Hall  
19 High School. The Commission decided on April 20, 2015.
- 20 10. Entrance area plant restoration project – planting plan & maintenance proposal,  
21 - D Saunders
- 22 Commissioner Saunders said Choate Kohler Students are planting the seedlings. She said she is preparing  
23 the before and after photos for her table at Les Merhoff at the CT. Association of Wetland Scientists  
24 luncheon.
- 25 **B. Fresh Meadows**
- 26 1. Trail Plan – final plan drawings
- 27 Ms. O'Hare said the final plan drawings came in. She said she sent them back to Lenard Engineering for a  
28 few changes.
- 29 2. Maintenance of Eagle Scout project
- 30 Ms. O'Hare said John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, has used Eagle Scouts for maintenance at the  
31 Parks. He suggested Zachary Blum, Eagle Scout candidate, be contacted regarding equipment being used  
32 and the timeline. Ms. O'Hare will follow through with this.
- 33 3. Visit to observe ADA accessible trails at CT Audubon, Fairfield, CT – set date

1 The Commission decided to plan the date around May 2nd or 3<sup>rd</sup>.

2 **C. Doolittle Park**

3 1. Riparian Corridor Restoration Project – status, M. Heffernon

4 Chair Heffernon spoke about the meeting which, she, John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, Ms.  
5 O'Hare, Roman Mrozinski of the Southwest Conservation District of CT, and State Rep. Mary Mushinsky  
6 attended. She said the plan was to stabilize the banks and put in plantings.

7 Chair Heffernon said the Commission will receive \$1,000 the QRWA and noted that Parks & Recreation will  
8 give money along with \$2,000 from the Conservation Commission budget. She spoke about the installing  
9 Vo-Ag and the Kohler Environmental Students being involved, and about applying for three grants  
10 including the Long Island Sound and the Project Learning Tree Grants.

11 **D. Volunteer Projects**

12 1. Seed growing – Choate Kohler Environmental Center students

13 Commissioner Saunders said the program is continuing. Commissioner Saunders asked Ms. O'Hare for  
14 money from the budget for plants and rabbit sticks.

15 2. Quinnipiac University "Big Event", April 11 – project

16 Chair Heffernon spoke about the "Big Event". She said she contacted Quinnipiac University and said the re-  
17 routing of the White Trail could be done by the students. *Chair Heffernon will submit the application.*

18 3. Purple loosestrife – CT Conference of Natural Resources, UCONN, March 16,  
19 2015 – M.Heffernon

20 Chair Heffernon said she asked the Vo-Ag students to grow more beetles for the loosestrife project. She  
21 said the students dug up some plants in the fall and took them to their greenhouse. She said one of the  
22 students asked her to attend a CNR conference at UCONN on Monday. The student who has worked on  
23 over-winterizing is getting ready to put the beetles on the plants and will be presenting this at the CCNR  
24 Conference at UCONN.

25 **E. Other properties**

26 Chair Heffernon discussed a letter written by a resident regarding property acquisition.

27 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

28 **A. 75 Tyler Mill Road property**

29 The Town Council voted unanimously Tuesday night to purchase this property. The upcoming Town  
30 Council Public Hearing will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24. Commissioners are encouraged  
31 to attend.

32 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

33 **A. Field 13A – bid proposal-status**

34 *Ms. O'Hare will write up the bid proposal.*

1                   **C. Field 9C – fence restoration**

2 Ms. O'Hare said she sent a memo to John Thompson, Town Engineer and is awaiting a response. She said  
3 she requested a split-rail fence.

4                   **D. "Soft edge" - proposal for lease areas fields**

5 Ms. O'Hare said she put this on the agenda to introduce the concept. She spoke about the soft edge which  
6 is a transition and layer for the birds. She said currently there is hard edge on the fields. Commissioner  
7 Saunders said this should be part of the management plan.

8                   **E. Community Farms Preservation Program, CT. Dept. of Agriculture**

9 Ms. O'Hare spoke about the Community Farms Preservation Program. She said this program was pushed in  
10 2011 and is for farms less than 40 acres. She said this is a matching grant program of 75/25. She said she  
11 met with Program Planner Don Roe to discuss the application process. She said approximately 26 Towns  
12 have registered. She passed around a map of the Towns who have joined this program and literature. Ms.  
13 O'Hare spoke about greenhouse farming.

14                   **F. Farmland Committee**

15 Commissioner Saunders said she and others will attend the CLCC conference next week. She said she will  
16 present two slides of the deep zone tillage squash and the woody goldenrod, mud and vegetation. She  
17 said she will use Google Earth to highlight the farmland lease fields and the scenic vistas. Ms. O'Hare gave  
18 the Commission a synopsis of the lease fields.

19                   **G. Property Issues**

20 Not discussed.

21 **5.PUBLIC OUTREACH**

22                   **A. Property owner outreach –M. Heffernon**

23 Chair Heffernon said the Landowner brochures and labels are printed and are ready to go out.

24                   **B. Trails Day – farm tour hike**

25 Chair Heffernon read the publicity Commissioner Saunders wrote. She said the hike will take place on  
26 Saturday June, 4, 2015.

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

28 No update.

29 **6. OPEN SPACE USER'S GROUP MEETING, April 8, 2015, 7:00 p.m. – topics for agenda**

30 Ms. O'Hare entertained suggestions for the agenda. Commissioner Saunders said the Stewards will give an  
31 annual report. Ms. O'Hare will speak about the Audubon Report and deer management and CT.Trails Day.  
32 Commissioner Saunders suggested speaking about the Eagle Scout project. Chair Heffernon suggested

1 speaking about the kestrel boxes at Farnham Field and Field 3A which have been constructed.  
2 Commissioner Lendler suggested speaking about the proposed management plan for Tyler Mill Preserve.

3 **7. Open Space Plan Update**

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

5 Not discussed.

6 **B. Mapping**

7 Not discussed.

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

9 Commissioner Lendler said she began the inventory which she will complete next week. She said the  
10 inventory will be categorized and a borrowing sheet will be made. She spoke about a film in the inventory  
11 by Sam Waterston which she will review. Ms. O'Hare said she found four copies of the vernal pool studies  
12 from 2002.

13 **9. BUDGET FY 15-16**

14 Chair Heffernon said she met with Mayor Dickinson about the budget, which included the Pink Trail  
15 crossing, the Riparian buffer project and the GPS markings.

16 *Ms. O'Hare said she will ask the Engineering Dept. if the boundaries have an A-2 survey.* She said the  
17 Town Council Public Hearing for the budget is April 9 at 6 p.m. and the workshop with the Town Council is  
18 April 13 at 6:30 p.m.

19 **10. OTHER TOPICS**

20 **11. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

21 **A. Proposed legislation**

22 Chair Heffernon said all the legislation spoken about previously has been referred to the Environmental  
23 Committee.

24 **B. CT Land Conservation Council -2015 Conference Wesleyan University, Middletown**  
25 **CT., Sat., March 21, 2015**

26 Some Commissioners will attend.

27 **C. DEEP – Notice of Intent to Amend Endangered Species Regulations ( to update the**  
28 **list of Endangered, Threatened and Species Concern): posted 2/19/15, received 2/20/15**

29 **D. CT Butterfly Association newsletter, Winter 2015**

30 Distributed by Ms. O'Hare.

31 **F. Southwest Conservation District, Inc., newsletter, "Soil and Water", Spring**  
32 **2015**

1 Distributed by Ms. O'Hare.

2 Ms. O'Hare spoke about a lecture she attended at Yale University and a lecture by Peter Picone of QRWA.  
3 She spoke about two workshops on Farm Wineries and the watershed regulations being conducted by P &  
4 Z in April.

5 **12. NEXT MEETING – April 9, 2015**

6 **13. ADJOURNMENT**

7 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Commissioner Ryan to adjourn the**  
8 **meeting at 9:17 p.m.**

9

10 Respectfully submitted,

11 Cynthia A. Kleist

12 Recording Secretary

13

14