

1 WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
2 REGULAR MEETING
3 Thursday, March 13, 2014
4 Town Hall, Basement Conference Room
5 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT
6

7 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Carl Arsenault; Jim Pyskaty; Dianne
8 Saunders; Dianne Lendler, Jeff Borne; Tom Pietras; Environmental Planner Erin O'Hare; Bill
9 Celata, Fire Chief, East Wallingford Fire Dept. Eagle Scout Zachary Blum, Boy Scouts Troop 5;
10 Richard Blum; Glenn Whitehouse, Scoutmaster, Boy Scouts Troop 5.

11 **NOT PRESENT:** Vice-Chairman John Lathrop; Commissioner Ken Ryan

12 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and took the agenda in the following
13 order:
14

15 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

16 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

17 1. Facilitating emergency response - Bill Celata, Fire Chief, East
18 Wallingford Fire Dept.

19 Chief Celata asked the Conservation Commission if they would consider installing trail markers
20 because there have been quite a few incidents of lost and injured hikers in the Tyler Mill
21 Preserve and these markers would make it easier for rescue personnel to locate these hikers and
22 would make it easier for the hikers to transmit their location to rescue personnel. He said he got
23 the idea for the markers after seeing the Conservation Commission map in the kiosks at Tyler
24 Mill. He said he would put the maps in all of the rescue trucks. Chief Celata suggested installing
25 the trail markers every 1,000 feet so they could be easily seen.

26 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the Aspetuck Land Trust in Easton and how they have
27 numbered trails for that purpose. She distributed maps of the Aspetuck Land Trust to the other
28 Commissioners as an example. She suggested giving a list of the Stewards of Tyler Mill to the
29 Fire Dept. as they know the trails very well and would be willing to assist the Fire Dept in
30 locating lost hikers.

31 Commissioner Borne suggested reflective numbers be installed on the trails so as to be easily
32 visible at night.

33 Chair Heffernon stated the Trails Committee will pursue this idea.

34 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Commissioner Borne to waive**
35 **Article 1, Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Rules and Regulations to add the "Eagle**
36 **Scout Project" to the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.**

37 **B. Fresh Meadows**

38 1. **Eagle Scout Project**

39 Eagle Scout Zachary Blum told the Commissioners he was interested in doing his Eagle Scout
40 project at the Galko Property (Fresh Meadows), which would include creating a walking path
41 from the parking lot through the guard rail to the area directly in front of the pond. He said the
42 path would be 4 to 6 feet wide and made from mulch. He said on either side of the path, he
43 would like to have two to three small picnic areas with picnic tables and to ensure the tables
44 would not end up in the water, he would make the table frames from concrete. Zachary said he
45 was also interested in making a second path from the main trail which would be the same width
46 which would lead to the deeper part of the pond. He also expressed an interest in constructing a
47 two-sided kiosk near the guardrail with one side of the kiosk having a map of the paths and
48 picnic areas and the other side having a list and description of the area wildlife. Zachary said he

1 could begin the project after receiving approval from the Boy Scouts of America sometime in
2 May.
3 Ms. O'Hare noted that anything constructed within 50-feet of the pond would need a wetlands
4 permit which could take time acquiring. She also suggested a possible concrete picnic table
5 could be installed at the end of the Cuneo driveway. Ms. O'Hare said since the Commission will
6 not be getting the \$115,000 DEEP Recreational Trails Grant funds, the Open Space Resources
7 Management funds could be used for this project. The work could include the "boxing-out" of
8 the trails for either millings or mulch. The Commission spoke about Zachary possibly
9 constructing a small fishing pier.

10 *Ms. O'Hare will provide Zachary with a copy of the fishing pier design.*

11 Commissioner Pietras said the plan was doable and he liked it, noting that it would allow access
12 and promote the property.

13 Mr. Whitehouse said he was confident the Boy Scouts of America would approve this project but
14 noted additional funding might be needed for materials and machine rentals. He said it was a
15 three-weekend project for the Troop.

16 Commissioner Borne suggested a copy of the engineering plans drawn by the hired consultant
17 Lenard Engineering, be given to Zachary. He said Public Works could possibly contribute some
18 asphalt and for woodchips

19 Commissioner Saunders suggested Zachary come up with a maintenance guide.

20 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pietras second by Commissioner Saunders to**
21 **authorize Zachary Blum to seek approval for his Eagle Scout project at Fresh Meadows**
22 **from the Boy Scouts of America. The motion passed unanimously.**

23

24

25 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

26

27 **A. Minutes, Special Meeting, Feb. 20, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

28

29 Cynthia Kleist, Recording Secretary, left the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

30

31 Ms. O'Hare acted as recording secretary for the remainder of the meeting.

32

33 The following corrections were requested:

34 Commissioner Saunders:

35 Page 3, line 2, add, "*The Commission agreed.*"

36 Page 6, line 5, after "*work by Tom Pietras*", add, "*as submitted last year*".

37 Page 7, line 20, add, "*for the services of a*" before "*bucket loader*".

38 Page 7, line 22, delete the words "*the Commissions*" from the sentence.

39 Page 7, after line 28, add, "*Commissioner Saunders will submit the budget narrative tomorrow*
40 *for footbridges and for edge habitat.*"

41 Chairman Heffernon:

42 Page 2, line 15, add, "*and installing wooden guard rail.*"

43 Page 4, line 30, substitute, "*to the Mayor*" for "*to Public Works*".

44

45 **MOTION: A motion by Jim Pyskaty, seconded by Dianne Saunders, to approve the**
46 **Minutes of Special Meeting, Feb. 20, 2014, as corrected:**

47 **VOTE: Unanimous**

48

49 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

50

1 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

2
3 2. Report to DEEP & remaining planned improvements
4

5 Ms. O’Hare reported that Don Roe, Program Planner, had forwarded the final report on Grant
6 project completion to the DEEP and a copy of the letter, dated Feb. 28, 2014, was passed around.
7 She listed remaining unfinished planned elements: regrading of parking area by the closed
8 bridge and refurbishing guardrail there, finished grading of expanded and new parking areas at
9 Preserve entrance that was held up by ice, installation of the two Preserve name signs, relocation
10 of fencing at Woodhouse Ave./East Dayton Hill Road and removal of signage there. She
11 believes the sign vendor corrected its mistake on installed regulation signage this week after the
12 warm temperature we had allowed the patch work to be done.
13

14 3. Forest Edge Habitat project
15

16 Commissioner Saunders reported the site favored for this project she found identified in the ERT
17 completed on Tyler Mill in 1992. *She and Chairman Heffernon will draft the letter to Peter*
18 *Picone.*
19

20 Ms. O’Hare reported that while researching this topic for the budget proposal, she read about the
21 creation of shelterwoods, early successional habitat and forest-edge habitat on the DEEP site and
22 ordered a DEEP book on the subject for the Commission.
23

24 4. Deer population – thinning
25

26 Commission discussed options available to decrease the deer population: culling, lotteries, fall,
27 archery season. Commissioner Borne indicated NU had issued deer hunting permits.
28

29 Chairman Heffernon asked Commissioner Lendler to report back at the next meeting on various
30 approaches different groups (Town of Redding, Easthampton, NY, Block Island, South Central
31 CT Regional Water Authority, etc.) have used to control deer populations and the associated cost
32 involved. Commissioner Borne pointed out that the town has a cooperative agreement with
33 DEEP regarding hunting in Tyler Mill.
34

35 *Ms. O’Hare will provide the file on this topic to Commissioner Lendler to complete the*
36 *assignment.*
37

38 5. Management of tamaracks – request to IWWC – report, M. Heffernon
39

40 Chairman Heffernon reported she presented the request for the thinning work to the IWWC last
41 week and the IWWC determined the work was exempt from permitting with the condition that a
42 map depicting the thinning area be submitted. The work was completed last weekend with
43 several commissioners participating. A brush pile was constructed with the brush cut.
44

45 Commissioner Arsenault drew the specific area on a map provided and submitted it to Ms.
46 O’Hare for the IWWC file.
47

48 6. Gold Trail – planned improvements
49

1 Commissioner Saunders reported that Choate Environmental Center students may be interested
2 in perhaps assisting with building this trail before the term is out. The need for dry conditions
3 for the work was discussed.
4

5 Ms. O'Hare reported that the IWWC determined at its meeting last week that the permit for this
6 work does not require a commencement date extension as work under the permit commenced
7 regarding the other trail work permitted under the same application.
8

9 **B. Fresh Meadows**

10 1. Trails Program – status

11
12
13 Ms. O'Hare reported that several Commissioners met with administrative heads, the engineering
14 consultant, and the Mayor to review the Commission's trails system design concerns. Consensus
15 was reached on final design with a few outstanding issues to be resolved regarding ADA
16 requirements. Ms. O'Hare subsequently conferred with Kacie Costello, Town Planner, and
17 Richard Boyne, Building Official, regarding design requirements and permitting.
18

19 Ms. O'Hare and Don Roe, Program Planner, were preparing to update the DEEP Recreational
20 Trails Grant application to incorporate the ADA trail work when the Town was advised it will
21 not be awarded the \$115,000 grant sought.
22

23 **C. 1250 Whirlwind Hill Road – mowing**

24
25 Not taken up.
26

27 **D. Invasive Species Eradication - update, D. Saunders**

28
29 Commissioner Saunders reviewed her monthly report, dated March 13, 2014, and submitted it.
30 She requested Ms. O'Hare complete the necessary processing to effect the Commission's annual
31 commitment to the eradication of invasive plants this year at five discrete areas within Tyler Mill
32 Preserve (as mapped previously) at the optimal time using the Open Space Resources
33 Management Fund – backpack spraying not broadcast spraying to be used.
34

35 **MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Pyskaty, seconded by Commissioner Saunders, to**
36 **eradicate invasive plants at five discrete areas within Tyler Mill Preserve at**
37 **the optimal time (midsummer) using the Open Space Resources Management**
38 **Fund.**

39 **VOTE: Unanimous**
40

41 Commissioner Saunders reported that she was present at a site in North Haven where bamboo
42 was documented spreading by crossing a stream.
43

44 Commissioner Saunders reported the Stewards of Tyler Mill in care of Dianne Saunders, made
45 application recently and were awarded the Les Mehrhoff Invasive Plant Grant (\$1,000) regarding
46 eradication of invasive plants at three discrete areas in Tyler Mill Preserve and restoration
47 plantings for these areas. She indicated Chairman Heffernon ascertained that the Town can act
48 as fiduciary sponsor. *Commissioner Saunders will provide Ms. O'Hare a copy of the map of the*
49 *sites as submitted for the grant application.*
50

1 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

2
3 **A. Property owner outreach**

4
5 The Commission discussed different approaches regarding a possible concerted outreach effort
6 which has not been done in several years. *Chairman Heffernon will look into reproducing the*
7 *original pamphlet or the use of outside consultants in this regard – to be followed up at the next*
8 *meeting.*

9
10 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

11
12 **A. Proposed bid - Field 5A and Field 7A - status**

13
14 Ms. O’Hare reported Commissioner Saunders submitted the proposed bid document and map for
15 Field 5A two weeks ago but she has not had a chance to review the material yet.

16
17 **B. Farmland Committee**

18
19 Commissioner Saunders submitted a FLC report, dated 3/13/14. She indicated after the last
20 meeting, she located and reviewed the draft proposal for Field 7A as typed up last April by Ms.
21 O’Hare, and, although the Committee had agreed to that version last month, upon review, due to
22 changes noticed therein from the original proposal completed by Commissioner Pietras, the
23 Committee will be proposing changes for the bid document. She also indicated that Ms.
24 O’Hare’s typed document was not finished.

25
26 Ms. O’Hare indicated that the Field 7A document was only 80% finished to order to meet the
27 Commission’s original April 5 deadline for forwarding to Purchasing Department. She
28 suggested a meeting be set with the Committee in the next two weeks to go over proposals for
29 both Fields 5A and 7A. It was agreed Field 5A had priority for bidding. *She will call*
30 *Commissioner Saunders to schedule the meeting.*

31
32 Commissioner Saunders reported she attended a seminar on model agricultural conservation
33 easements.

34
35 **C. Property issues**

36 1. Field 3A – encroachment

37 Commissioner Saunders indicated concrete block were reported dumped on the field.

38
39 2. Field 2A – fence & signage

40
41 Commissioner Saunders indicated there has been no word back from Rick Vansky, Wtaer
42 Division, about cooperating on a gate installation.

43
44 3. Field 7H – gate

45
46 Commissioner Saunders indicated the ice has prevented Public Works from following through
47 with the installation of a wider gate as planned.

48
49 4. Field 12A – gate to access Field 9B

1 Ms. O'Hare indicated the Public Works Department will clear brush and install a gate as planned
2 when drier conditions allow, as per Steve Palermo, Foreman, Public Works.

3
4 **5. Fields 4A & 4B – kestrel box**

5
6 Ms. O'Hare had forwarded Commissioner Saunders an article on erection of kestrel boxes as
7 promoted by the DEEP from CT Wildlife magazine.

8
9 Commissioner Saunders is researching the suitability of the boxes for the Whirlwind Hill fields
10 and indicated box maintenance is very labor intensive.

11
12 **5. BUDGET FY 14-15**

13 **A. Line item, "Purchased Services-Natural Resources" - report**

14
15 Chairman Heffernon and Ms. O'Hare reported on the March 3 Mayoral budget proposal meeting
16 wherein the proposed uses for the Purchased Services line item were discussed. Although the
17 Commission last month had approved submitting four proposals, only two of them were
18 submitted (Fresh Meadows regarding eradication of invasive plants, and mapping for the Open
19 Space Plan document) as it was ascertained the other two could be completed using Open Space
20 Resources Management funds. A copy of the proposal was circulated.

21
22 Ms. O'Hare indicated she forwarded a memorandum to James Bowes, Comptroller, last week
23 requesting information on the conservation conveyance tax revenues which had come up at the
24 budget meeting – to be on next agenda.

25
26 **6. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

27 **A. CT Trails Day, June 8**

28 **B. Fall program**

29 Not taken up.

30
31 **7. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

32 **A. Discussion regarding goals**

33 Not taken up.

34
35 **8. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS**

36 **A. Town Dog Park Proposal, off Quinnipiac Street - status**

37 Chairman Heffernon noted the proposal obtained wetlands permitting and is now seeking other
38 permitting.

39
40 **B. CT Land Conservation Council – Conference, Wesleyan University, Middletown,**
41 **March 15, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (optional, 6:p.m.)**

42
43 **C. CFPA, "Building Walking Opportunities in the Town of Wallingford"**

44 Not taken up.

45
46 **9. NEXT MEETING – April 10, 2014**

47
48 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

49
50 Chairman Heffernon adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

Respectfully submitted,

Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner
Acting Recording Secretary