

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 **Thursday, April 10, 2014**

4 **7:00 p.m.**

5 **Town Hall, Basement Conference Room**

6 **45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

7 **MINUTES**

8

9 **These Minutes are subject to approval by the Conservation Commission**

10 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Dianne Saunders;
11 Dianne Lendler; Carl Arsenault; Ken Ryan; Tom Pietras; Jeff Borne; Erin O'Hare, Environmental
12 and Natural Resources Planner; Zachary Blum; Richard Blum.

13 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioner Jim Pyskaty.

14 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and took the agenda in the following
15 order:

16 **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

17 **B. Fresh Meadows**

18 1. Eagle Scout project

19 Zachary Blum said he submitted plans of his Eagle Scout project to construct two walking paths
20 two picnic tables and a kiosk on the Galko property, (Fresh Meadows), to the Boy Scouts of
21 America for approval and should receive a reply in one-week. Zachary requested a letter be
22 written to the contractor who will be supplying woodchips for the project. He will take "before"
23 and "after" photos and design a kiosk. Richard Blum, his father, expressed concern regarding
24 possible encroachment into the wetlands. The possibility of an IWWC administrative approval
25 was discussed.

26 *Ms. O'Hare will meet on Monday with Zachary Blum to draw up a wetlands application to be*
27 *submitted to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for the May 7, 2014 Meeting.*

28 *Chair Heffernon will write a letter to the contractor who will be depositing the woodchips.*

29 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

30 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, March 13, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

1 Tabled to the May 8, 2014 Meeting.

2 **B. Discussion regarding Minutes document**

3 The Commissioners discussed the topic of the Minutes in general and recommended less detail,
4 the summarizing of outcomes of discussions and the focusing more on emphasizing the action
5 items.

6 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

7 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

8 1. Remaining planned improvements

9 *Ms. O'Hare will write Mayor Dickinson for permission to install rules and regulation signs at the*
10 *Tamarac Swamp Road entrance and will order the sign if affirmative.*

11 *Ms. O'Hare will write a letter to Public Works Director Henry McCully regarding non-completed*
12 *items.*

13 2. Forest Edge Habitat

14 Commissioner Saunders said she had nothing new to report.

15 Chair Heffernon showed a copy of the Audubon Connecticut Forest Bird Habitat Assessment.
16 *She will contact them.*

17 Ms. O'Hare showed a book ordered from the DEEP on the subject, "Managing Grasslands,
18 Shrublands and Young Forests for Wildlife."

19 3. Deer population – thinning – report, D. Lendler

20 Commissioner Lender presented her report on the various approaches to achieve thinning of the
21 deer population for use at Tyler Mill Preserve.

22 *Commissioner Ryan will meet with Mayor Dickinson to discuss thinning the deer population at*
23 *Tyler Mill Preserve and will report back to Commissioner Lender. Ms. O'Hare will then set up a*
24 *meeting between the Mayor, Chair Heffernon, John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, Rod &*
25 *Gun Club members to hear a presentation by Howard Kilpatrick, wildlife biologist at DEEP.*

26 4. Gold Trail – planned improvements

27 Commissioner Saunders discussed the planned improvements. She suggested utilizing students
28 from the Choate School to do the planned improvements in the fall. *Commissioner Saunders*
29 *will try to obtain a price for an on-site person to do the planned improvements and will send out*
30 *an e-mail to Commission members regarding the time and place for the planned visit to the*
31 *North Branford saw mill.*

32 5. Stewards of Tyler Mill – Les Merhoff Biodiversity Grant, D. Saunders

1 Commissioner Saunders reported that soil sampling will take place this Saturday. She said two
2 Stewards of Tyler Mill have volunteered to start growing seeds in the greenhouses for the
3 project.

4 6. Trails map brochure –Trails Committee

5 Chair Heffernon said the Rules and Regulations will be included on the back of the Tyler Mill
6 Preserve trail map brochure. She distributed copies of the trail map to the Commissioners. She
7 said the Engineering Dept. made the trail lines bigger as requested. Chair Heffernon will revise
8 "lavender" to "lilac" for the Lilac Trail, and the "Please Stay on Blazed Trail" will be printed in
9 red.

10 7. Trail marking for emergency response – M. Heffernon

11 Chair Heffernon passed around reflective sign samples for the Commissions perusal. The
12 Commission decided to utilize the two sets of white reflective signs with black numbered
13 lettering # 1-100, and 25 blank signs.

14 *Vice-Chair Lathrop will price out nails for the signs.*

15 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Lendler to**
16 **authorize Chair Heffernon to contact the Fire Department to work out details. The**
17 **motion passed 7-1 with Commissioner Borne opposed.**

18 8. Encroachment – 82 Anderson Road

19 Ms. O'Hare discussed an encroachment issue in the rear portion of the property on 82
20 Anderson Road which abuts Tyler Mill Preserve.

21 *Ms. O'Hare will advise the Law Dept. to set up a site walk for any weekday after 5:15 p.m.*

22 9. Maltby Lane Road (closed portion) – drainage issue

23 Commissioner Pietras discussed damage from drainage to the access road used by the Town .

24 *Ms. O'Hare will follow through with Parks & Recreation Director John Gawlak.*

25 **B. Fresh Meadows**

26 1. Trails Program – status

27 Ms. O'Hare said the final design for the Trails Program is temporarily on hold. *She will forward*
28 *the consultant the proposed locations for trail signage as submitted by the Trails Committee*
29 *recently.*

30 2. Eagle Scout Project – update, M. Heffernon

31 Taken up above.

1 **C. Field 1B – monitoring study, T. Pietras**

2 Commissioner Pietras showed a map and photos of a potential vernal pool on Town property
3 located on Field 1B to the west side of Field 1D. He discussed the monitoring study on the site
4 that he will be undertaking as part of the State of CT's vernal pool study, (a 10-year study). *He*
5 *will seek the Mayor's authorization for this. Commissioner Pietras will keep the Commission up-*
6 *to-date.*

7 **D. 1250 Whirlwind Hill Road – mowing**

8 Nothing to report.

9 **E. Volunteer projects**

10 1. Quinnipiac University "Big Event"

11 Chair Heffernon reported on the "Big Event" which took place this past Sunday. She said there
12 were 10 volunteers on-hand from Quinnipiac University. Commissioner Saunders passed around
13 before and after photos. *The Stewards of Tyler Mill will cut up a log that fell across the stream*
14 *channel.*

15 2. Choate Kohler Environmental Center students

16 Commissioner Saunders said the students expressed interest in helping eradicating evasives
17 such as wild garlic mustard and bloodroot. She said the students were interested in constructing
18 the footbridge on the Gold Trail, planting starter seeds in the greenhouse and using GPS to
19 track some of the stone walls.

20 *Commissioner Saunders said the Stewards of Tyler Mill will accompany the students when they*
21 *pull up the invasives.*

22 *Chair Heffernon will coordinate.*

23 **F. Invasive Species Eradication**

24 1. Report, D. Saunders

25 Commissioner Saunders turned in her report for the file to Ms. O'Hare at the meeting. She said
26 the Stewards of Tyler Mill worked on the southern end of the Purple Trail in March cutting
27 bittersweet, barberry and multiflora rose, and on the bridge site eradicating multiflora rose. She
28 said one Steward adopted several additional trees on the edge of the overgrown former field,
29 and cleared the bases of the trees of bittersweet.

30 Ms. O'Hare passed around a copy of the proposed running bamboo B Ms. O'Hare will advise the
31 Law Dept. to set up a site walk for any weekday after 5:15 p.m.

32 ill –SB-72 .

1 Commissioner Saunders said there was one possible new siting of running bamboo in
2 Wallingford. She said the proposed bill is making its way through the State legislative process
3 and makes a few changes to the bill passed last year, most notably, a 40-foot setback
4 requirement.

5 2. Contracted work (Tyler Mill entranceway area & Trees of Heaven) – status

6 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the Japanese knotweed rhizomes. She said she will have
7 work parties take out the rhizomes.

8 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

9 **A. Property owner outreach – report, M. Heffernon**

10 Chair Heffernon passed around a pamphlet sent to property owners years ago regarding the
11 selling or donating of land to the Town. She asked the Commission to re- read it for discussion
12 at the May Meeting.

13 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

14 **A. Proposed bid –Field 5A – status**

15 Ms. O'Hare reported she has not reviewed the Committee's submittal for 5A yet which was
16 submitted in February.

17 **C. Farmland Committee**

18 Commissioner Saunders said the Committee's proposed bid specs for Field 5A for the 2014-
19 2018 lease cycle was submitted in February to Ms. O'Hare. She said she has not finished re-
20 drafting the Field 7A bid specs for 2014-2018. She said the original report, which the Committee
21 and Conservation Commission endorsed, was submitted in January 2013 by Commissioner
22 Pietras. She said it was changed by a staff person. *She will submit it soon to Ms. O'Hare.*

23 **D. Property issues**

- 24 1. Field 3A - encroachment: recent trespass damage – D. Saunders
25 2. Field 2A – encroachment: recent trespass damage – D. Saunders

26 Commissioner Saunders reported Fields 3A and 2A received vehicle trespass damage in March.
27 She said a report with photos was sent to Ms. O'Hare, the Police Dept. and John Gawlak, Parks
28 & Recreation Director. Commissioner Saunders said she has not gotten a response from Rick
29 Vanski at the Water Department regarding the gate proposal and has not had time to re-contact
30 him. Commissioner Saunders proposed the farmer fence in the two sides to keep vehicles out of
31 the field on North Branford Road which is near Water Dept. land.

32 Ms. O'Hare suggested re-visiting installation of the original gate proposal for this vicinity.

1 *Ms. O'Hare will look into the pricing of a fence, boulders and a gate with Henry McCully, Parks &*
2 *Recreation Director.*

- 3 3. Field 7H – gate – not taken up
- 4 4. Field 12A - gate to access Field 9B – not taken up
- 5 5. Fields 4A & 4B – kestrel box – update, D Saunders – not taken up

6 **5. MOWING – Mowing Committee report, M. Heffernon**

7 Chair Heffernon distributed the Mowing Committee Report and letter to the Commission.

8 Ms. O'Hare reported that Public Works indicated an outside contractor will need to cut the
9 autumn olive on Field 4C.

10 *Ms. O'Hare will get three quotes to cut autumn olive.*

11 **6. BUDGET FY 14-15**

12 **A. Conservation conveyance tax – report**

13 Ms. O'Hare said James Bowes, Comptroller, told her he was not familiar with a conservation
14 conveyance tax per se, and she will report on this subject when Mr. Bowes submits a revision of
15 his recent memorandum.

16 Ms. O'Hare said Mayor Dickinson approved the Conservation Commission budget for \$6,000 for
17 Fresh Meadow invasive eradication and the open space plan to the next Meeting

18 *The Commission decided to table the discussion on spraying Fresh Meadows in relation to*
19 *mowing to control the invasives.*

20 **B. Town Council Budget Workshop, April 14, 6:30 p.m.**

21 **C. Town Council Budget Public Hearing, May 6, 6:00 p.m.**

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23 **7. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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

25 Discussed briefly.

26 **B. Fall Program**

27

28 Discussed.

29 **C. 2nd Sunday Walks, D. Lendler**

30 Commissioner Lendler spoke about the 2nd Sunday Walks with the Stewards of Tyler Mill which
31 will take place in Tyler Mill Preserve. She said she met with the Library staff who agreed to co-
32 host the walks and will print flyers and do publicity. She said a walk on the Orange Trail will

1 take place this Sunday, with birding scheduled for the week after, and wildflower walk
2 scheduled for Mother's Day.

3 **D. Celebrate Open Space event**

4 The Commission discussed a possible Fall program.

5 **8. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

6 **A. Discussion regarding goals –** Not taken up.

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8 **9. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

9 **A. CT Land Conservation Council –** Conference Wesleyan University,
10 Middletown – March 15 – reports by participants on presentation

11 Commissioner Saunders and Chair Heffernon discussed the conference which several had
12 attended.

13 **B. CFPA, "Building Walking Opportunities in the Town of Wallingford"**

14 Chair Heffernon spoke about the CFPA interactive website which provides information on where
15 to walk in the State. She passed around information to the Commission which decided not to
16 include Tyler Mill Preserve on the list.

17 **C. CT Butterfly Association –** membership dues

18 Ms. O'Hare spoke about a monarch butterfly program to take place on April 29.

19 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to**
20 **renew the membership in the CT. Butterfly Association for \$15. The motion passed**
21 **unanimously.**

22 **D. New England Wildflower Society,** correspondence, dated 3/19/14

23 Ms. O'Hare spoke about a letter she received from the New England Wildflower Society
24 thanking her for allowing them to look at the rare plant community.

25 **E. Open Space Users Group,** April 28, 7:00 p.m., Park & Recreation –
26 suggested agenda items

27 The Commission suggested items to be put onto the O.S.U.G. agenda.

28 *Ms. O'Hare will contact John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director with agenda items.* Ms.
29 O'Hare reported she has not reviewed it yet.

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1 **F. Quinnipiac River canoe launch proposal – staff**

2 The proposal was discussed by Ms. O'Hare.

3 **G. Notice: General Permit for Diversion of Water for Consumptive Use,**
4 Wallingford Water Division: interconnection station, 237 (rear) Pond Hill
5 Road, submitted 4/1/14.

6 The notice was discussed by Ms. O'Hare.

7 **H. CFPA - magazine, "CT Woodlands", Spring 2014**

8 Distributed to Commission by Ms. O'Hare.

9 **I. Southwest Conservation District – newsletter, "Soil & Water", Spring**
10 2014

11 Distributed to Commission by Ms. O'Hare.

12 **J. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park –update on parking area improvement**
13 project

14 Ms. O'Hare said the Town improvement plan for the front is being done in the Spring and the
15 improvement for the back will be done in the Fall.

16 **K. Town Dog Park**

17 Chair Heffernon said the project is moving along.

18 Chair Heffernon spoke about correspondence received from Aquarion Water Company which is
19 seeking nominations for businesses large and small which have contributed to the improvement
20 of our environment. She said this is a \$2,500 grant. *Commissioners are to give her nominations*
21 *by the May 7 deadline.*

22 Chair Heffernon also spoke about Raised Bill No. 405 which is "An Act Concerning Public
23 Hearings on Subdivision Applications." She said the bill would permit a planning commission to
24 conduct a public hearing on a subdivision proposal only when such proposal does not comply
25 with subdivision regulations.

26 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Lathrop second by Commissioner Saunders to**
27 **reject Raised Bill No. 405. The motion passed unanimously.**

28 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the erosion above the dam site which is eroding into the
29 Tyler Mill Raceway. She suggested Public Works install rocks in the area. *Ms. O'Hare will follow*
30 *up.*

31 **10. NEXT MEETING – May 8, 2014**

32 **11. ADJOURNMENT**

1 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to adjourn**
2 **the meeting at 10:43 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

3 Respectfully submitted,

4 Cynthia A. Kleist

5 Recording Secretary

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