

1 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

2 **REGULAR MEETING**

3 **Thursday, May 8, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.**

4 **Town Hall Basement Conference Room**

5 **45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

6 **MINUTES**

7  
8 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Dianne Lendler;  
9 Dianne Saunders; Jim Pyskaty; Ken Ryan; Tom Pietras; Jeff Borne; Erin O'Hare, Environmental  
10 and Natural Resources Planner; Lisa and Paul Powers; Jay Fishbein; Molly Callahan, Record-  
11 Journal.

12 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioner Carl Arsenault.

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

15 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

16 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

17 **3. Deer population- thinning – report on meeting with DEEP**

18 Chair Heffernon spoke about the deer population problem at Tyler Mill. She emphasized that at  
19 the present time, there are no plans to cull the deer. She said the Stewards of Tyler Mill had  
20 spent several years planting native shrubs and plants and have noticed over the years that their  
21 plantings have been eaten and thinned out. Chair Heffernon said it is time to investigate  
22 whether the deer are eating the native shrubs and plants at Tyler Mill Preserve.

23 Ms. O'Hare spoke about the recent Special Meeting which took place with Howard Kilpatrick,  
24 State Wildlife Biologist with CT DEEP to discuss the impact the dense deer population may be  
25 having on Tyler Mill Preserve. She said \$60,000 have been spent on trail improvements at Tyler  
26 Mill. Ms. O'Hare spoke about a 2009 study funded by the Park & Recreation Department. She  
27 noted it was found there were 39 deer per square mile. She said 30 communities have  
28 conducted deer culling programs which include birth control and bow and gun hunting. She said  
29 Mr. Kilpatrick will be conducting a technical assessment at Tyler Mill Preserve.

1 *Ms. O'Hare will forward a copy of the 2006 Forestry Inventory to Commissioner Saunders who*  
2 *will scan and email it to Commission.*

3 Chair Heffernon said she had filled out an application for CT. Aududon to do an assessment at  
4 Tyler Mill and should hear back by the end of May. Commissioner Borne spoke about the forest  
5 management plan for Tyler Mill Preserve from the early 1990's. Commissioner Saunders spoke  
6 in favor of an up-to-date full forest assessment at Tyler Mill Preserve which the Commission  
7 supported. The Commission also supported having a forester from Ferrucci & Walicki to come  
8 out and conduct a full-forest assessment at Tyler Mill for a \$65 an hour with the travel fee  
9 being waived.

10 *Chair Heffernon will send Mr. Kilpatrick a priority e-mail inquiring about a forester and a*  
11 *botanist to go to Tyler Mill Preserve and examine the growth of trees.*

12 Chair Heffernon also spoke about an article about birth control methods being used on deer in  
13 the Hudson River valley in New York. Commissioner Saunders expressed concern about the  
14 health of the forest. Commissioner Pietras told the members of the public in attendance that  
15 the Conservation Commission can only advise about deer culling; the Town Council has to make  
16 the ultimate decision.

17 Mr. Fishbein spoke about the increasing deer population on his property and expressed support  
18 in controlling the deer population. Mr. Powers asked the density of deer in Tyler Mill and noted  
19 the deer population on his property has decreased. He asked what the density studies would be  
20 based on.

21 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

23 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Borne second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to**  
24 **approve the March 13, 2014 regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion**  
25 **passed 7-1 with Commissioner Saunders abstaining.**

26 **B. Minutes, Regular Meeting, April 10, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

27 On page 4, under Volunteer Project- "Big Event" Chair Heffernon requested that it be noted in  
28 the minutes to thank Commissioners Saunders and Lendler for their preparation work on the  
29 "Big Event."

30 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Commissioner Borne to**  
31 **approve the April 10, 2014 regular Meeting Minutes as amended the motion passed**  
32 **8-0.**

33 **C. Minutes, Special Meeting, April 24, 2014, 2:30 p.m.**

1 These Minutes were tabled to the June 12, 2014 Meeting.

2 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

3 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

4 1. Remaining planned improvements

5 Ms. O'Hare said the Engineering Dept. forwarded a memo indicating it did not agree with f the  
6 installation of wooden guardrails as planned at Tyler Mill Preserve entranceway and she wrote a  
7 memo in response.

8 *Chair Heffernon asked Ms. O'Hare to write to speak to Public Works about finishing the horse  
9 trailer parking area. Ms. O'Hare will follow-up with John Gawlak, Director, Parks & Rec  
10 regarding missing guardrails.*

11 *Chair Heffernon will email photo of "Lilac Trail" trail head sign to Commissioner Lendler.*

12 *Ms. O'Hare will pull together all of the "loose ends" regarding final finishing of the Entranceway.*

13 2. Forest Edge Habitat Project

14 Commissioner Saunders said there was no update. Chair Heffernon suggested Commissioner  
15 Saunders send a letter to Peter Picone of CT DEEP. Commissioner Saunders spoke about the  
16 CT. Audubon Society's Big Count in May. She said Anthony Zemba of the CT Audubon Society is  
17 still advising the Stewards of Tyler Mill on the plantings for the two sites.

18 *She will draft a letter to Mr. Zemba.*

19 3. Deer population – thinning – report on meeting with DEEP

20 Discussed above.

21 4. Gold Trail – planned improvements

22 Chair Heffernon said she and Commissioner Saunders met with staff at the Choate Kohler  
23 Environmental Center to discuss the planned improvements. She said the students will be  
24 planting seed in the greenhouse, and in the Fall, will hopefully work on the Gold Trail.

25 5. Stewards of Tyler Mill – Les Merhoff Biodiverstiy Grant, D.  
26 Saunders

27 Commissioner Saunders said she met with the Choate Kohler Environmental Center student.  
28 She spoke about the possibility of the students starting seed in the greenhouse and plant seeds  
29 or plugs and broadcast the seed. She said because of lost time, and was told it would be too  
30 late to put the plugs out in July. She said she is waiting for a second opinion on this from staff  
31 at New England Wetland Plants. She said even though the Stewards of Tyler Mill will be doing

---

1 most of the planting of the plugs, the Cub Scouts have expressed interest in assisting. He said  
2 the Cub Scouts are also interested in assisting the Stewards in the construction of a footbridge  
3 on the Northford Rd. entrance of Tyler Mill. Commissioner Saunders said she is waiting for a list  
4 of plants suitable for warblers from Anthony Zemba.

5 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the Japanese knotweed at Tyler Mill and said she will  
6 continue digging rhizomes.

7 6. Trail Marking for emergency response – M. Heffernon

8 Chair Heffernon reported on the Open Space Users 'Group meeting and said everyone at the  
9 meeting agreed the trail marking for emergency response was a good idea. She said Parks &  
10 Recreation requested three bids and then they would purchase the emergency reflective signs  
11 and are sending out the orders for the signs. She spoke about an article in the paper about  
12 people illegally being in parks after dark and the possibility of being fined if rescue is needed.

13 7. Encroachment - 82 Anderson Road

14 Chair Heffernon said an appointment has been made through the Law Department to visit this  
15 property on Wednesday, May 21 at 5:45 p.m.

16 *Vice-Chairman Lathrop will send out reminder e-mails to the Commissioners.*

17 8. Maltby Lane Road (closed portion) – drainage issue

18 Ms. O'Hare gave an update. She said Public Works repaired the washed-out section of Maltby  
19 Lane by installing stone and an earthen berm at the top of the Pink Trail. Chair Heffernon  
20 expressed her displeasure with the earthen berm saying it was blocking part of the Pink Trail  
21 and was concave and was unsafe. *Ms. O'Hare will request that Public Works Foreman Steve  
22 Palermo stabilize the earthen berm.*

23 Ms. O'Hare spoke about the Open Space Users' Group meeting where the pipe blockage on  
24 Maltby Lane was discussed. She noted that Public Works did clean out the pipe. Commissioner  
25 Saunders expressed concern about the farm field side of the road becoming flooded.

26 *Ms. O'Hare will ask Public Works to construct an outlet protection at the pipe outlet and install  
27 small rip-rap in this area.*

28 Commissioner Saunders spoke about painting the bollards gray to cover graffiti and about the  
29 conditions of the guardrails and placing of concrete barriers near Tyler Mill bridge.

30 *Commissioner Saunders will draw a map and give it to Ms. O'Hare.*

1 *Ms. O'Hare will write Henry McCully, Public Works Director, if it was acceptable for the Stewards*  
2 *to paint the guardrails and bollards (by the closed Tyler Mill Bridge) flat black or flat dark gray-*  
3 *green.*

4 **B. Fresh Meadows**

5 1. Trails Program – status

6 Ms. O'Hare said the consultant, Lenard Engineering, must complete their work by June 30 *and*  
7 *she will follow through.* Chair Heffernon asked about a sign for Tessa's Trail.

8 *Chair Heffernon will send a photo of the proposed sign to Voss Signs for a quote.*

9 2. Eagle Scout Project – update

10 Ms. O'Hare passed around a CAD map made by Richard Blum, and Zachary Blum, the Eagle  
11 Scout who will be constructing two picnic tables, two trails, which will run through reed canary  
12 grass, and a kiosk on the Galko property. She said this application will be taken up for  
13 consideration by the IWWC at its June 4 meeting. Commissioner Pietras contributed a report  
14 about the reed canary grass for the IWWC application..

15 Chair Heffernon said Commissioner Borne went to the site and saw three picnic tables already  
16 on site. She said one of the picnic tables is out in an area that is not mowed and wondered  
17 about access and asked where the Eagle Scout's picnic tables would be located. Ms. O'Hare said  
18 the two tables to be constructed would also be located on a slope in the grassy area. Vice-  
19 Chairman Lathrop suggested the Boy Scout construct the two picnic tables as planned and have  
20 Public Works move the other tables away so as not to be in a cluster. Chair Heffernon said she  
21 will be in attendance at the June 4 IWWC meeting and Zachary Blum will present.

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

23 *Commissioner Saunders will follow-up with Mr. Termini.*

24 **D. Volunteer projects**

25 1. Choate Kohler Environmental Center students – status – Taken up  
26 above.

27 **E. Invasive Species Eradication**

28 1. Report, D. Saunders

29 Commission Saunders said the Stewards have been working on eradicating the wild garlic  
30 mustard and have seen a difference in the wildflowers in the area they worked on last year. She  
31 talked about the bloodroot and Dutchman's Breeches on the Pink Trail. The Stewards are now  
32 working on the Green Trail and the floodplain. She said within the past few weeks, the

1 Stewards have worked on the road edges, did the south end of the Blue Trail and are headed  
2 for the south end of the road.

3 2. Contracted work (Tyler Mill entranceway area & Trees of heaven) –  
4 status

5 Ms. O'Hare said the contracted work must be processed first *and she will follow through on it.*  
6 She said if budget money is to be used for work at Fresh Meadows, it will be used on or after  
7 July 1, 2014, the start of the new budget year The Commission agreed to use the \$6,000 to  
8 spray Fresh Meadows, in the target area.

### 9 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

#### 10 **A. Property owner outreach**

11 Chair Heffernon spoke about the outreach brochure. Commissioner Borne suggested a meeting  
12 with Mayor Dickinson to discuss this issue.

13 *Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Ryan will make an appointment with Mayor Dickinson.*

14 Chair Heffernon took the agenda for Item #4 in the following order.

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

16 Chair Heffernon took the agenda for Item #4 in the following order.

#### 17 **C. Property issues**

18 1. Field 3A – encroachment; recent trespass damage

19 Commissioner Borne suggested the Town install a gate on this property which belongs to the  
20 Land Trust to deter trespassing damage from 4 x4 vehicles. He suggested speaking with the  
21 Land Trust officers on this matter.

22 *Chair Heffernon will speak with the Land Trust officers about the possibility of installing a gate.*

23 2. Field 2A – fence & signage; recent trespass damage

24 Ms. O'Hare said she spoke to Rick Vanski of the Water & Sewer Division who indicated the  
25 Division does not object to a proposed gate installation. Commissioner Saunders spoke about  
26 considering the original proposal which included a no trespass sign and a fence being erected  
27 without a gate. Commissioner Pietras suggested a gate be installed.

28 3. Field 7H – gate

1 Ms. O'Hare said Public Works had not yet installed a gate but must do so soon for the farmer  
2 lessee.

3 *Ms. O'Hare will follow-up.*

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

5 Ms. O'Hare said Steve Palermo, Public Works foreman, is willing to install the gate on Field 12A  
6 access to Field 9B, but is waiting for the land to dry out, so the farmer will need to provide  
7 access earlier.

8 5. Fields 4A & 4B – kestrel box – update, D. Saunders

9 Commissioner Saunders said Mr. Gouveia is willing to construct a kestrel box as to deter birds  
10 from damaging his grape crop. She said she will provide Mr. Gouveia with a box plan.  
11 Commissioner Saunders spoke about fallen trees on Field 5A and indicated the Audubon Society  
12 will clear the trees.

13 6. Field 4A – ground disturbance by white barn

14 Commissioner Saunders said the silt fence is down and water is running from the pile of  
15 millings. Ms. O'Hare said she was contacted her about this situation. She said she and  
16 Henry McCully, Public Works Director, and herself will go out to the site to investigate.

17 *Ms. O'Hare will ask Public Works to install a filter fabric and stone right away to stabilize the*  
18 *area access way into Field 4A for the lessee's*

19 7. Field 19A – mowing maintenance required

20 Commissioner Saunders said this field, Field 19A, is being leased by Triangle A. She spoke  
21 about mowing and fence damage. She said the field was mowed with a brush hog but the  
22 autumn olive was not mowed down. Commissioner Saunders said that Field 4A needs to be  
23 mowed and that the lessee will mow it in the summer.

24 Chair Heffernon said she wrote a letter to Mayor Dickinson about using contractors for the  
25 mowing and is awaiting his response.

26 It was noted that the footbridges were not discussed under "Tyler Mill Preserve."

27 Commissioner Saunders gave Ms. O'Hare a quote for a purchase order for the footbridges under  
28 the Open Space Resources Management Fund which are planned to be done May 31.

29 *Ms. O'Hare will write Mayor Dickinson for authorization the expense for the footbridges and*  
30 *upon approval will write a purchase order for \$625.*

1           **A. Proposed bid – Field 5A and Field 7A–approval**

2 Commissioner Saunders said she walked Field 5A on Cook Road with a botanist from the CT  
3 Botanical Society to observe the plant life in the wet meadow. She said the botanist wrote up a  
4 list of plants found on Field 5A and recommended the field be mowed. Commissioner Saunders  
5 also gave a bird report to the Commission and showed photos of the birds. She said Anthony  
6 Zemba formerly with CT Audubon Society, will walk the site again. She said Mr. Zemba  
7 recommended mowing. She noted that several trees fell forward into the lease area and created  
8 a bird habitat. Commissioner Saunders recommended Field 5A be allowed to go fallow for one  
9 year.

10 Commissioner Saunders recommended that the Farmland Lease Committee revise and re-  
11 submit the section regarding the edge mowing after receiving the report from Anthony Zemba  
12 next week. Ms. O'Hare suggested calling this area a "Habitat Area with Maintenance  
13 Requirements" rather than "Maintenance Area."

14 *Ms. O'Hare will make editing changes to the document to be submitted by Commissioner*  
15 *Saunders and will submit a typed version for the June 12, WCC meeting.*

16 *Commissioner Saunders will report on Anthony Zemba's findings.*

17           **Proposed bid –Field 7A**

18 Ms. O'Hare said the Farmland Lease Committee met with herself and Chair Heffernon on April  
19 28 and reviewed proposed documents regarding Fields 5A & 7A. Commissioner Saunders had  
20 handed in a partial report on Field 7A at the meeting. Chair Heffernon indicated both Field 5A &  
21 Field 7A must be ready for approval at the next meeting.

22 Chair Heffernon said she received a call from Parks & Recreation regarding a call from a  
23 resident who wants to donate a 4 -foot oak tree to the Conservation Commission. Ms. O'Hare  
24 suggested planting the tree in the turnaround parking area at Fresh Meadows (former Cuneo  
25 driveway).

26 The Commission agreed to plant the tree at the turnaround area in Fresh Meadows.

27 *Ms. O'Hare will make the arrangements.*

28           **5. MOWING – M. Heffernon – discussed above**

29           **6. Budget FY 14-15**

30           **A. Conservation conveyance tax – report – Not taken up.**

31           **B. Town Council Budget Workshop – April 14-report**



1 Chair Heffernon said the workshop went well and there were no problems.

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

3 Chair Heffernon said the hearing went well.

4 **7. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

5 **A. CT Trails Day, June 8, 2014 – promotion**

6 Chair Heffernon said this event will be promoted in the Library's newsletter and flyers will be  
7 put in the kiosks.

8 **B. Fall program – Not discussed.**

9 **C. Celebrate Open Space – Not discussed**

10 **8.. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

11 **A. Discussion regarding goals – Not discussed**

12 **9. OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS – Not discussed**

13 **10. OTHER TOPICS**

14 Commissioner Saunders spoke about driveway dirt at Field 1C which now comes out onto No.  
15 Branford Road because Public Works had eliminated the buffer.

16 **11. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

17 **A. SWCD- "Soil Health & Cover Crop Workshop", Jones farm, Shelton, May 12,**  
18 **6-8 p.m.**

19 Discussed by Chair Heffernon.

20 **B. Open Space Users' Group, April 28, - report**

21 Chair Heffernon spoke about the meeting in which the ATV's were discussed. The  
22 agenda used was comprised of the Commission's suggested agenda items, including the  
23 deer thinning proposal. Several Commission and staff attended.

24

25

26 **C. Quinnipiac River canoe launch proposal – staff**

27

28 Ms. O'Hare said this plan was approved in 2010. One canoe launch will soon be built on  
29 Community Lake and the other at Fireworks Island.

1 **D. CFPA Annual Meeting** – Discussed.

2 **E. Town dog park- status**

3 Ms. O'Hare gave an update on the construction which is just beginning.

4 **F. CACIWC newsletter, "The Habitat", Spring 2024**

5 Received by the Commission

6 **G. Community Lake Park – projects**

7 Discussed by Ms. O'Hare.

8 **H. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Park – improvement project – status**

9 Ms. O'Hare said this improvement project was delayed and will begin in the Fall of 2014.

10 **I. Wharton Brook State Park – Controlled burn project**

11 Ms. O'Hare said the controlled burn has not started. She passed around a map showing where  
12 the controlled burn will take place. She said six acres in total will be burned in an effort to make  
13 the pitch pines regenerate.

14 **12. NEXT MEETING – June 12, 2014**

15 **13. ADJOURNMENT**

16 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Pyskaty second by Commissioner Ryan to**  
17 **adjourn the Meeting at 10:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

18 Respectfully submitted,

19 Cynthia A. Kleist

20 Recording Secretary

21

22

23

24

25

26

27