

1 Wallingford Conservation Commission

2 REGULAR MEETING

3 Thursday, June 11, 2015 – 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 Tom Pietras, arrived at 7:45;
9 Dianne Saunders; Carl Arsenault, arrived at 7:20; Dianne Lendler; Jeff Borne; Ken Ryan; Erin O'Hare
10 Environmental and Natural Resources Planner

11 **NOT PRESENT:** Jim Pyskaty.

12 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

13 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

14 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, May 14**

15 Page 1, D, Field 2A, should read using the Town field for "training" hunting dogs and noted the last line of
16 paragraph should read "if" the permit is allowed.

17 On page 2, regarding the motion, Chair Heffernon was not included in the motion.

18 Page 1 line 31, the pheasants are stocked in Field 1A, 1C, and 2A, and Tyler Mill Preserve at the edges.

19 Top of page 5, the sugar maple tree is at the Tyler Mill bridge.

20 On line 26, should be "compliments" not "complements"

21 Page 6, under 5.B, the Garden Club presentation was on open space not on wildflowers.

22 Page 6, under 5.C, Chair Heffernon said she "assisted" in the High School QWRA conference.

23 Page 2, under Fresh Meadows, on line 35, it should be "the Butterfly Trail is stone dust" and "bituminous
24 be applied on the Cheshire Road Trail and the Pond Trail also be stone dust".

25 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Borne second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to approve the**
26 **regular meeting minutes of May 14, 2015 as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

27 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

28 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

29 1. Ash trees status & salvaging project

30 Commissioner Borne said he, Commissioner Arsenault and Commissioner Saunders did a site visit to the
31 Purple, Gold, and Green Trails on the east side of Tyler Mill Road. He provided a report.

1 Commissioner Borne said the ash trees weren't as dense as thought, although there are some large dead
2 ash trees and some declining, but there wasn't the heavy stock of oak which the forester said would offset
3 the marginal salvaging of ash. He said it was agreed to have a professional forester give an assessment
4 and have a management plan which includes a detailed inventory and based on this, are there places we
5 want to create openings at the expense of old large trees. He said the committee thought it was premature
6 to pursue the salvage cutting in that area.

7 Commissioner Saunders said the area where the trees were young was filled with invasives. She said
8 another place to look is the east side of the Muddy River behind Field 7A. Commissioner Borne said the
9 areas recently cut became a thicket of brambles and roses. He said any area cut must be managed so it
10 doesn't turn into a thicket. Commissioner Borne said the Committee suggested preparing the Mayor for
11 the need to come up with a management plan for the forest at Tyler Mill.

12 Commissioner Saunders said in some areas the wildflowers were nice and noticed that Audubon had
13 installed their flags. She said she had obtained the entire management plan for Aspetuck Preserve which
14 cost \$9,000 for the scope of services completed by Audubon.

15 Commissioner Borne asked if the Commission wanted to develop a comprehensive management plan with
16 an inventory with a list of species. He said the first phase would be the inventory part with discussion but
17 look to the forester for direction. She noted their preserve is similar to Wallingford's Tyler Mill.

18 Ms. O'Hare said there is \$6,000 in the FY 15-16 budget and there is also the Open Space Management
19 Resources fund which has approximately \$30,000 currently and \$40,000 next year, but noted it is about
20 to be encumbered for the match relative to the grant of which the match is 20 percent. Commissioner
21 Ryan asked if this project could be done in phases and then a decision could be made if phase 2 would be
22 necessary.

23 Chair Heffernon indicated Audubon will likely complete the May/June bird survey at the Preserve.

24 *Chair Heffernon will contact Ferrucci & Walicki and Tom Worthley to inquire about available grant monies.*

25 2. Entrance area plant restoration project, D. Saunders

26 Commissioner Saunders distributed her report. She said \$402 worth of plants were purchased and Lyman
27 Hall Science Ag students assisted in planting the first batch and noted all of the shrubs at the entrance are
28 producing blossoms. She said the Stewards transplanted some hay scented ferns from Commissioner
29 Lendler. She said the Stewards cleaned up resprouts of mugwort, bittersweet and garlic mustard. She said
30 there are about 8 to 10 small plants left to install. She said the Stewards continued to clear knotweed
31 resprouts at the Northford Road entrance to Tyler Mill, new parking area (minimal), and the old parking
32 area (minimal), and the streambank behind the sign. She said students also planted clover.

33 Ms. O'Hare asked the Commission to approve the new recent expenditures related to the plantings project.
34 She said the total was \$393 for supplies. Commissioner Saunders went over the list of supplies and
35 presented the invoice

36 Ms. O'Hare said there was \$34 left in the Les Mehrhoff grant as of the middle of May. Commissioner
37 Saunders said this grant was finished. She said the total cost was \$125 and \$116 respectively, not \$393. .

1 The Commission spoke about Tyler Mill trail maps for the kiosk. Commissioner Lendler said she will pick up
2 the paper for the maps to be printed. Commissioner Saunders will obtain a price from Prentice.

3 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Commissioner Borne to spend up to**
4 **\$200 on maps. The motion passed unanimously.**

5 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Commissioner Borne to reimburse**
6 **Commissioner Saunders \$393 for plants and miscellaneous expenses. The motion passed**
7 **unanimously.**

8 Chair Heffernon asked Ms. O'Hare about the mock-up of the "parking for horse trailers only" sign. *Ms.*
9 *O'Hare will contact the Traffic Division of the Police Dept. to inquire about the sign.*

10 3. Tree by bridge

11 Commissioner Saunders said she Commissioners Arsenault and Borne looked at the tree. Commissioner
12 Arsenault said the tree looks like it is going to fall and decided it should be cut it down unless it can be
13 cabled.

14 *Ms. O'Hare will see the tree with Henry McCully.*

15 Chair Heffernon indicated that if the tree is to be cut, the Commissioner requests the trail sign on the tree
16 be saved, and that a contractor be used and that a careful job be done.

17 4. Stewards of Tyler Mill, D. Saunders

18 Discussed above.

19 5. Trail maps for kiosks, D. Saunders

20 Chair Heffernon said the Town is still waiting to close on the Barrett property before the trail maps will be
21 installed in the kiosks.

22 **B. Fresh Meadows**

23 1. "Grow Your Own Meadow", CFPA, Rockfall, CT, May 30 – report

24 Ms. O'Hare said she, Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Saunders attended the "Grow Your Own Meadow"
25 seminar and noted it was informative and all the attendees agreed establishing a meadow requires a lot of
26 maintenance.

27 2. Invasive plant eradication work

28 Ms. O'Hare said the contract went out last week. She said there is \$6,000 to spend under "Professional
29 Services" to do invasive plant eradication out on Fresh Meadows. She said the contract was awarded to the
30 lowest bidder, Todd Mervosh. Chair Heffernon spoke about the possibility using alternative organic
31 methods of spraying. Commissioner Lendler read an article regarding the use of organic chemicals and the
32 Town of Durham has banned the use of glyphosate.

33 3. State of CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program – grant application

1 Ms. O'Hare said she was working on the changes to the trail plans with Lenard Engineering. She said
2 Lenard Engineering said their quote to do all of the changes was \$5,570.00. Ms. O'Hare said the grant is
3 due July 1 and proposed a meeting to discuss the butterfly meadow.

4 *Chair Heffernon and Commissioner Arsenault will meet with Ms. O'Hare, June 16, at 5:00 p.m. in the*
5 *Conference Room.*

6 Chair Heffernon took the agenda in the following order at this time:

7 **5. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

8 **A. CT Trails Day** – farm tour hike, convene at Tyler Mill Preserve entrance, Northford
9 Rd/Tyler Mill Road, June 6, 10 a.m. to noon.

10 Commissioner Saunders reported there were 17 people including the Commission, 12 from the public. She
11 distributed photos. Commissioner Pietras said everyone was impressed by the trail system and how easy it
12 was to walk. Commissioner Saunders reported folks enjoyed Commissioner Pietras's soils demonstration of
13 the different soils in the area. Commissioner Saunders said no one attended the farm tour offered by
14 Colleen Auger.

15 Ms. O'Hare showed Commissioner Pietras the different vetches she brought to the meeting from the Fresh
16 Meadows property, and asked the Commission if they wanted it sprayed as it is not a listed invasive but it
17 is a nuisance plant. Vice-Chair Lathrop suggested clearing the vetch from the paths. The Commission
18 decided not to spray the vetches.

19 **C. Doolittle Park**

20 1. Riparian Corridor Restoration project – status

21 Ms. O'Hare said this was tabled from the May 6th IWWC Meeting and withdrawn from the June 3 IWWC
22 Meeting because this project needs an Army Corps of Engineer permit. Ms. O'Hare will begin working on
23 this project after July 1, 2015.

24 **D. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Road, Wildlife Conservation Area**

25 Ms. O'Hare said this is located at the top of Whirlwind Hill Road. She said she did a field trip there.
26 Commissioner Saunders said this hasn't been mowed in a year and a half. Ms. O'Hare said she walked the
27 area to preparatory to hiring a contractor to cut down the Autumn olive. She asked the Commission if the
28 autumn olive should be just cut down to the ground or be sprayed also and what to do about the large
29 bare area which will be left. Chair Heffernon suggested Ms. O'Hare speak to Henry McCully, Director,
30 Public Works, regarding funding.

31 **E. Volunteer Projects**

32 Commissioner Ryan said he and Commissioner Saunders said she has a few projects such as watering and
33 trail maintenance which need assistance and wondered if some Lyman Hall students would be interested in
34 working over the summer. He said the Commission is listed as an approved organization by Lyman Hall.
35 Commissioner Ryan suggested Commissioner Saunders prepare a flyer and send it over to him. Chair
36 Heffernon suggested for future years, speaking to Choate Rosemary Hall students.

37 *Commissioner Saunders will prepare a flyer with a photo.*

1 **F. Other properties**

2 Nothing to report.

3 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

4 **A. Tyler Mill Road property – status**

5 Not discussed

6 *The Commission will do a site visit on Thursday at 5:30 p.m on a property of interest.*

7 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

8 **A. Field 13A – bid proposal – status**

9 Ms.O'Hare said she contacted the two people interested. She said they did not respond. She said she sent
10 a memo to Henry McCully informing there is no lessee. She said it is in the FLPP and can be removed and
11 given to John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, or Henry McCully, Public Works Director. The
12 Commission discussed the possibility of locating a community garden and suggested taking it out of the
13 Farmland Lease Properties Program, (FLPP). *Ms. O'Hare will write a memo to Mr. McCully and Mr. Gawlak*
14 *informing them this field will be taken off the FLPP informing them of the Commission's intent to remove it*
15 *from the FLPP.*

16 **B. Field 14A – encroachment status**

17 Ms. O'Hare reported on her site visit to Field 14A, 205 Main Street, and possible encroachment, mowing of
18 approximately ¼ acres, and dumping of yard waste by the owner of 215 Main Street next door. She
19 recommended the Commission install fencing – preferably wire fencing, however, Henry McCully, Public
20 Works Director, had indicated to her that the four-foot chain-link fencing is to be used by the Town
21 abutting private property. Commissioner Saunders suggested a split rail fence. The Commission reviewed
22 and revised a draft letter Ms. O'Hare had prepared regarding the fencing matter and approved
23 recommending fencing be installed to preclude any further encroachment.

24 **C. Farmland Committee**

25 Nothing to report.

26 **6. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE – status, M. Heffernon, J. Borne and staff**

27 Chair Heffernon spoke about the Commission completing an online survey regarding the open space for
28 the Plan of Conservation and Development and spoke about two PZC sub-committee meetings she
29 attended on the Plan for Conservation and Development.

30 **7. OTHER TOPICS**

31 Commissioner Saunders gave Ms. O'Hare photos of the ADA-accessible trails at the Saugatuck Reservoir
32 from the field trip.

33 **8. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

1 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the CFPA requiring the signatures of people who attended the hike .

2 **9. NEXT MEETING** – July 9, 2015

3 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

4 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Borne second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to adjourn the**
5 **Meeting at 9:22 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

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7 Respectfully submitted,

8 Cynthia A. Kleist

9 Recording Secretary

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