

1 WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2 REGULAR MEETING

3 Thursday, July 9, 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 Dianne Saunders; Dianne  
9 Lendler; Jim Pyskaty; Ken Ryan; Erin O'Hare, Environmental and Natural Resources Planner.

10 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioners Jeff Borne; Tom Pietras

11 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

12 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

13 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, June 11, 2015**

14 Line 23, page 2, should be "is completing" cross out "likely"

15 Page 3, lines 8 & 9, should be "gave to Don Roe".

16 Page 3, line 15 & 16, should be "doesn't have a sign".

17 Page 5 "Other Properties" will have a site visit.

18 Page 2, line 11, should be "overall management plan for Tyler Mill"

19 Page 2, Line 17, look to the forester and others.

20 Under the "Tyler Mill Preserve" category, put in "E-Other Properties" agenda item.

21 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Lathrop second by Commissioner Ryan to approve the June**  
22 **11 Meeting Minutes with amendments.**

23 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

24 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

25 1. Management plan

26 Commissioner Saunders suggested looking at the management plan at Aspetuck. She said there are a lot  
27 of issues and suggested forming a sub-committee. Chair Heffernon said concrete ideas and a method of  
28 funding this management plan are needed.

29 *Commissioner Saunders will draft up a proposal of scope of work, how to go about it, and sources of*  
30 *funding.*

31 Commissioner Lendler said she was willing to discuss this idea with Commissioner Saunders.

1                   2. Tree by bridge

2 Ms. O'Hare she said will visit the site with Henry McCully, Public Works Director, next week. Commissioner  
3 Saunders spoke about a yellow jacket nest near the Red Trail. She said she put up caution tape on the Red  
4 Trail to warn people of the nest and sprayed the nest.

5                   3. Stewards of Tyler Mill, D. Saunders

6 Commissioner Saunders said the Stewards are dealing with the resprouts of invasives but found no new  
7 ones this month. She said they are working on the plants. She showed a photo of the plants and said that  
8 at the Tyler Mill Preserve entrance, there is mostly all native growth on the both sides and little bit of  
9 knotweed at the back and around the boulders, the front is kept clear and behind the boulders there are  
10 native plants. She said the Stewards applied soil moist. She said at the Tyler Mill Preserve entrance, the  
11 Stewards are making a perimeter around the knotweed. She said a four-foot swath was cut between the  
12 knotweed and the good plants.

13                   4. Trail maps for kiosks, D. Saunders

14 Commissioner Saunders said 200 trail maps for \$100 were printed up.

15                   **B. Fresh Meadows**

16                   2. State of CT DEEP Recreational Trails Grant Program – grant application

17 Ms. O'Hare said the application went in the day before the deadline (July 1). She said the project name is  
18 "Trails for Fresh Meadows at Cheshire Road", and the total project cost \$284,035 with the match being  
19 \$56,800. She said there is approximately \$30,000 in the Open Space Resources Management Fund and if  
20 the Grant is obtained, the work must be done within a two-year period.

21 Ms. O'Hare said the parking lot itself comes in as \$64,000. She said the parking lot can be revised to be  
22 gravel and bituminous for the handicapped spaces.

23                   1. Invasive Plant eradication work

24 Ms. O'Hare said she received an extension from the Finance Dept. to finish the spraying which has been  
25 delayed because of the rain. Ms. O'Hare spoke about sweet vernal grass.

26                   **C. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Road – contract status**

27 Ms. O'Hare said she will be writing the contract. She was requested to ask Henry McCully, Public Works  
28 Director, where the money will come from to cut the field because the field is filled with Autumn Olive. *Ms.*  
29 *O'Hare will speak to Mr. McCully regarding renting a Fecon mower to cut the Autumn Olive.*

30                   **D. Volunteer Projects**

31 Commissioner Saunders said she had asked Commissioner Ryan to get volunteers from the schools. Chair  
32 Heffernon spoke about trails needing work and about getting some of the upward bound students from the  
33 YMCA to do work on the trails and getting them transportation. Chair Heffernon asked if there could be  
34 some projects for these students to do within walking distance of the YMCA.

1 Ms. O'Hare said there are invasive species at Doolittle Park that the students could cut. *Chair Heffernon*  
2 *and Commissioner Arsenault will visit Doolittle Park to look at the invasives.*

3 Chair Heffernon asked about the Army Corp permit for the riparian buffer work. *Ms. O'Hare will start this*  
4 *work.*

5 **E. Other property**

6 Commissioner Arsenault spoke about property at Whisk Key Wind Rd. He said the cement blocks which  
7 were installed did stop the ATVs, but reported someone dumped some bamboo in on Town property. *Ms.*  
8 *O'Hare will document with a photo and send the property owner a letter as soon as possible to request the*  
9 *property owner remove the bamboo.*

10 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

11 **A. 75 Tyler Mill Road property – status**

12 Ms. O'Hare said she was told by Mayor Dickinson's office that the Phase 1 report isn't back yet.  
13 Commissioner Saunders said there are feral cats at this property and that she encountered a coyote at  
14 Field 7A.

15 .

16 **B. Other property**

17 Chair Heffernon asked if the Commissioners read Commissioner Borne's report on property which he  
18 recommended the Commission pursue purchasing and also explore the possibility of acquiring abutting  
19 property. She went over the report. Commissioner Saunders suggested Mayor Dickinson be made aware of  
20 various maintenance issues discussed. The Commission reached a consensus to agree to recommend not  
21 purchasing this parcel and will not pursue this any further.

22

23 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

24 **A. Field 14A – encroachment status**

25 Ms. O'Hare said the encroacher graded down the land from his property and said now the Engineering  
26 Dept. has to go out and measure to ensure everything was done properly. She said she recommended to  
27 the Law Dept. that a fence be installed between the encroacher's property and Town property.  
28 Commissioner Arsenault suggested installing wooden posts along the line for easier maintenance. Ms.  
29 O'Hare suggested installing a fence in the back of the property only. Commissioner Saunders suggested a  
30 fence be installed.

31 **C. Field 7A – issues**

32 Chair Heffernon indicated she asked Commissioner Saunders to look at Field 7A in response to a report of  
33 violation by Ms. O'Hare that entailed installing an unauthorized access and plowing under a portion of the  
34 conservation management area.

1 Commissioner Saunders said she went to the field and spoke with the farmer, Nelson Cecarelli, who  
2 indicated his cousin did the work and was uniformed. She said trespass has already occurred on the field  
3 and noted that Mr. Cecarelli said he will install a telephone pole across the opening and will install a  
4 conservation seed mix after harvesting. Ms. O'Hare said hours went into crafting the lease so that issues as  
5 this would not occur. Ms. O'Hare said she will contact Mr. Cecarelli to remind him that as the lessee, he  
6 must be sure to orient all his workers to the lease restrictions and lease map for all his leases.

7 Commissioner Saunders explained that Field 5A was harrowed deeper this year as it was fallow last year  
8 and the weeds grew in thicker. Ms. O'Hare suggested having the lessee plant wetland plants such as  
9 elderberry and make this a conservation area instead of a grassy area. Commissioner Arsenault said the  
10 area should be restored to what it was previously.

11 *Commissioner Saunders will speak to Commissioner Pietras about this.*

12 Commissioner Ryan said the question is to what level this area should be restored because the Lessee has  
13 agreed to restore the area.

14 Commissioner Pyskaty left the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

#### 15 **D. Farmland Committee**

16 Commissioner Saunders requested a meeting regarding Field 4A. She said a roof was put on the barn but  
17 noted that Public Works can never clean it. She said vines have grown up the side of the barn and  
18 suggested having someone lease the barn.

19 Commissioner Saunders spoke about Field 9D and the posts remaining in the field. She said the posts  
20 have been removed and gone in there with a machine, out of the field into the laneway in the White Trail  
21 and pushed a large tree over the trail. She said the end of the trail is now too steep around the trap rock  
22 for the horses. She said Field 10B has also been barricaded. *Commissioner Arsenault will speak to the*  
23 *Lessee about opening up the two ends of the field and removing the two posts from the woods and then*  
24 *Commissioners Saunders and Arsenault will meet with the lessee on-site.*

### 25 **5. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

#### 26 **A. Farm to table dinner**

27 Chair Heffernon said the Methodist Church in Rockville School will be having a farm to table dinner on  
28 Saturday, Sept. 26 at 5:30 p.m. at no charge.

29 She said they were looking for speakers. Commissioner Saunders suggested getting Jiff Martin,  
30 nutritionist at UConn, to speak. Chair Heffernon said they were also looking for pamphlets and information.

31 Ms. O'Hare passed around information on a new juice bar which opened in Town.

#### 32 **B. Celebrate Open Space – Fall hike**

33 Commissioner Saunders said about a possible foliage hike on the Red/Yellow Trail. She spoke about a  
34 follow up to the "Farm to Field" hike. Chair Heffernon said this will be discussed further in August.

35 Commissioner Saunders said Emily Picard has another student who will shadow her for eight hours to see

1 what a Conservation Commission does and will attend the August meeting. Yale student Lauren Smith has  
2 60 plots set up in the Preserve

3 **6. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE** – status, M. Heffernon, J. Borne & staff – Not discussed.

4 **7. OTHER TOPICS**

5 Chair Heffernon said Zachary Blum will repair the vandalized kiosk. He said he will get the receipts and  
6 send them to the Commission. Commissioner Arsenault suggested using Lexan instead of Plexiglas.

7 Commissioner Saunders spoke about the giant sign on Tamarac Swamp Road which keeps getting covered  
8 in vegetation. She said in the fall, Public Works could go clear around the school bus circle and next spring;  
9 this could be a Quinnipiac Big Event project. Chair Heffernon said this will be discussed in August.

10 Chair Heffernon spoke about the Community Garden. She said the Parks and Recs Commission has a plan  
11 to tidy things up and asked the renters to sign an agreement stating they would allow the gardens to be  
12 ripped out, resizing it, making it uniform and installing a fence. She said many of the community gardeners  
13 were upset over this. She said a Committee has been formed. Vice-Chair Lathrop said this has been going  
14 on for a while because of the talk of leveling everything. He said they want Public Works to pull out the  
15 fencing, plow it and redistribute everything. He said people have worked hard to remove invasives and  
16 many have worked at enriching the soil.

17 Chair Heffernon read correspondence which stated the Parks & Recs Commission considered turning the  
18 Community Gardens into a parking lot.

19 Commissioner Saunders said the Community Gardens area is open space because of the wetlands.  
20 Commissioner Lendler suggested a fence be installed around the perimeter of the gardens. Chair  
21 Heffernon suggested installing a chain link fence with slats. Commissioner Saunders said some people  
22 installed their own fencing. Chair Heffernon said Vice-Chair Lathrop's wife has written a letter to the Parks  
23 & Recreation Commission stating a fence be installed around the perimeter. *Chair Heffernon will write a*  
24 *letter on behalf of the Commission supporting the idea of a fence.*

25 Chair Heffernon said the Parks & Rec Dept. asked the Commission to cut some trees down by Community  
26 Lake. Commissioner Saunders spoke about discouraging picnickers from Tyler Mill Preserve. She said she  
27 encourages people to go to Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park to picnic. Vice Chair Lathrop said he agrees  
28 organized events need a permit, but anyone bringing in food, as long as they clean up, is fine.

29 **8. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

30 **A. CT Land Conservation Trust** – membership dues

31 **MOTION: A motion by Vice-Chair Lathrop second by Commissioner Saunders to approve the**  
32 **\$100 dues. The motion passed unanimously.**

33 **B. CFPA magazine, "CT Woodlands", summer 2015** – received by Commission.

34 **C. Film, "Origins", Wallingford Public Library, August 17, 6 p.m.**

35 **D. UCONN College of Agriculture, "Building Equity in Farm Leasing Workshop", July 23,**  
36 **9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Wethersfield Historical Society, Wethersfield, CT**

1 Commissioner Saunders noted that approximately 38 percent of farmers lease land. Ms. O'Hare distributed  
2 farmland lease material regarding some of the lessees on Town lease areas.

3 **9. NEXT MEETING – August 13, 2015**

4 **10. ADJOURMENT**

5 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Ryan second by Commissioner Lendler to adjourn the**  
6 **Meeting at 9:13p.m. The motion passed unanimously.**

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8 Respectfully submitted,

9 Cynthia A. Kleist

10 Recording Secretary

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