

1 WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2 **SPECIAL MEETING**

3 Thursday, September 18 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

4 Town Hall, Basement Conference Room

5 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, Connecticut

6 **MINUTES**

7
8 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Carl Arsenault; Jeffrey Borne;
9 Ken Ryan; Dianne Saunders; State Representative Mary Mushinsky.

10 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioners Tom Pietras; Jim Pyskaty; Dianne Lendler; Erin O'Hare, Environmental
11 and Natural Resources Planner.

12 Chair Heffernon called the Special Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m and took the agenda in the following
13 order:

14 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

15 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, August 14, 2014, 9:30 a.m.**

16 On Page 2, (2A-4) should be "try" the area, not "tri". On page 3, Item F-1-"two garden club members did
17 not join the Stewards of Tyler Mill", they have been coming on walks and assisting; on page 4, Item F-1-
18 change to "she referred the student to Ms. O'Hare as a follow-up."

19 **MOTION: A motion by Commissioner Borne second by Commissioner Ryan to approve the**
20 **August 14, 2014 Meeting Minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

21 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

22 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

23 1. Remaining planned improvements- report, staff

24 Chair Heffernon said Ms. O'Hare sent an email to Public Works on June 30, about installing signage at the
25 horse trail pull-off area. Commissioner Saunders said this work has not as of yet been completed. She said
26 the area was mowed once. Chair Heffernon said Public Works has started installing a new parking area at
27 Vietnam Veterans Park.

28 Chair Heffernon said she received a report back from Rob Rocks, Peter Picone and Howard Kilpatrick of
29 DEEP. She discussed the report with the Commission. Chair Heffernon said the Commission should not just
30 focus on deer, but a total management plan for Tyler Mill Preserve. She also spoke about the Coverts
31 Projects conference she attended. The Commission agreed to look at the management of Tyler Mill
32 Preserve. Commissioner Saunders suggested the Commission use some of their budget money to have a
33 professional write a management plan.

1 2. Gold Trail

2 Commissioner Saunders said work on the boardwalk on the Gold Trail is scheduled to begin October 19
3 and will involve the Students at the Kohler Environmental Center at Choate Rosemary Hall. Commissioner
4 Saunders presented the purchase order for the cost of the wood to construct the boardwalk to Chair
5 Heffernon. Commissioner Saunders said 8-foot pieces of cedar will be used to construct the boardwalk.
6 She said the Stewards of Tyler Mill will cut the cedar planks this week. Commissioner Saunders also said
7 the Stewards hope to plant this weekend and will also do work at the bridge at Tyler Mill. She noted that
8 the bollards to the entrance at Tyler Mill were painted.

9 3. Stewards of Tyler Mill –Les Merhoff Biodiversity Grant project –update, D. Saunders-
10 discussed above.

11 4. Emergency trail markers

12 Chair Heffernon said the installation of the trail markers will be completed after one more session.

13 5. Trail maps

14 The trail maps were distributed to the Commission. Commissioner Saunders spoke about the quotes she
15 received for printing the maps on two sides. She said Staples and Prentice were the least expensive.
16 Commissioner Borne spoke about an honor system for laminated trail map cards. Vice-Chair Lathrop
17 suggested the installation of a good quality map in the kiosks in order for people to be able to take a photo
18 with their Smartphone and then be able to print out the map on their own or obtain a copy in the Parks
19 Recreation office. Chair Heffernon suggested possibly discussing putting the map online with the Mayor's
20 Office. She also suggested putting a notice in the kiosk informing people where to obtain the maps and to
21 use their Smartphone to take a photo of the map.

22 *Chair Heffernon will ask permission from Parks and Recreation if their printer can be used to print out the*
23 *maps.*

24 **B. 1250 Whirlwind Hill Road – mowing**

25 No updates.

26 **C. Dibble Edge Road property – drainage issue & encroachment**

27 Chair Heffernon said this is an on-going issue and Ms. O'Hare has been on-site.

28 **D. Invasive Species Eradication**

29 1. Report, D. Saunders

30 Commissioner Saunders said there is not a lot of invasive plant species at the entranceway to Tyler Mill
31 and will write the specs this fall for the knotweed. She said All-Habitat did the treatment to eradicate the
32 Trees of Heaven.

33 **E. Other properties**

1 Chair Heffernon read a copy of a letter from a resident on Schoolhouse Road which she received from
2 Mayor Dickinson's office stating the open fields are a menace and suggested a lawn park be established at
3 Fresh Meadows.

4 *Chair Heffernon will write a letter to the resident explaining that this area is a wildlife habitat.*

5 **3. PROPERTY ACQUISITION**

6 Commissioner Borne wrote a letter and contacted the Mayor's office regarding the property acquisition.

7 *The Commission will respond to the property owner who wrote the letter to Mayor Dickinson.*

8 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

9 **A. Field 5A & Field 7A – Bid opening, Sept 15, 2:00 p.m. – report**

10 Commissioner Saunders said only one bid was received. She noted that part-two of the bid opening for
11 Field 5A & Field 7A is scheduled for Sept. 25, 2014. Commissioner Saunders said the Farmland Lease
12 Committee is preparing to do the field monitoring now, but decided the monitoring will be done once a
13 year. She said many leases will come due in 2016 and the preparation of the bid packet should be done
14 by Fall 2014, so the bids can take place early 2015.

15 **8. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

16 **C. Doolittle Park-riparian buffer**

17 The Commission discussed the possibility of installing a riparian buffer at Doolittle Park and what to plant
18 after learning about neighbors complaining about the growth of weeds, limiting their view of the river.
19 Chair Heffernon said that Parks & Recreation Director John Gawlak had contacted the Commission a few
20 years ago and Rep. Mary Mushinsky received grant monies which was used to control the weeds.

21 Chair Heffernon said Ms. O'Hare had written a plan which Rep. Mushinsky had used as a guide for the
22 plantings. Chair Heffernon said Ms. O'Hare gave her photos and the history of what had been done.

23 Rep. Mushinsky said she first went to the site with John Gawlak and Erin O'Hare and took photos and one
24 section was done and the work was going to extend to the footbridge. She said signs stating "Buffer
25 Project in Progress" were also installed. She said Public Works was supportive and completed one of the
26 four designated sites. Rep. Mushinsky said she could come in and try to do this again by planting trees and
27 utilizing students from the Sound School.

28 Chair Heffernon asked the Commission for ideas. Commissioner Borne suggested selecting floodplain trees
29 such as red maples, black gum trees and elderberry and winterberry bushes to be planted in the riparian
30 buffer. Commissioner Arsenaault suggested meeting with the neighbors and asking them to volunteer to
31 maintain the riparian buffer. Commissioner Saunders suggested having the Vo-Ag students start the
32 cuttings of winterberry. The Commission will try to come up with a plan to discuss at next Month's
33 Meeting.

1 *Chair Heffernon will go to the site at Doolittle Park to look at invasives and will contact Roman Mrozinski of*
2 *the South West Conservation District to discuss this project.*

3 **5. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

4 Chair Heffernon said she began this project and since she attend the Coverts Project, she has expanded
5 her ideas and said she hopes to have something new for the Commission to look at for the next Meeting.

6 **6. OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**

7 Chair Heffernon said she and Commissioner Borne have not met to discuss the Open Space Plan.

8 *She and Commissioner Borne set a date to meet next week.*

9 **7. OTHER TOPICS**

10 Chair Heffernon spoke about the Coverts Project and said its purpose was to take what one learned and do
11 outreach and have resources available to others. She encouraged the Commission to take part in the
12 Coverts Project. Commissioner Borne said he attended the first Meeting they ever had. Chair Heffernon
13 said the Coverts Project was three nights, free of charge, with 28 people attending including two UCONN
14 students and ran from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. She said Peter Picone and Rob Rocks from DEEP attended along
15 with a woman who discussed the rabbit habitat.

16 **8. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS**

17 **A. Coverts Project – M.Heffernon** – discussed above.

18 **B. Liney Hall Lane – correspondence** – discussed above.

19 **C. Doolittle Park-riparian buffer** – discussed above.

20 **D. Community Garden**

21 Chair Heffernon said Parks & Recreation Director John Gawlak asked the Commission to find additional
22 land in addition to the existing Community Garden at Vietnam Veterans Park, which could be used for the
23 Community Garden. The Commission discussed some possible sites and suggested the Moran Property,
24 (Hope Hill Road), as a possible location for the Community Garden.

25 Chair Heffernon showed the Commission a mock up of the sign for Tessa's Trail at Fresh Meadows. She
26 also spoke about the upcoming CACIWC Meeting which will take place on Saturday, November 15 at the
27 Villa Capri. She told the Commissioners the cost is \$40 which will be paid by the Conservation Commission.

28 Rep. Mary Mushinsky gave an update on the fish ladder project and will send the fish counts to Chair
29 Heffernon. She also will send Chair Heffernon information on State funding for open space.

30 **E. Visit to rabbit habitat – Sunday, Sept. 21, 2014**

31 Commissioner Saunders told the Commission that all the arrangements have been made for the visit.

1 **9.NEXT MEETING- October 9, 2014**

2 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

3 **MOTION: Commissioner Borne made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 8:59 p.m. which was**
4 **seconded by Commissioner Ryan and passed unanimously.**

5 Respectfully submitted,

6 Cynthia A. Kleist

7 Recording Secretary

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