

Beacon Falls Conservation Commission
10 Maple Ave
Beacon Falls, CT 06403

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Meeting Minutes, September 14, 2009
REVISED

Chair Diane Betkoski called the regular monthly meeting of the Beacon Falls Conservation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m.

Present: Chair D. Betkoski, Vice Chair A. Parzuchowski, Commissioners: J. Mylen, Christian Yanarella and W. Chellis.

Also Present: Richard Minnick and Atty. Steven Byrne.

Minutes of July

Motion was made by Commissioner Parzuchowski and seconded by Commissioner Mylen to approve the minutes of July 6, 2009 as presented.

Discussion: None Vote: 5 in favor Abstained: 0 Opposed: 0

Motion was made by Chair Betkoski and seconded by Commissioner Mylen to arrange the agenda to accommodate Atty. Bryne.

Discussion: None Vote: 5 in favor Abstained: 0 Opposed: 0

Chair Betkoski explained that a letter was sent to Atty. Byrne concerning the responsibility of this Commission. The Commission is asking Atty. Byrne to provide some guidance and parameters concerning the Commission's responsibility.

Atty. Byrne came before the Commission and provided information concerning the roles and responsibility of the Commission. Discussion was held concerning abandoned roads to be used for hiking, biking and trails. Rich Minnick stated there are a number of abandoned roads in the Town. There was a previous plan to use the abandoned roads for trails. A recommendation should be made to the Board of Selectmen. Atty. Byrne stated that legally the State gives Town's the okay to turn unused roads into Conservation parcels for types of recreation.

A copy of Section 7-131a – ordinance concerning the authority of the Conservation Commission was forwarded. In this ordinance there is information concerning intervention and permanent activity were the Commission may elect to intervene to protect the public trust of air, water and of natural resources of the State of Connecticut from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction. The role of the Conservation Commission is advisory.

Atty. Byrne also forwarded information concerning: 1. Conservation Easements, Guidelines to Conduct Public Meetings and Public Hearings and Freedom of Information and CACIWC.

Atty. Byrne discussed the conducting of meetings and conflict of interest. Conservation Easements were discussed. The Town's liability of areas was discussed. The Town would have to maintain the areas. Discussion was held active and passive recreation. The Town's insurance carrier would have to be consulted. Rich Minnick stated that the Town is liable for any parcel active or passive. Steps would have to be taken to protect the Town's liability and minimize risks.

Chair Betkoski suggested getting information from other Towns/Cities have done. A natural resource inventory of the area would have to be done. A determination of whether the area should be active or passive. Chair Betkoski mentioned the use of fences or securing of areas and use of signs versus leaving the area open. Areas concerning water and ledge were discussed. When reviewing open space in the Town, this information will have to be considered. The Planning and Zoning Commission make final decisions with recommendations from other Commissions. Chair Betkoski mentioned a checklist of criteria when walking the properties for consistency. Rich Minnick mentioned the CACIWC sessions for Wetlands and Conservation Commissions. Discussion concerned the marking of boundaries of the open space to protect abutting property owners. Chair Betkoski mentioned the risk of wild animals. What is the town's risk? Notice should be made of the species in the area and should be cleared with the insurance carrier. Chair Betkoski noted that budgeting for proper items will be needed for the open space. An assessment of the Lantern Ridge open space should be made concerning the town liability.

Commissioner Mylen questioned the establishment of a town ordinance concerning the use of open space. Do other towns have ordinances? Atty. Byrne felt that establishment of an ordinance would be beneficial to the Town.

Correspondence

Commissioner Mylen noted that the following correspondence has been received:

1. Fall Training Schedule – Land Use Academy
2. Invitation from Chatfield Farms re: Opening of Clubhouse
3. Letter from DeCarlo and Doll – Re: River walk
4. Letter from Main Street Development Corp. re: Downtown Improvements
5. CACIWC Membership – both memberships IWWC and Conservation will be paid by IWWC

Chair Betkoski noted that she was notified by Maureen Jurzynski concerning information which Ed Jurzynski had when he was on numerous Commissions. The Commission agreed that information should be obtained for review.

Storm water Management

An update was given by Commissioner Mylen. Commissioner Mylen stated that 85% is done. Discussion was held concerning recognition of the volunteers working on the marker program. Certificates should be given at the end of the program. The Boy Scouts have done the bulk of the work. Commissioner Mylen will like an article to be written for the Citizens News. Commissioner Chellis suggested filming the installation of the markers. The Commission agreed that recognition will be given at the end of the program.

Outreach

Discussion was held concerning the website. A Town website will be done.

Commissioner Parzuchowski noted that due to budget cuts the publication of the newsletter has been put on hold. Chair Betkoski will get an update on the budget for the next meeting.

The Duck Race will be held on October 3rd.

Natural Resource Inventory Program

Commissioner Chellis is looking into the GIS class. There is still work left to be done. Commissioner Chellis would like to review Ed Jurzynski's information.

The previous discussion concerning a Town ordinance regarding open space will be discussed with the Selectmen. Research will be done concerning what other Towns/Cities have done. A

checklist will be needed when doing an inventory of the open space. CACIWC information will be reviewed for a possible checklist for next meeting. Commissioner Parzuchowski stated she would like Commissioner Yanarella on the Outreach Sub Committee.

Land Use Committee Update

Chair Betkoski noted that the September meeting has been cancelled. No other meetings will be held until further notice.

Membership

This matter will be discussed with First Selectman, Susan Cable.

Payment of Bills

M. Kempa

Motion was made by Commissioner Mylen and seconded by Commissioner Chellis to approve the bill as submitted.

Discussion: None Vote: 5 in favor Abstained: 0 Opposed: 0

Motion was made by Chair Betkoski and seconded by Commissioner Parzuchowski to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Maryann Kempa, Clerk