



DRAFT MINUTES
Brookfield Conservation Commission
Brookfield Town Hall Room 129
Wednesday, August 6, 2014
7:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Dew called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, and established a quorum of members.

Present: A. Dew, Chair; R. Blessey, Vice Chair; S. Landis, Secretary/Treasurer; M. Carmody; M. Dew; J. Bronn

Absent: M. Murphy

Also Present: E. Cole Prescott, Recording Secretary

2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: 06/04/14 – M. Dew made a motion to approve the minutes, and M. Carmody seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3. GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment at this time.

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

a. Email from P. Schnell to A. Dew, B. Tinsley & B. Davidson dated 07/24/14 Re: Happy Landings Mowing:

b. Letter from Donna Schillings to A. Dew:

The Commission reviewed both pieces of correspondence. M. Dew stated that the Commission could consider altering the time of the cuttings. Chair Dew mentioned that according to the lease agreement, the current tenant has the right to make the decision about when to mow the property. Upon inquiry of J. Bronn about past requests received to maintain areas of Joe Pye Weed and milkweed, Chair Dew stated that there is a wildflower area at the Nature Center. Chair Dew stated that she had read in the Nature Conservancy magazine about the importance of planting milkweed in residential areas for butterflies and birds. M. Carmody stated that for a farmers' livelihood the more the farmer can cut the hay, the better the hay is. M. Carmody asked J. Bronn if he knows what the farmer is using the hay for, and J. Bronn replied that he is not sure. Eriksen Farm is only mowed once a year, and 41 Obtuse Road South is not mowed, so these are wildflower areas that also currently exist.

Chair Dew will respond to these inquiries. Chair Dew gave J. Bronn the insurance information for the farming tenant at Happy Landings.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT: Chair Dew will forward the budget information to S. Landis.

6. CURRENT PROJECT REPORTS:

a. The Nature Center – S. Landis reported that the next large project will be the garage floor. She has spoken with Mike Morlock and George Waltz, who will let the Commission know what time is best for them. S. Landis stated that M. Morlock prefers that George Waltz do the prep work. S. Landis stated that she will write a letter to K. Yates about removing the remaining items in the garage. S. Landis would like to thank Parks and Recreation and Chris Rabuse for the work done along the information board. A. Dew asked when S. Landis would like to have the garage cleaned, and S. Landis stated that she would like the work done by October 1st. S. Landis reported that Molly Birdsall has completed the swing project. E. Cole Prescott showed a picture of the swing that was sent to the Commission.

b. Happy Landings – J. Bronn stated that the farmer mowed the property a couple of weeks ago in July. R. Blessey stated that the farmer had not tethered and baled. M. Carmody stated that she had seen a number of large bales near the parking lot.

The sign has been done, and the sign application needs to now be completed to have approval of the sign location.

First Selectman Bill Tinsley stopped briefly into the meeting to ask the Commission to consider the property diagonally across from the Post Office at 108 Pocono Road. The Commission then returned to the discussion regarding the sign application.

Chair Dew stated that a variance application may need to be filed for the location of the sign, due to the proximity to the center line of the road. Additionally, the Commission may need to work on acquiring approval from the DOT. The Commission discussed the sign location in relation to the stone wall and the trees at the entrance of the property. S. Landis mentioned that a tree may need to be removed so the sign can be visible.

J. Bronn agreed to meet Chair Dew at the property to locate a place for the sign. M. Carmody shared a picture of what the sign looks like with the Commission.

c. Burr Farm – Chair Dew stated that Happy Landings needs the fence line mowed, and Burr Farm needs some maintenance along the fence as well. Chair Dew asked if the Commission would like to consider hiring one company to complete the landscape work at all the properties. This one company could then be given a master list of the different projects to be completed. Chair Dew noted that maintenance done this way may be more organized and easier to budget for the Commission.

M. Carmody stated that there is a dedication rock at the property that will soon be engraved.

d. Williams/Gurski Open Space – M. Dew stated that he has been walking the property consistently, and the trails look good.

e. 18 Junction Road – S. Landis stated that the outside looks good, and she will need to ask Leahy's to go to the site to check the heating system.

f. Gurski Homestead – Chair Dew stated that she has not yet heard from Patrick Conlon about the work to re-build the shed, and she has not yet requested quotes for the work that needs to be done. R. Blessey stated that some of the electrical work has been done. Chair Dew stated that she will contact Val Carroll to get some estimates for the siding of the property.

M. Dew and R. Blessey noted the siding, and discussed the possibility of either shingles or hardy plank, and both agreed that shingles will be easier to obtain and to install.

g. Eriksen Farm Open Space – M. Carmody stated that butterfly bushes that were planted last year survived, except for one. M. Dew stated that he has met Steve Turco, a painting contractor, at Eriksen Farm last week. He had spoken to him last year about the work, and now Steve is preparing an estimate. M. Dew presented an estimate from Turco for staining and repair work at the barn. M. Dew stated that the contractor had also commented about the vines and overgrowth along the barn. M. Dew will do some cleaning of the property, and noted that it would be good to ask Jason Sivo to chip some of the material that is removed, to reduce the amount of piles on site. Chair Dew calculated the amount remaining in the budget, and noted that the Commission most likely has the funds to do some of the work. M. Dew noted that doing the house over will be between \$30,000 and \$40,000. M. Dew mentioned that the barn is in reasonably good condition, and the Commission would probably want to maintain that structure. M. Dew, upon inquiry from J. Bronn, replied that he suspects the work would be done within the next two months. **M. Dew made a motion to pursue the estimate received [for \$8,200, for repair and staining of the barn on Nabby Road]. R. Blessey seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.**

h. Old Bridge Sanctuary – J. Bronn reported that there is no activity on this site.

i. Deer Management – M. Dew stated that White Tail has been in touch with him to see if there are any new available properties for hunting. BOSLI will not permit any additional hunting on their properties. Chair Dew mentioned that the deeds for BOSLI's property usually contain a hunting restriction.

Chair Dew asked where the precast well cover is, and R. Blessey stated that it is still at Eastern Precast. He will pick it up.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

a. List of Potential Projects for Community Organizations – This matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

J. Bronn asked that the Commission discuss the Trails Day.

b. CT Trails Weekend – J. Bronn stated that he is thinking of doing something like a community bike ride from Williams Park to Happy Landings and back, to have a more appealing event. Chair Dew suggested a mountain ride bike through Williams Park, or a horse ride through Burr Farm. Chair Dew stated that the year before there were some high school students who had worked to get this project together, and this helped with the attendance rate.

A. Dew asked that the Commission discuss trail guides.

c. Trail Guides – Chair Dew stated that Donna in the Parks and Recreation Department is putting the last of the trail guides together. M. Dew asked if the Commission has spoken with the Parks and Recreation Department or with the Health Department about a trail guide collaboration, and A. Dew noted that neither of the departments has any money to spend on the creation of a trail guide.

Chair Dew asked that the following two topics be added as new business items for discussion: 44 Obtuse Road South and 108 Pocono Road.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

a. FarmFest – Planning Discussion – *See below.*

b. 44 Obtuse Road South – Chair Dew stated that she would like to go out to the site and mark the location of this easement. J. Bronn suggested that this be done at the same time as the sign location, as discussed under Happy Landings.

c. 108 Pocono Road – The house is in terrible condition, and the Commission will consider options moving forward.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

a. FarmFest – Planning Discussion – R. Blessey stated that the date for the FarmFest is Saturday, September 20th. The event time will be from 11 AM to 4 PM. R. Blessey stated that Don Eirich will be contacting those people with tractors to come display at the FarmFest. R. Blessey stated that the same groups as the previous year should be invited back. J. Bronn stated that he will speak with BOSLI, and S. Landis stated that she will speak with the Garden Club. Chair Dew will talk with J. Blick about activities for kids. J. Bronn stated that the hay ride is a big attraction; R. Blessey will organized the hay rides again this year. M. Carmody will ask her relative to bring a cow. M. Carmody stated that she will also ask one of her family members to bring a goat. J. Bronn stated that the parking situation worked well last year. R. Blessey stated that if conditions are too wet, the parking may need to be moved. Chair Dew asked if members of the Fire House will be attending. R. Blessey stated that he will work with the Police Department and the Fire Department. Blacksmith demonstrations will also be done again this year. Chair Dew will ask Roxanne and Good Luck Food Truck to attend the event, as well as the owner of Royale Tobacco, who travels with a small ice cream cart. M. Dew mentioned signage and advertising. E. Cole Prescott will put the event information on the website. Chair Dew mentioned that there should also be a police presence at the event. Six lawn signs can be put up; the information can be posted online and in *The Penny Saver*. The shirts need to be sold. E. Cole Prescott will work on organizing a pie contest again. R. Blessey stated that he will start to organize the tractor pull. J. Bronn stated that he has some carnival-style games he could bring. Last year, Adam Dew and Lions Club members worked together on parking. E. Cole Prescott will ask T.E. Lopez about whether he was representing the Lions Club or the Kiwanis Garden, and ask if he is willing to come help again with parking. The loom could be put out for viewing. A schedule of the day also needs to be done and posted. R. Blessey has four tents, and last year the Commission had borrowed some of the tents. J. Bronn asked about inviting vendors from the Farmers Market to come to the FarmFest. Chair Dew stated she will ask the Farmers' Market vendors if they are interested in attending. M. Dew stated that at the next meeting, a schedule should be drafted and a map should be done indicating the locations of the vendors and the tents. S. Landis also mentioned the Master Gardener at White Flower Farms. S. Landis mentioned inviting a bee keeper and selling honey. R. Blessey stated that he will speak with Lou Menendez about inviting the master gardener. R. Blessey stated that he would also like to have a police dog demonstration. J. Bronn asked if the Commission would consider scheduling a rain date. R. Blessey noted the difficulty with rain dates. This item is continued to the next agenda.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Dew made a motion to adjourn at 8:25 PM. R. Blessey seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Please contact Stephanie Landis: 203-775-4545 if you cannot attend the Meeting

****Next regular meeting scheduled for September 3, 2014****