



**DRAFT MINUTES**  
*Brookfield Conservation Commission*  
**Brookfield Town Hall Room 129**  
**Wednesday, October 7, 2015**  
**7:00 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** A. Dew called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the following in attendance:

**Present:** A. Dew, Chair; J. Bronn, Vice Chair; S. Landis, Secretary/Treasurer; M. Dew, Commissioner

**Absent:** Commissioner M. Carmody; Commissioner R. Blessey; Commissioner M. Murphy

**Also Present:** E. Cole Prescott, Recording Secretary

**2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: 09/02/15 – M. Dew made a motion to approve the minutes. S. Landis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.**

Chair Dew noted that F. Lollie (Assistant Land Use Manager/Zoning Enforcement Officer) will not be attending the November CACIWC meeting, as originally stated in last meeting's minutes.

**3. GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT:** C. Cumberton and M. Jaffe, both of the Library Board, were present for discussion of a new library location, possibly at the Gurski Homestead. C. Cumberton explained that the Library Board is currently viewing several locations for the construction of a new library. Most of these locations are on town-owned lands, such as the Town Hall property. There had been previous discussion about the possibility of a library in the Four Corners area as well. C. Cumberton noted some of the advantages of having a new library building at the Gurski Homestead, including the possibility of hosting nature-oriented programs, a destination library with a "friendly" atmosphere, and community spaces for renting, both for higher-end functions and community events. A. Dew stated that she feels as though there is the potential with this proposal to offer events which also focus on Brookfield's past. Upon inquiry from M. Jaffe regarding the history of the property, A. Dew replied with a brief history of how the Town acquired and later managed the property. J. Bronn asked about issues with access way to the property, and M. Jaffe agreed that the access way is a concern. A. Dew mentioned that perhaps some of the front space where the orchard is currently planted may be used for future access. Upon inquiry from J. Bronn about who has the jurisdiction for the property, A. Dew clarified that the Conservation Commission is an advisory board to the Board of Selectmen, and simply makes suggestions and recommendations relative to properties which the Commission oversees or, in some cases, has the potential to oversee. It was noted that this property is not designated in a deed as open space, as some of the other properties for which the Commission oversees are. C. Cumberton explained that, according to the State's library standards, the size of a library in Brookfield should be anywhere between 27,000 and 32,000 square feet. The current Library in the Town is 9,000 square feet. The current community room may seat up to 150 people, but is commonly booked, according to Ms. Cumberton. C. Cumberton is scheduled to

present her findings to the Library Board on November 18th, and the Library Board must make a decision by the end of December. M. Dew noted the timeline, and indicated that the Commission has until their next regularly scheduled meeting to send their comments back to C. Cumberton, and he stated that he would prefer to give the Commission some time to review and think about the proposal. This item will be added to the next regularly scheduled meeting's agenda.

**4. CORRESPONDENCE:** None at this meeting. No motions.

**5. TREASURER'S REPORT:** S. Landis reported the remaining amount of the budget as \$12,975.00. This amount excludes the bill from Bob Fisher.

**6. CURRENT PROJECT REPORTS:**

a. The Nature Center – S. Landis – S. Landis reported that “everything is good” at the property. M. Dew stated that Chris Rabuse had been sanding the hand rails on the front porch, and he thought that was very nice. The Commission was very grateful for the work, which Chris Rabuse is doing on the house and at the property.

b. Happy Landings – J. Bronn – A. Dew stated that there was discussion of spraying today, but she has not seen the spraying done yet. J. Bronn stated that the bill for this was just under \$5,000. A. Dew stated that she has spoken with the DEEP regarding the spraying, and the appropriate parties have been contacted. The material safety data sheets have been sent to the First Selectman, as well as to the Secretaries in the Land Use Office. This is a several-year proposition, and the spraying will have to be done next year also. At least three years is generally needed.

c. Burr Farm – M. Carmody – The fencing has been done on the property. M. Dew mentioned that J. Sivo had installed the fence around the parking area and had gone in both directions along the road. M. Dew stated that he thinks the fence looks beautiful, and S. Landis agreed. S. Landis stated that M. Carmody very much likes the stone wall. A. Dew stated that J. Sivo had sent her an email about the fencing, and she had replied to his email, thanking him for the work, which was very professionally done. There is still some extra fencing in the garage, from a previous project. M. Dew stated that some of the rails along the Cemetery area at the Gurski Homestead will need to be replaced. M. Dew suggested that the extra rails be used as replacements at that location.

d. Williams/Gurski Open Space – J. Bronn, M. Dew – No report.

e. 18 Junction Road – S. Landis, M. Dew – S. Landis stated that the carpet, mailbox, and stonewall will be repaired on Tuesday.

f. Gurski Homestead – R. Blessey, A. Dew – S. Landis stated that from a historical standpoint, the house along the road has historic value because the beams which are used upstairs came from a small schoolhouse in Brookfield. M. Dew stated that some of the beams were broken and had to be set up and repaired for a new roof. The matter has since been fixed, according to M. Dew. A. Dew stated that the most historic beams she has seen in Town are at the attic at the Eriksen Farm house. The weekend before FarmFest, M. Dew had repaired some of the siding on the road-side of the barn.

g. Eriksen Farm Open Space – M. Carmody, M. Dew – M. Dew reported that all of the work is complete, except the siding contractor has not yet been paid for the project.

h. Old Bridge Sanctuary – J. Bronn – No report.

i. Deer Management – M. Dew – M. Dew stated that hunting is underway. Some of the apples are being taken from the Nature Center, which is fine with S. Landis. M. Dew stated that he has spoken with the hunters in the past to request that they ask to pick the apples before picking them.

## 7. OLD BUSINESS:

a. FarmFest 2015: Overview – The Commission briefly discussed FarmFest 2015, and possible ideas for FarmFest 2016. A. Dew reimbursed Commissioners for the amount spent, based on their receipts submitted for the purchase of necessary items for the event. A. Dew noted that the two largest expenses are the port-a-johns and the hiring of a private duty police officer. Other items are all donated, or are smaller items picked up and reimbursed. A. Dew stated that pre-written parking signs and a handicapped parking sign would be good additions. A. Dew stated that another drill would be a good investment.

S. Landis noted interest in the Cemetery, and stated that the tombstones are only six or so inches below ground. She stated that there is a radar image map showing where the tombstones are located in the area. S. Landis stated that perhaps she could put together some work sessions to have some of the tombstones uncovered. The condition of the tombstones was discussed, and S. Landis replied that the tombstones should remain in the ground, and should not be stood up, as they are not strong enough. S. Landis stated that she spent 1.5 hours on the phone with Jan Howard, who knows the property well. The cemetery is larger than the boundaries indicating its location, and S. Landis stated that this project would be an asset to the Town and the property.

A. Dew thanked the Commission for their work at FarmFest. S. Landis stated that she really believes the property should maintain a farm character, and she envisions some sort of barn structure – rain or shine – to have a FarmFest and other similar events. She also noted the possibility of having a Farmer’s Market and holiday events on site. S. Landis stated that if a new library building is to be constructed on the property, the building should fit in with the character of the property and the area. M. Dew stated that the property was not maintained before the Town bought it; the buildings had been marked as condemned since the Town purchased the property. M. Dew stated that he would prefer the property be used as open space, perhaps with a nice barn on site in the future. There are some beautiful beams, but the barn structure is not strong enough to be maintained. S. Landis stated that everyone loved FarmFest. A. Dew stated that she and M. Dew have always talked about the possibility of renting a tent for the event. She noted the potential option to have perhaps a BBQ event in the evening, with ticket sales.

b. List of Potential Projects for Community Organizations and volunteers – This item is tabled until the next meeting.

c. Trail Guide/Map: Draft & Publication of Document – J. Bronn will contact the person or business who had completed the Southbury Trail Guide: *Get Out and Get Healthy*. He will report back to the Commission on pricing for something similar to be done for Brookfield’s properties. M. Dew mentioned that the Parks and Recreation Department had indicated in the past that they would perhaps be willing to co-sponsor such an event as well.

d. Girl Scout Gold Project – Ms. Garizio – G. Garizio was at FarmFest, and a raffle was done for a bee house. There was a nice display, and she is very enthusiastic about her project.

8. **NEW BUSINESS:** There was no new business at this meeting.
9. **ADJOURNMENT: The meeting ended at 8:10 PM.**

\*\*\*\*Please contact Stephanie Landis: 203-775-4545 if you cannot attend the Meeting\*\*\*\*  
**\*\*Next regular meeting scheduled for November 4, 2015\*\***