



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes

April 10, 2012 @ 7:00 pm

Newtown Municipal Center, Meeting Room #3
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470

In attendance are: Commissioners Wilson, Cramer, Hovious and Germain
Staff Members: Rob Sibley and Lynn Kovack

Public Participation- Dottie Evans and Holly Kocet from the public were present at the meeting. They voiced concerns about the timing of cutting of town owned meadows areas. Holly had spoken to Amy Mangold from Parks and Rec who agreed to leave the meadows at Dickenson (near Barb's Trail) uncut until August. That way any nesting birds would not be affected. Discussion followed about the High Meadow at FFH. Apparently that meadow is rented to a farmer who hays it in June for livestock purposes. The Commission would like more information about this: how often is it mowed, whose jurisdiction it falls under, and how much is it rented for. Rob Sibley agreed to report back to the Commission at their meeting. A possible milkweed area that would attract Monarch butterflies was also discussed.

Correspondence- Comm Hovious had received information on the upcoming Duck race

Approval of Minutes of 3/13/2012- Will discuss acceptance on minutes at next meeting

Administrative Items

Project Management/Task List: Nothing new to report on

Old Business and Action Item:

Fairfield Hills Open Space: Comm Hovious would like to see what Parks and Rec submitted to P & Z for the POCD. Rob Sibley will get draft of that report. Rob had previously met with P & Z to provide info about the Conservation Commission for inclusion in the new POCD.

Work Orders: Comm Wilson asked on any new work orders. Rob stated that Parks and Rec keeps track. Only outstanding one at this time is the bridges on Al's Trail. They went out twice for solutions. Offered ideas to anchor as it is in flood zone. Commission would like to have some type of confirmation when a work order is completed. Rob will check with Parks and Rec about that.

Open Space 37-3-14: No new updates except that Pat Llodra is going to send letter within a month to Commissioner of Agriculture and ask them to send us status. Rob received a copy of map from Liz that is To be recorded with languages and meets and bounds. Transfer couldn't be done until that was Completed.

Use of High School volunteers: We will be losing our volunteer Jess soon. Commissioner Wilson will email Peg Regany to see if she has anyone else interested in volunteering and helping with the brochure as a project for credit. Commissioner Wilson will also ask if there would be any volunteers who would like to help with the school presentations on invasives that we do every year.

Discussion of NRI: There was discussion about the NRI. It was decided to try to have Bill Root come to our May 22 meeting. Rob will ask for a digital copy so that all Commissioners will have ample opportunity to review the document before that date.

Committee/Staff Reports

Trail Building Sub-committee: Nothing new to report on

Forest Evaluation: Comm Wilson walked the Nettleton property with Comm McLeod (Germain) and members of the NFA on April 2. The forested area is dense with various invasives.

OS Inventory and Maintenance Progress: Comm Kaley has many deeds in the folders now. Not sure on the maps but definite progress being made on getting the folders built up. Comm Hovious has worked on the pole Bridge Project. Steven Birney in the IT dept has worked on Indexing. He has worked on parcel updates and created layers on the map database. Eventually commission would like a laminated map that could be updated yearly.

Property Marking Plans, Surveying Status: Rob stated that the survey on Purdy Station was completed and is ready for marking. He put the Purdy Station maps in the folder. He was asked by Ann Astarita to mark the Bamboo on Great Ring road open space. It is at the bend on Great Ring by Arrowhead. We will survey that next.

Computer for CC : Rob will be doing computer training on any questions on Tuesday April 17th at 11:00. At this time he will go over any questions and walk through any procedures as needed.

Conservation Easement on WWTP: It is expected that Parks and Rec will be requesting that boundary for the Dog Park be changed to include some land that is currently under the conservation easement.

Status of Halfway River fishing access: Nothing new to report. Rob did point out that there will be a larger tree clearing project at this site. We need to clear a line of sight 500 feet from 15 feet inside of our property line.

Iroquois invasive documentation: Rob will be meeting with Dave Fontaine on site in 2 ½ weeks. He will get the last 6 qtrs of information pertaining to invasives.

Education Committee: Report on Seminar, etc.: Commissioners Wilson, Cramer and Hovious all attended the seminar on Green Development for Blue Water on March 20th.

Report on Meadows Seminar: Seminar on Meadows was given on March 24th by Dan Holmes; Power Point on Barberry/Tick connection was done by Mary Wilson. About 20 people attended including 2 members of the Trumbull CC. Session was video-taped and is currently available on the town website.

Fliers about the Barberry Blitz and removal hand-outs sheets were available at the meeting.

Pole Bridge Brochure: Commissioners Hovious and Kaley will be going out with Steven Birney on April 17th at 1:00 to walk property with camera and GPS to get map made up of property. We will then be able to put in links on map. Comm Hovious sent out write up on how brochure stands. Would like comments from other Commissioners. It is expected that the property line transfer should be completed in May.

Invasives Sub-committee: Barberry Blitz, etc.: Made arrangements with Carl Samuelson at P & R to have a small number of people attend the meeting at which the propane torch method of Barberry control will be demonstrated on Wednesday April 11th. That went well. Ordered Barberry Blitz banner to be hung across Queen Street by the Middle School. Picked it up and made arrangements for it to be hung sometime this week. Delivered Barberry Blitz fliers to Donna Culbert for distribution. Marj Cramer will deliver more flier to Healthy pet to make available to public. Forwarded Barberry Blitz campaign material to members of the Ridgefield CC who have used our material and put it up on their web site, with credit to us. Hope to do more sharing of info and work products. Also sent it to Monroe CC who sent thanks. Comm Wilson took phone calls from members of the public who had questions about invasives. Five people have now requested an inspection of their property for invasives. Holly Kocet and Comm Wilson have now completed four of those inspections. Info about common invasives was given to these residents.

Al's Trail: Have to set date for invasive removal

Strategic Sub-committee: Input to POCD: Rob stated that P & Z were very impressed with the maps from NRI. There will be another opportunity for the CC to provide input.

Legislation: Federal Recreation Trails Program: Comm Wilson forwarded letter she received from Lieberman to the Commission for their review.

Earth Day April 28: Will need 3 commissioners for us to do it. Comm Wilson will be there. Commissioners Hovious and Cramer will not be there. Comm Wilson will check with the other commissioners on availability.

Victory Garden: Comm Wilson and Henderson will be doing row.

New Business: Comm Hovious would like to see the First Light/CL & P property. Commission would like information on it. Will be turned over for Open Space but will be kept as a separate trust like the class 3 watershed is. Will not be town owned.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11 P.M.

Executive Session