

Conservation Commission
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – September 11, 2012 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

Present: Commissioners Cramer, Gaudet-Wilson, Hovious, and McLeod
Staff: Rob Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning and Land and Tammy Hazen, Clerk

These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Conservation Commission

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:13 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

CORRESPONDENCE: Commissioner Wilson discussed a letter she received from the Legislative Council regarding the Charter revision. She will contact Jeff Capeci of the LC to confirm the information they need from the commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Hovious motioned to approve the minutes of August 28, 2012. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion. The Minutes were approved as amended.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Membership Openings – Commissioner Wilson said Mary Kaley submitted her letter of resignation. John Feder still needs to submit his resignation.

Staff Support – Tabled

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. Barberry Removal Project/Publicity – Commissioner Wilson said there was a nice article in The Bee on the project. She wrote a letter to various newspapers and asked the First Selectman to place information on invasives on the website. The information is to encourage people to investigate whether they have invasives in their own yard. She has heard from Dottie Evans that there has been a great deal of positive feedback regarding the high meadow and trail system. Commissioner Hovious said he has noticed where residents are working on removing invasives along the roadside or in their yard.
2. Kiosks – Commissioner Cramer said there were two Eagle Scouts interested in building the kiosks. She will be meeting with the first to respond and his Scout Master. The scout will work in conjunction with the Parks and Rec. Commission. Commissioner Hovious suggested that, for future reference, the commission work to produce a list of materials that is needed to build these kiosks. The commissioners will see what project the second Eagle Scout would be interested in working on. Commissioner Cramer will contact the scouts.

3. Committee to Integrate Documents – Commissioners Cramer and Wilson attended this meeting and said there was a great deal of discussion regarding the high meadow being kept as open space. Commissioner Cramer shared concerns over the term “land banking” that had been used and feels the areas in question should be protected in perpetuity. The commissioners will look more into the talk of a windmill being erected on top of the high meadow as well. The next meeting is Thursday September 27th at 9:00 am.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious discussed an alternative to the Land Use Agency asking for funding for personnel to work on open space (as discussed at the last meeting in regards to a budget request). He asked the commissioners for their opinion of suggesting instead there be a budget line item for funds that can be used to hire contractors to do the work on open space. The commissioners will gather information on this (a report from Dan Holmes that includes acreage, hours, etc.). The subcommittee can prepare a list of projects based on recommendations from the Yale report and suggestions from Larry Russo.

Commissioner Hovious then opened discussion regarding an upcoming public hearing for Planning & Zoning for 12 Turnberry Lane. The applicant is seeking to add 139 parking spots adjacent to Curtis Pond and close to Town-owned open space. The commissioners reviewed the map and discussed potential implications. After a thorough discussion, Commissioner Hovious motioned that the Conservation Commission will review this application and circulate comments via email and gather this information to bring forth to Planning & Zoning. Commissioner Cramer seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Education Subcommittee

1. Pole Bridge Pamphlet – Commissioner Hovious is working on the pamphlet and waiting to hear from Daisy. If she is not interested, Ms. Hazen said she can help with this. Mr. Sibley will see if Steve Birney has the pictures he took of the area. Commissioner Wilson shared concerns over finding tire tracks where a vehicle ripped through the meadow. Beer bottles were also found.
2. Barberry Banner at Edmond Town Hall – Commissioners Wilson and Cramer thanked Mr. Sibley for putting up the banner.
3. More Barberry Fliers – Mr. Sibley said that more fliers can be ordered.

Invasives Subcommittee

1. Response to Letters to Landholders – There have been little response to the letters sent out. Ms. Hazen is sending them out in groups of 25 every two weeks or so.
2. Inspection of Private Properties – Commissioner Wilson discussed calls that have come in from land owners asking about invasives.
3. Disposal of Invasives at Transfer Station – Commissioner McLeod said that she found that some invasives being placed in the incineration bin at the Transfer Station were being moved to the brush pile. Fred Hurley is helping by getting a dumpster set up specifically for invasives to be incinerated. The commissioners feel that more information should be available to the public regarding their

disposal and that signs should be placed at the transfer station informing residents of the proper disposal.

4. Bittersweet Signs – Commissioner Wilson said it's time to put up the signs at Fairfield Hills, Edmond Town Hall and the middle school. Someone from News Times will be reporting on the work that was done at Fairfield.
5. Seminar on Invasives, October 25 – Commissioner Wilson discussed the Invasive Plant Symposium being held on 10/25/12 presented by the CT Invasive Plant Working Group. The registration fee is \$45.00 if sent in before 9/21/12. Anyone interested needs to contact Tammy Hazen.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee – The subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, September 19th at 10:00 am. Commissioner Hovious completed a redline version for the commissioners' review.

NRI Subcommittee – Mr. Sibley will supply the commissioners with a hard copy of the tables that were not included in the original report.

Al's Trail – Mr. Sibley said that an Eagle Scout interested in completing the kiosk near the dog pound and Deep Brook is putting plans together for review.

TBDAC Follow-up – No updates.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Sibley said that staff has been placing copies of the maps of markings in the open space folders. CCA has been working on Bradley Lane/Great Ring connector. He said there have been questions regarding the management of invasives on open space behind 47 Pond Brook. The commissioners will walk the area.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Hovious motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:55 pm. Commissioner Cramer seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.