

**Conservation Commission
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – November 13, 2012 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

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

These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Conservation Commission

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Jenny Nowacki, a Southern University Student, was present.

CORRESPONDENCE: Commissioner Wilson received information from Anne Peters regarding a \$5,000 grant available for local projects. She will forward this information to all commissioners.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Hovious motioned to approve the minutes of October 23, 2012. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. Changes are as follows: On page 2, under Invasives Subcommittee – Letters to Landholders, in the next to the last line, change “infiltration” to “infestation”. With those changes, the minutes were approved as amended.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Membership Openings – Commissioner Wilson noted that there are still two openings.

Budget Discussion – No update

CACIWC/Rivers Alliance Seminar – The CACIWC annual meeting will be held on November 17th, 2012 in Meriden.

Meeting Schedule for 2013 – The commissioners discussed changing the days of the monthly meetings but will be discussed with the whole commission. A decision will be rendered at the December meeting.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. **Kiosks** – Commissioner Wilson said the scouts have received some funding for this work.
2. **Committee to Integrate Documents** – no update.

Curtis Pond / Turnberry Project – Commissioner Hovious said that the applicant decided to reduce the number of spaces from 139 to 105 and that the top of the ridge will not be cut down and that no trees will be cut down. Their landscaper is working on lighting that will automatically turn off at 11:00 pm. The retaining wall was also eliminated.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee

1. **Pond Brook Open Space** – The letter to Clare Harrison was mailed.
2. **Point of Rocks Property** – Mr. Sibley said there was a possible trespass into the preserve, but after researching this, he found there to be no encroachment.

3. **Possible Invasive Removal Orchard Hill, Pole Bridge, et al** – Mr. Sibley said he will contact Mr. Ekstrom to help coordinate the work and feels priority should be placed on work at the Pole Bridge Preserve.
4. **Pole Bridge Trail Work** – This was cancelled due to the storm.

Education Subcommittee

1. **Pole Bridge Pamphlet** – Ms. Hazen will complete the pamphlet when the trail map is complete.
2. **Website** – After speaking with Liz Stocker regarding the cost of their website's development, Commissioner Wilson is researching to see if a High School or WestConn student would be interested in volunteering time to develop a website for the commission.

Invasives Subcommittee

1. **Akebia Follow-up** – Commissioner Wilson discussed the Akebia found on state property (M/B/L 50-9-15) along Rte 34 near Old Mill Road. She contacted Logan Senack (State Coordinator for Invasive Plants) about Akebia and Bamboo. The Akebia found in town will be placed on a mapping system the State uses to track invasives. Mr. Senack said that Bamboo is not likely to be put on the official state invasive plants list because it does not become naturalized without cultivation. He suggested the Town create an ordinance requiring set-backs or physical barriers to prevent Bamboo from spreading into neighboring yards.
2. **Nunnawauk Meadows Report** – Commissioner Wilson will present her report to Nunnawauk this week.
3. **Disposal of Invasives at Transfer Station** – Mr. Sibley said the transfer station has been inundated with storm debris following Storm Sandy, so plans for this has been pushed back. The sign should be done by the end of the month. The dedicated bin for invasives has not yet arrived.
4. **Mile-a-Minute / Bamboo** – Mr. Sibley and Donna Ellis inspected the Weevil release site the day after the first frost. They found the plans are dying but the weevils are still robust.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee – No update

NRI Subcommittee – No update

Al's Trail – Mr. Sibley said the storms have backed up the scout projects a little but that they've been working a portion of Al's Trail from the end of Commerce Drive to Fairfield Hills. They have also cleared an area around the kiosk and will be placing a new kiosk along Deep Brook across the bridge near the dog pound.

STAFF REPORT – Mr. Sibley said the Legislative Council was cancelled, postponing the decision on open space donations and lot-line revisions. It will be brought before the council the first week of December. The goal is to have these recorded before the end of the year.

Mr. Sibley explained the scout projects (see "Al's Trail") and that Patrick Haggerty will be clearing the old road that leads to the Blue Trail in Pausussett State Forest (off Charter Ridge Road).

NEW BUSINESS – None

Commissioner McLeod motioned to adjourn at 7:49 pm. Commissioner Hovious seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen