

**Conservation Commission
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – January 22, 2013 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

Present: Marj Cramer, Bill Darrin, Mary Gaudet-Wilson, Adria Henderson and Joe Hovious;
Absent: Michele McLeod; **Staff Present:** George Benson, Director of Planning & Land Use

These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Conservation Commission

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:09 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Bill Pieragostini

CORRESPONDENCE – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Cramer motioned to approve the minutes of January 14, 2013. Commissioner Hovious seconded the motion. Commissioner Darrin and Astarita abstained. The changes are as follows: Change “John Vaughn” to “Jon Vaughn” ; under Election of Officers, change “Commissioner Henderson said it is suggested” to “Commissioner Henderson suggested”; under Monitoring of Town Commissions, change the last line from “and that he will review” to “and that Commissioner Wilson will review the Legislative Council”; then change the last sentence to read “Commissioner Hovious will review Parks and Rec.”; second page, change “John” to “Jon”; then under Committee on Fairfield Hills; last sentence, change “draft something up and email” to “draft a report and email”; The minutes were approved as amended.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Membership Appointment/Opening – Bill Darrin was introduced and welcomed as a new commissioner.

Review of Other Commissions – Commissioners discussed activities of other commissions as agreed at the January 14th meeting. Discussion of budget and Parks and Rec. response resulted in agreement to send a second copy of the October 15, 2012 budget request to George Benson. A discussion will be held with the First Selectman on how to proceed.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. **Kiosks** – Commissioner Cramer will draft a letter to the scout master complimenting Life Scout, John Vaughn, on this project.
2. **Committee on Fairfield Hills (Open Space)** – Commissioner Cramer discussed a report to the Fairfield Hills Committee on Open Space. The commission recommended that property be protected by subject to a conservation easement or restriction to be held in the name of the Conservation Commission. Commissioner Cramer will send a letter as agreed.

POCD Documents Discussion – Commissioners Wilson and Hovious discussed the review of POCD portions with the Planning & Zoning Commission. It was generally very well received. There is some work remaining to be completed and sent to Planning & Zoning.

Project at Pieragostini – The commissioners discussed the proposed activities and whether they were consistent with the conservation easement language on the property. Mr. Pieragostini discussed his

interactions with DOA and government agencies (DEEP) regarding cottontail habitat. Eastern cottontails may have been found within one quarter mile of the area.

The commissioners then discussed a draft position paper prepared after the last meeting. The commission will meet with the First Selectman before sending the letter. Commissioner Astarita motioned to approve the letter as written. Commissioner Cramer seconded. Commissioner Darrin abstained. The motion was carried unanimously.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee – No update.

Education Subcommittee

1. **Development of Website** – The commissioners discussed the website and hosting. The commissioners were asked to provide ideas and pictures.
2. **Possible Seminar** – The commissioners discussed a possible seminar with Inland Wetlands regarding function and regulations of wetlands. Awaiting reaction from IWC on topic. The group noted a Bionova wetland filter application currently before the wetlands commission.

Invasives Subcommittee

1. **Bamboo** – Commissioner Wilson reported on a possible meeting in February.
2. **Mile-a-Minute** – A presentation on MAM was discussed. It spreads exponentially and out of control quickly. Commissioner Henderson and Wilson will work on publicity.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious will send out the latest Strategic Plan for discussion at the next meeting.

POCD Subcommittee – Item tabled.

NRI Subcommittee – Item tabled.

Al's Trail – Item tabled.

STAFF REPORT / CIP – Item tabled

NEW BUSINESS – None

Commissioner Cramer motioned to adjourn at 8:55 pm. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen