

**Conservation Commission
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – February 11, 2013 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

Present: Ann Astarita, Bill Darrin, Mary Gaudet-Wilson, Adria Henderson and Joe Hovious (via speaker phone); **Absent:** Marj Cramer and Michele McLeod

These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Conservation Commission

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

CORRESPONDENCE – The commission received a P & Z referral for an application by ADARE investment subdivision - Old Bethel Road, which will be discussed under New Business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Darrin motioned to approve the minutes of January 22, 2013. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. . The changes are as follows: Ann Astarita should be added on the list of members present. On the first page under FFH OS, Item #2, second sentence, add “being” to read “*being* subject to a conservation easement”. The minutes were approved as amended.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of Other Commissions – Commissioner Astarita discussed the Inland Wetlands commission minutes. It was noted that Commissioner Henderson tracks P & Z, Commissioner Hovious tracks Parks & Rec. Commissioner Mary said the Legislative Council discussed a piece of property proposed for purchase due to tax foreclosure. She will ask Mr. Sibley about this.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. **Kiosks** – No Update.
2. **Committee on Fairfield Hills (Open Space)** – No update.

Project at Pieragostini – Commissioner Wilson said that in a conversation with Dave Grogins, Town counsel, it was stated by Atty. Grogins that the Conservation Commission has full authority to enforce conservation easements. He also said he sent a letter, dated February 5, 2013, to the Pieragostini’s clarifying that the Town did not approve their application, only that they said they could submit an application. The commissioners discussed three options of response. A hard copy of the final letter will be hand delivered to the First Selectman’s office. Commissioner Astarita motioned that the commission chose Option 2 with the caveat that they are able to revise and modify it via email after the meeting. Commissioner Darrin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Commissioner Wilson will make revisions as noted and resend to commissioners via email. The letter will then be mailed to the Pieragostinis.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee – No update.

Education Subcommittee

1. **Development of Website** – Commissioner Wilson said Alicia is working with Mr. Sibley and will be ordering Dreamweaver software. It will be a stand-alone website with a link to the Town’s website.
2. **Possible Seminar** – Commissioner Wilson discussed a possible informational seminar on wetlands. Commissioner Astarita said there is an Inland Wetlands brochure (trifold) in Land Use that could be used. Commissioners Wilson and Astarita will work together on this.

Invasives Subcommittee

Handling of Invasives at Transfer Station – There are two signs up for invasives but no container designated yet. A handout or pamphlet needs to be developed which will highlight the five top invasives in the area: Barberry, Bittersweet, Multiflora Rose, Autumn Olive, and Winged Euonymus. Mile-a-Minute will also be noted. The commissioners discussed getting the word out to residents. Proper containment and disposal of invasives were discussed. Commissioner Astarita felt the State should be contacted to see what they require regarding proper disposal and transfer of material. Commissioner Wilson will e-mail Logan Senack at DEEP (CT Invasive Plant Working Group). CT General Statutes 22a-381d was referenced.

Bamboo – No update.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious said the document is complete. The commission will look at the final document at the next meeting.

POCD Subcommittee – Commissioner Wilson will incorporate Commissioner Astarita’s comments on vegetative buffers into the draft.

NRI Subcommittee – Item tabled until April.

Al’s Trail – Commissioner Henderson is working with Dan Holmes on where trees are needed. There’s an entire area that needs to be replanted.

STAFF REPORT / Budget Update – No staff report. Commissioner Hovious is concerned whether the budget requests are being acknowledged. The items have not been included in the Parks and Rec. budget. He will speak with George Benson on this.

NEW BUSINESS – Commissioner Wilson discussed the open space portion of Public Act 490 which has not been implemented in Newtown. She will contact Chris Kelsey (Tax Assessor) on this.

P & Z Referral – The commissioners reviewed P & Z application by ADARE investments, a two-lot single family subdivision (Heather Estates) 37 Old Bethel Road, M/B/L: 2-4-39b. Depending upon the amount of snow, the commissioners will see if they can walk the site.

Commissioner Darrin motioned to adjourn at 8:35 pm. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen