

Conservation Commission
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – February 26, 2013 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

Present: Ann Astarita, Marj Cramer, Joe Hovious and Michele McLeod.

Absent: Bill Darrin, Adria Henderson and Mary Gaudet-Wilson. **Staff Present:** 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 – Scout Brandon Johnson was in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Item tabled.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

Review of Other Commissions – Commissioner Hovious discussed a presentation on a proposed trail on the Fairfield Hills property that was reflected in Parks and Rec.'s minutes of 2/12/13. He is awaiting a response to an email he was sent to Paula Burton, Mark Lurie and Scott Coleman. The minutes also discussed the application of snow mold fungicide. Commissioner Cramer will follow up on this with Amy Mangold. Commissioner Astarita reviewed the Inland Wetland minutes and noted that the Pieragostini property was discussed but that the matter is still pending.

Task List – The commission felt that this task list will be helpful to track projects, etc., and will be maintained. Ms. Hazen will work on its formatting and will forward to Commissioner Hovious for review.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS:

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. **Kiosks** – Commissioner Cramer asked for input on information that can be displayed in the kiosks. Items noted were information on the ongoing invasives project by Dan Holmes, information on other invasives, a write up of native species found in the meadow, and a map of the trails. Commissioners were encouraged to email Commissioner Cramer with additional suggestions.
2. **Committee on Fairfield Hills (Open Space)** – Commissioner Cramer discussed the Fairfield Hills Master Plan update. She submitted a list of native trees that should be included in the planting list. It was noted that most members of that committee are in favor of having the High Meadow and East Meadow designated as open space in perpetuity.

Project at Pieragostini – Item tabled.

Development of 37 Old Bethel Road – Development plans for a two lot subdivision were reviewed by the commissioners. Commissioner Astarita will ask Mr. Sibley if P & Z requires a response and if the commissioners should walk the site.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious discussed Excel spreadsheets that have been in place, including one the staff uses, one the commission uses, and one given by the Tax Assessor. He felt the information is about 90% complete but needs a methodical check. Work on researching Conservation Easements should be started. The commissioners discussed ideas of who could work on this. They will ask Commissioner Darrin if he would be interested in taking on this task.

Education Subcommittee

1. **Development of Website** – Commissioner McLeod said she and Alisha has been work on the website. She showed some graphics that Alisha sketched and created for the commission to review. This can be discussed more thoroughly when more commissioners are present.
2. **Possible Seminar/or Pamphlets** – No Update.

Invasives Subcommittee

1. **Handling of Invasives at Transfer Station** – Commissioner Astarita will research the legalities of transporting invasives. It was noted that the transfer station has posted signs but there is no bin yet.
2. **Bamboo** – No Update.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious reviewed the strategic planning document dated January 22, 2013. This should be distributed to interested parties and be placed on the new CC website. Tammy will update with a few changes and send out to the commission.

POCD Subcommittee – Commissioner Hovious reported that P & Z commissioners are happy with the commissions input. Action items will be combined. Follow-up work is needed on the NRI portion. It was noted that the 490 program has not been implemented in Newtown. This would take working with Legislative Council, Board of Selectmen and the Tax Assessor to get the Town to adopt this policy.

NRI Subcommittee – Item tabled.

Al's Trail – Item tabled.

STAFF REPORT / Budget Update – No Update.

NEW BUSINESS – Commissioner Astarita felt the commission should revisit the conservation easement policies and language so no room is left for interpretation. She would like to wait for the remainder of the commission to be present to discuss further. Commissioner Cramer felt the final conserve easement language for each P & Z application should be reviewed and approved by the Conservation Commission.

Commissioner Cramer motioned to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen