

**Conservation Commission**  
**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting – April 23, 2013 @ 7:00 pm**  
**Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

**Present:** Ann Astarita, Bill Darrin, Mary Gaudet-Wilson, and Joe Hovious, and Michele McLeod; **Absent:** Marj Cramer; **Staff Present:** Tammy Hazen, Clerk

*These Minutes are subject to the approval of the Conservation Commission*

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – None

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Ms. Wilson said the Earth Day event is scheduled for Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and that Duck Day will be held on May 25<sup>th</sup>, from 1 pm to 2:30 pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Hovious motioned to approve the minutes of April 8, 2013. Mr. Darrin seconded the motion. The changes are as follows: The date on top should show April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Under “Review of Other Commissions”, third row down, change “supports” to “support”. The minutes were approved as amended.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

Review of Other Commissions – Ms. Astarita will attend the Inland Wetlands meeting this week. Mr. Hovious discussed the Trails Committee / Parks and Rec.’s minutes. Ms. Wilson discussed Planning & Zoning’s review of the Conservation Commission’s submission to the POCD. She was concerned that they plan to reduce the content. She will call Lila Dean to see if it could be reviewed before finalized

Task List – Mr. Hovious asked for updates on the items on the task list.

Open Position – Ms. Wilson said that Adria Henderson has resigned from the commission. It was noted that she was a valuable member and will be missed.

**OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS**

Fairfield Hills Open Space

1. **Kiosks** – Ms. Wilson said there was difficulty posting items in the kiosks. Corkboard may be used.
2. **Committee on Fairfield Hills (Open Space)** – Ms. Wilson said she and Ms. Cramer reviewed the latest draft of the Fairfield Hills Master Plan update. The committee accepted all that was submitted. The zone for the high meadow will be changed as per Lila Dean.

Easements – Mr. Hovious spoke with Steve Birney in the GIS Dept who will export a list of all conservation easements into an Excel spreadsheet after he returns from his vacation. Mr. Hovious printed out some easements at the Town Clerk’s office. Commissioners Hovious and Wilson met with George Benson to discuss the commission taking part in all reviews of future conservation easements. Ms. Wilson will work with Mr. Benson to develop an easement application and sign-off / review process. *(Ms. McLeod arrived at 7:35 pm)*

The commissioners discussed Julia Wasserman’s request that the Town removes invasives from the easement on her property. It was noted that this easement does not have public access. This will need to be discussed further with Mr. Benson.

90 Hattertown Road Subdivision – Ms. Wilson attended the P & Z meeting. She reviewed the map discussing the fee in lieu of vs. a potential easement on a thin strip of land that connects the site to the location of a cell tower.

Earth Day – Ms. Wilson said that the commission will be sharing a table at the Earth Day event with the Garden Club.

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee – Mr. Hovious discussed the Open Space list (sorted by unique ID). As discussed at the previous meeting, the commissioners will review the files against Town records. The list was split between the commissioners as follows: Rows 2-55 Wilson; Rows 56-110 Darrin; Rows 111–165 Astarita; Rows 166-220 Cramer; Rows 221-275 Hovious; Rows 276-330 (possibly Ms. Hazen if she has time).

Commissioners Astarita, Wilson and Hovious walked the open space on Great Ring Road. There was a sewage odor that was coming from adjoining properties (either 54-7-23 Lot 2 or 54-7-18 Lot 1). Ms. Astarita will draft a letter to the Health District. Fences, debris, bamboo and a shed were found on open space as well. Mr. Hovious will write up the inspection report.

### Education Subcommittee

1. **Development of Website** – Ms. Wilson said that Alisha is unfamiliar with new software. The commissioners shared some concerns. Ms. Wilson will follow-up on this.
2. **Pamphlet on Wetlands** – Ms. Astarita reviewed the latest update of the wetlands pamphlet.

### Invasives Subcommittee

1. **Invasives at Transfer Station** – Ms. Wilson reviewed the updated handout on invasives.
2. **Bamboo** – Ms. Wilson said the Bamboo bill is making its way through the legislature. She forwarded information about this to The Bee for a possible article.
3. **Inspections of Private Properties** – Ms. Wilson said Holly Kocet offered to inspect properties if a resident requests an inventory of invasives for their property.

POCD Subcommittee – Item tabled.

Open Space Acquisition Subcommittee – Mr. Hovious felt this should be tabled until the OS inventory is reviewed and completed and after there's a good start on the review of the conservation easements.

AI's Trail – Ms. Wilson said Pat Barkman tentatively set a date (May 9<sup>th</sup>) to remove invasives near the manure pile. More information is forthcoming.

Commissioner Astarita motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:25 pm. Commissioner Darrin seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen