

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

**Present:** Ann Astarita, Bill Darrin, Joe Hovious and Mary Gaudet-Wilson;  
**Absent:** Marjorie Cramer; **Also Present:** Martha Wright.

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

The Public Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

**ITEMS ADDED TO THE AGENDA** – Mr. Hovious requested to add an item under Old Business, “Pole Bridge Preserve”.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Ms. Wilson received an email from Anne Peters regarding an environmental grant program. The CT Chapter of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals are accepting applications for a grant program. It offers up to \$2,000 and the deadline is October 15<sup>th</sup>. Also, CACIWC Annual Meeting on November 16, 2013.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Mr. Darrin motioned to approve the minutes of September 24, 2013. Mr. Hovious seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

**Review of Other Commissions** – Ms. Astarita noted that the Inland Wetlands Commission is having the Sherman Woods Subdivision presentation on Wednesday, 10/9.

**Task List** – Mr. Hovious and the commissioners reviewed the updated task list and made changes as needed. They discussed the parking area for Pole Bridge Preserve. Ms. Wilson will check on the Trott, Kovacs and Silvey properties. She will also follow up on the commission reviewing easements before they are filed. The Meadow Management Plan will be forwarded to Inland Wetlands for review and then to P & Z for acceptance.

**Open Position** – Ms. Wilson said that Anne Peters, Chair of the Inland Wetlands Commission, is sending a letter to The Bee regarding openings on their commission. Ms. Wilson will draft one on behalf of the Conservation Commission.

#### **OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION ITEMS**

##### **Fairfield Hills**

1. Meadows Initiative / Management Plan – The commissioners discussed the total area and acreage for the High Meadow.
2. Revised Master Plan – No update.
3. Corn Fields – No update.
4. Trails at Fairfield Hills – The commissioners will walk the high meadow area on Friday, October 11, at 10:00 am. They will meet at the Municipal Center. Ms. Astarita felt there should be a wetlands delineation of the area since a portion of it is wet.

**Conservation Easements** – Mr. Hovious provided an updated list of conversation easements that Chris Zakur has been working on. There is work now that the commissioners need to do. Mr. Hovious said the work in looking at the properties around the open space parcels is about 75% complete. In searching for Town-owned

conservation easements through the Town Clerk's database, 41 pages of information was collected. This information needs to be aligned with the work already completed. Mr. Zakur went through this list and found approximately 71 that are most likely conservation easements. The ultimate goal is to consolidate the two approaches.

**Meadow on 38-9-34 Riverside Road** – The commissioners discussed the potential ability to secure and protect this meadow.

**Pole Bridge Preserve** – Mr. Hovious said the Pole Bridge Preserve pamphlet has been drafted. The reverse side will have a map of the property showing the trails. Mr. Sibley planned to work with the GIS Department on marking the trails using the GPS system.

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

**Open Space Inventory and Maintenance Subcommittee** – It was noted that Mr. Sibley walked the Fulton property and found three stakes. The parcel needs to be remarked. The commissioners will mark Hoseye Coach / Marlin open space on October 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm. They will finish marking Leopard Drive open space on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. The list of open space inventory will be updated by Tammy Hazen. Mr. Hovious discussed combining certain parcels into one, similar to where several parcels that are considered part of "Pole Bridge Preserve" and the 10 to 15 lots that can be considered "Brook Heights". Mr. Hovious will discuss this with George Benson.

### **Education Subcommittee**

1. Development of Website – None

### **Invasives Subcommittee**

1. Invasives at Fairfield Hills (Japanese Knotweed) – Dan Holmes has cut down and sprayed the Knotweed. He will do this two more times.
2. Possible Town Task Force/Subcommittee – Ms. Wilson will check with George Benson on this.
3. Bamboo – Ms. Wilson said that Jim Gaston will be taking the information to the Board of Burgesses on Tuesday and requesting they vote to approve the legal fee regarding a legal opinion from council on implementing an ordinance as well as draft a bamboo ordinance. He will keep her updated. The commissioners discussed grandfathering, complaint procedures, and potential enforcement.
4. Mile-a-Minute at Dickinson Park – Ms. Wilson said the invasive group pulled another 13 bags of MAM and other invasives out of Dickinson Park.
5. Letters to Fallen Leaf Area Residents – No responses.

Al's Trail – Mr. Hovious said there is a tentative meeting with Mr. Gadbut on Wednesday afternoon. Mr. Sibley will be providing more information on other properties adjacent to the trail.

POCD – Mr. Hovious discussed a list of action items on the POCD. The commissioners will review this list.

**STAFF REPORT** – None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Sherman Woods Subdivision – The commissioners reviewed the maps and plans for this cluster subdivision application that will be presented to the Inland Wetlands commission. The open space and conservation easements were discussed.

Farmland Preservation – Mr. Hovious discussed a meeting with the NFA, Farmlands Trust, and others to talk about preserving farm properties on the State-owned Fairfield Hills land. Legislation passed protecting property at Southbury Training School. They were discussing doing the same for agricultural property on Fairfield Hills. The easements would protect the State property in the future in case farming ceases on those particular parcels. They are interested in also protecting the Governor’s Horse Guard.

Proposed Cell Tower in Monroe – Ms. Wilson discussed a proposal for a cell tower in Monroe forwarded to the commission. No response is necessary.

Mr. Hovious motioned to go into Executive Session at 9:30 pm. Ms. Astarita seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen