

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
Regular Meeting – October 28, 2014 @ 7:00 pm
Newtown Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT**

Present: Ann Astarita, Bill Darrin (via phone), Steven Gogliettino, James Ryan and Karlyn Sturmer (arrived during Executive Session); **Also Present:** Atty. Dave Grogins, Town Attorney; and Rob Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning and Land Use.

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Ms. Astarita called to order at 7:00 pm. It was determined to discuss the Timber Harvest Review under Action Items first as Mr. McCarthy was present.

Timber Harvest Review – Ms. Astarita contacted State Forester Larry Russo who explained that the proper procedure for open space harvesting is to hire an independent certified forester to represent the Town's interest and then write up a management plan. Once the management plan is submitted, there should be a competitive sealed bid process. Ms. Astarita then motioned that the commission follow the advice of the certified forester and hire an independent certified forester to represent the Town's interest before going forward with doing a timber harvest on open space property. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 to 1.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Ms. Astarita motioned to go into Executive Session at 7:06 pm inviting Atty. Dave Grogins and Mr. Sibley to discuss the Point o' Rocks property.

The commission exited Executive Session at 8:06 pm.

Mr. Darrin motioned that the commission approve the Point o' Rocks settlement. Mr. Gogliettino seconded the motion which passed 3 to 2.

CORRESPONDENCE – Mr. Ryan read a letter received by Trout Unlimited, Candlewood Valley Chapter (Attachment A). Mr. Sibley said the Inland Wetlands Commission has received an application with a wetlands study to be submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the Minutes of 10/6/14. Ms. Astarita seconded the motion. Ms. Sturmer abstained and the motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Review of Other Commissions – Ms. Astarita opened discussion regarding the application that was submitted by the Hubbard Foundation to the Inland Wetlands Commission. She said the Conservation Commission received a letter in the past from Atty. Grogins saying that (open space) would not be usable as a road so it would have to be accessed from a different direction. The Conservation Commission has requested that Inland Wetlands hold a public hearing on this application.

Budget – Mr. Sibley discussed the time table on the budget process and invited the commission to be part of the budget request. A \$20,000 line item will be requested in addition to the budget under the Open Space line item. The commissioners can provide input at that point if necessary.

ACTION ITEMS

Equestrian Trail Review – Astarita said Terry Hennesey would like to meet with the commissioners again to discuss other parcels. She will forward an email from another neighbor in the area who is interested in looking at potential horse trails. Mr. Sibley will work with Kyle Moore to get some open space signs posted.

Reduction of Invasive Species – Ms Astarita said CIPWG (CT Invasive Plant Working Group) sent a letter thanking the commission for the help on the Symposium booklet – Ms. Astarita sent information to them on behalf of the commission.

Conservation Education – Ms. Astarita said there was an article in the Bee asking that people do not put leaves in the lake or streams when doing fall cleanup.

Outreach – The Land Use Agency received calls from residents asking about invasives on private property. More information on invasives will be made available to the public.

Monitor Key Natural Resources – Ms. Astarita was contacted by a concerned citizen about a discharge into a tributary of Deep Brook. Steve Maguire from Land Use took samples of the water; Mr. Sibley said he understood the results showed elevated bacteria (1,200) but that everything else seemed OK. He explained that Fairfield Hills was built on an old swamp and a stream use to run from Nunnewauk to Deep Brook. They are researching the stormwater systems in the campus and locating sumps that could be vacuumed out. George Benson and Fred Hurley are reviewing old maps from 1938. More testing will be completed to determine the flow of stormwater.

STAFF REPORT – Mr. Sibley said that Newtown was awarded an open space grant for \$110,000 which will be applied towards a negative balance. .

Mr. Gogliettino motioned to adjourn at 8:45pm which was seconded by Ms. Sturmer. The motion was unanimously passed.

Respectfully Submitted by Tammy Hazen