

DRAFT

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Regular Meeting of March 24, 2015 at 7:00 pm

Meeting Room #3, Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

These Minutes are Subject to Approval by the Conversation Commission

In Attendance: Bill Darrin (Chairman), James Ryan, Thomas Philbrick,
Mark Boland, Karlyn Sturmer (arrived at 7:10pm)

Staff: Rob Sibley and Dawn Fried (Clerk)

Mr. Darrin opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Public Participation:

Mr. Richmond Jones of Southbury presented a plan for a Memorial Park for Sandy Hook dedicated to serve as a public meeting area comprised of an educational campus with workshops, museums, playgrounds and several other communal purposes. The Peace symbol would be used as a focal point and would be seen from an aerial view. The proposed area is High Meadows of Fairfield Hills. Mr. Jones left his plans for review. The Commission discussed use of the meadows and thanked Mr Jones for his presentation.

Correspondence: No new correspondence.

Approval of Minutes of 2/24/15:

Changes are as follows: 1) Under Public Participation , change “James Walsh” to “James Ryan”; 2) Under Public Participation change sentence “Verbal agreement between Newtown Conservation Commission and Cross Cut Tree and Land Management LLC (contractor) to have contractor:” to read “Approved by the Newtown Conservation Commission for Cross Cut Tree and Land Management LLC (contractor) to:” 3) Under Correspondence take out the word “and”; 4) Under Correspondence remove the sentences “Karly has a bearacratc background. She started a small Commission in her town before coming to this Commission. She likes to do gardening and her expertise is something the Commission can rely on.” Mr. Darrin motioned to approve amended minutes. All were in favor.

Administrative Items

Review of other Commissions: No new information

Budget: Rob Sibley stated “The Budget has not been approved yet but is still moving forward as a line item.”

2015 Calendar: Mr. Darrin proposed one meeting a month going forward. The first Monday meeting each month will remain on the calendar but will be cancelled. All were in favor.

Action Items

OS Parcels: Nothing to report.

Timber Harvest: Karlyn Sturmer spoke about the last CC meeting on Feb 24th. She was concerned that a vote was taken without notification in the Agenda. Bill Darrin proposed taking another vote and changing verbiage on Minutes from Feb 24th. Tom Philbrick seconded the motion. 4 to 1 in favor. Karlyn invited Mike McCarthy from Cross Cut Tree and Land Management LLC (contractor) to the meeting. Mike discussed his visit to the Open Space property (Stonebridge Trail) and the process of tree removal and specifications and values of trees. He also presented a map and an informational summary of the estimated payments from the work. The Board also discussed hiring an independent contractor.

Equestrian Trail Review: Looked on Newtown's Open Space map. Jim Ryan spoke on revisiting the properties and trails and look into alternatives.

Reduction of Invasive Species: Rob Sibley spoke. Unsure if contract for Fairfield Hills invasive removal was completed because it went through the First Selectman.

Outreach: Newtown Earthday Festival May 2, 2015. Set up at 8:00 a.m. Breakdown 5:00 p.m. at The Middle School.

Monitor Key Natural Resources: No new information

Staff Report: Rob Sibley gave an electronic visual presentation on the GIS System and highlighted the Open Space areas. He also gave a brief history of the Conservation Commission and their responsibilities to protect and enforce Open Space. Rob explained the many tools the Commission can utilize to help them make informed decisions. After the presentation Rob took the Commissioners for an office tour and showed them the CC files.

New Business: No new business.

Executive Session: James Ryan made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss "Acquisition of Open Space". Fried and Sibley asked to stay. Seconded by Thomas Philbrick . All in favor. Exited Executive Session 9:22 p.m.

Adjournment: James Ryan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m. Thomas Philbrick seconded the motion and all in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Fried