

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting of April 28, 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, Mark Boland, Karlyn Sturmer

**Staff:** Dawn Fried, Clerk

Mr. Darrin opened the meeting at 7:05 pm.

**New Business:**

**Trout Unlimited Tree Planting**

Mr. Darrin spoke about the Trout Unlimited tree planting project. He gave a brief description of the open space area at the end of Commerce Road and spoke about the American Liberty elm saplings. Ms. Sturmer questioned if the trees are native to our area and if they are resistant to disease. Ms. Sturmer would be agreeable to plant the saplings if they are a cultivar of the native elm. Ms. Sturmer and Mr. Boland found information on the internet to support their decision to approve the project. Mr. Boland motioned to grant permission to plant 25 Liberty elm saplings. Ms. Sturmer seconded. All in favor. Mr. J. Patrick Bovino of 10 Old Mill Road, Sandy Hook, representative from Trout Unlimited, arrived later in the meeting and discussed the project and answered questions.

**Evaluation of an OS Parcel 15-01:** Mr. Darrin spoke about the above property being considered for the open space program. The Commissioners looked at the maps and discussed the area. Mr. Darrin explained the purpose of the evaluation form. The Commissioners agreed to meet as a group and walk the property on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at 9:00 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes of 3/24/15:**

Changes are as follows: 1) Under **Public Participation**, in place of the word "would" add "is large enough to" 2) Under **Approval of Minutes of 2/24/15**, remove all sentences concerning Karlyn Sturmer 3) Under **2015 Calendar**, after the word "cancelled" add the sentence "Monthly meetings will continue to be held on the fourth Tuesday". 4) Under **Timber Harvest**, delete paragraph, add "Ms. Sturmer raised concerns about the vote taken at the 2/24 meeting concerning the timber harvest at Stonebridge. She said that, first of all, the timber harvest was not included in the agenda and came up only when Mike McCarthy presented his letter during public participation. She indicated that the modification to the agenda was made before the vote, so it was not legal. Secondly, she considered the February vote to allow Mr. McCarthy to mark trees for harvesting as a contradiction of the vote taken by the commission at their 10/28/14 meeting, as to a management plan. And finally, Ms. Sturmer said that

the Commission didn't have the authority to enter into any form of contract that would involve selling off town resources, in this case lumber, and that it would be the Board of Selectmen who would conduct a competitive sealed bid process and decide on a contract. Bill Darrin then proposed taking a second vote on whether the commission would allow Mr. McCarthy to mark trees at Stonebridge. Mr. Philbrick seconded the motion. During the discussion, Mr. McCarthy presented the work he had already done in marking trees and determining board footage and value. The commission then voted 4 to 1 in favor of allowing Mr. McCarthy to mark trees and then accepted his report. 5) Under **Equestrian Trail Review**, change the word "look" to "looking". 6) Under **Executive Session**, in place of the word "asked" add "were invited". Ms. Sturmer motioned to approve minutes, Mr. Darrin seconded. All in favor.

### **Administrative Items**

**2015 Calendar:** Mr. Darrin confirmed that going forward all Conservation Commission meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of every month.

### **Action Items**

**Outreach:** The Commissioners discussed the details of Newtown's Earth Day Festival on Saturday, May 2, 2015. The conservation booth will set up at 8:00 a.m. and breakdown at 5:00 p.m. at Newtown Middle School. The booth will have a "native plant" raffle, trail maps and informational brochures regarding wetlands, meadows, the Pole Bridge Preserve and invasive plants.

**Conservation Education:** Mr. Boland spoke about the Conservation website and questioned its status. The Conservation Commission started an informational website last year which needs to be re-organized and enriched. Mr. Boland and Ms. Sturmer will work on rejuvenating this website.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Boland motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Mr. Darrin seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Dawn Fried