

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of March 14, 2016 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: Jim Ryan, Mark Boland, Karlyn Sturmer, Jennifer Padilla, Cindy Joyce  
Clerk: Dawn Fried

Observer: Boy Scout, Jason Silkowski

Mr. Ryan opened the meeting at 7:07 pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR 2/8/16**

The approval of the minutes will be tabled due to the absence of Mr. Philbrick.

**COMMISSION APPOINTMENT**

The Commission welcomed the new Commissioners, Jennifer Padilla and Cindy Joyce.

There is one vacancy left on the Conservation Commission.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

The Commission discussed the benefits of inviting different groups to future CC meetings.

Candlewood Valley Trout Unlimited (CVTU). Ms. Sturmer would like to invite CVTU to a Conservation Commission (CC) meeting to discuss the status of the Deep Brook kiosk. Last year CVTU contributed materials regarding the importance of protecting Deep Brook as well as added a plexi-glass covering. Ms. Sturmer had concerns about the materials being replaced and then subsequently the kiosk taken down. Ms. Sturmer would like clarification from Mr. Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning and Land Use, regarding any information regarding the missing kiosk. Ms. Joyce mentioned that it might have been vandalized. Mr. Ryan will reach out to CVTU and extend an invitation to a CC meeting to discuss the Deep Brook kiosk as well as discuss common goals.

Newtown Bridle Lands Association. Mr. Ryan spoke about the Newtown Bridle Lands Assoc. Mr. Ryan thought it would be beneficial to include them at a future CC meeting because of their involvement in the community and to better understand their objectives of O.S properties.

Gary Sorge of Stantec. Stantec is Newtown's consultant regarding engineering and information regarding access to the High Meadow. Mr. Sorge from Stantec has agreed to meet with the CC to help clarify the impact issues of an accessway to the High Meadow area.

Larry Weaner Landscape Associates. Mr. Weaner, a meadow consultant, will also be invited to a future CC meeting as well as visit High Meadow. Mr. Weaner is an expert on meadows and will be able to advance the Commission's understanding of High Meadow. Mr. Weaner sent a proposal titled "Site Visit Proposal", dated February 16, 2016. The Commission felt the proposal was specifically related to the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial rather than focusing on the actual meadow area. Mr. Ryan would like the proposal to be restated and brought back to the CC for review. The letter was tabled until the next CC meeting.

In regards to the High Meadow, Ms. Sturmer noted that the Board of Selectmen never responded to a letter written by William Darrin, Chair of the Conservation Commission, dated July 24, 2015. The letter discussed the mowing of High Meadow and the recommendation to cease the mowing activity. Mr. Ryan will look further in to this matter.

## **REVIEW OF OTHER COMMISSIONS**

Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Commission (SHPMC) – Mr. Ryan shared the information he obtained from the SHPMC. The SHPMC is focusing on preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a specialized memorial. At this time the High Meadow is the designated area. The SHPMC is open to input from the CC and welcomes any information.

Ms. Sturmer felt that the “yes” CC vote in December in favor of the Sandy Hook Memorial hurt the High Meadow and put the CC in an uncomfortable position. Ms. Sturmer pointed out that The Bee and the Newtown Forest Association are opposed to using High Meadow. Ms. Sturmer also felt that the CC should not be providing alternate Open Space sites to the SHPMC. The Commission agreed that it was not their responsibility.

Board of Selectmen – Ms. Padilla will be reviewing the Board of Selectmen.

Planning and Zoning Commission - Ms. Joyce will be reviewing the P&Z Commission.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

O.S. Parcels

Stone Bridge Property – Mr. Jeremy Clark with Clark Forestry Services submitted an RFP titled “Forest Management Plan – Stone Bridge”, dated February 23, 2016. The Commission discussed Mr. Clark’s proposal and his visit on December 14, 2016. Mr. Clark states in his proposal that he can start work in April. The Commission will schedule a site walk of the Stone Bridge area.

Mr. Ryan reviewed the O.S. rating sheet titled “Criteria for Setting Open Space Protection Properties”. Mr. Ryan explained the rating sheet to the new Commissioners and the responsibility of the Commission.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Earth Day – Mr. Philbrick will be manning the table on Earth Day, April 23, 2016. Ms. Sturmer suggested shifting the Conservation topics from “Invasives” to “Diversity in Forests” and the “New England Cottontail”. The Commissioners will check their schedules regarding availability of coverage.

The next Conservation Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 22, 2016.

Mr. Ryan requested a motion to adjourn meeting. Ms. Sturmer so moved. Ms. Padilla seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dawn Fried, Clerk