

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on January 27, 2014
Police Station Community Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Called to order by Chairman Stanton Simm at 7:00 p.m. Commission members also in attendance were Stuart Cole, Walter Grant, and Tim Bell. Ben Baldwin arrived at 7:05 pm. Members Jim Friedlander, Sheila Lyons and Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent. Members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

2a. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals. None.

2b. Toll Brothers – Discussion of pending open space dedication for previously approved Old Mystic Estates Subdivision currently under construction by Toll Brothers. Property located at Whitehall Ave., Jerry Browne Rd., & Pequot Trail, Old Mystic. Application #PZ0360SD, SUP & GPP. Attorney Thomas Collier, representing Toll Brothers, described the history of the subdivision, its approvals and redesigns. Chairman Simm said that he believed the open space should have been dedicated before building permits were issued. Attorney Collier said that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved by the Town Attorney and filed on the land records in 2011. It said that the open space of the subdivision would be transferred to the Stonington Land Trust when the roads transfer to the town. The western portion of the subdivision has not been constructed due to the drainage problem which is the newly recognized lack of an outlet for storm water. They have permission to build 12-15 houses on the east side. New designs will exclude drainage structures from the open space. There is a working group of Larry Sullivan, the Town Engineer, Milone & McBroom (Toll Brothers' engineer) and ConnDOT that meets regularly to come to a solution. They are trying to tie the western basin into a State pipe that goes under Route 27 to the Mystic River. This would avoid additional basins in the development which would keep all water onsite.

3. Old Business

3a. Mystic River Dam Committee – Tim Bell said that the water table was low.

3b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees – Carlene Donnarummo said that street trees on Moss Street and Mayflower Avenue have been removed by CL&P. She said that this included donated Bradford pears and even untagged trees. Tim Bell asked for a map or atlas of the Commission's list of trees, available at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1jnh9nPveVQ-FpG_4dwI7lhHQud8aZCFJ1DC4oSx0ZMg/viewform.

3c. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing and Past Subdivisions. Baldwin said there were no new additions to the list and he believed that the list was being worked on. Chairman Simm said he had requested the status of Moss Park. Carlene Donnarummo said a portion of the West Vine Street School's large property is reportedly being reviewed for a possible senior housing development.

3d. Discussion of 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development – Walter Grant said the PZC will review a draft in early February. He will forward consultant Glenn Chalder's recommendations to Chairman Simm with comments to be returned in time for the 2014 POCD meeting of 2/3/2014. Town Planner Brynes is working on an open space map. Chairman Simm wishes to add to the action items re Natural Resource Inventory. Such an inventory was recommended in CACTWC's Habitat newsletter of Winter 2012 (<http://www.caciwc.org/library/habitat/Habitat%2012%20winter.pdf>). Other possible additions include: a farm commission, garden shed regulations, expand GBR-130 zone for water quality protection, eliminate or reduce use of non-infringement zone, update open space development regulation.

3e. Discussion of Updates to 2007 Open Space Plan – Items to update (3 land preservation example stories) and updated portion (parcel rating sheet) discussed.

3f. Installing signs on Town open space properties. Ben Baldwin said that Vargas Pond has been posted, 23 Bittersweet Way should have been posted by the Highway Department, and two properties did not have an appropriate tree – Liberty Park Condos on West Arch Street and the Crescent Club subdivision open space off Meadow Road and Crestwood Lane.

3g. Any Other Old Business. Ben Baldwin distributed a draft 2012 annual report, asked for input and will begin one for 2013. Chairman Simm said Town Planner Keith Brynes was working on one. Changes were suggested. Baldwin to distribute updated draft by email.

4. Open Space Parcels

4a. Discussion of parcels for preservation – Chairman Simm said that Stonington Land Trust is proceeding with the Davis Farm conservation easement purchase. Baldwin said he had been asked if the rear land east of SLT's Miner Preserve on Taugwonk Road was being acquired and Chairman Simm said that US Fish & Wildlife was reviewing the property due to the New England Cottontail rabbits that have been found there.

5. New Business

5a. Window broken. MOTION: The Conservation Commission recommends that the Police Station meeting room window be repaired (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

5b. It was noted that the position of Administrative Planner has been posted.

5c. Correspondence: brochure for Connecticut Federation of Lakes (www.ctlakes.org) distributed.

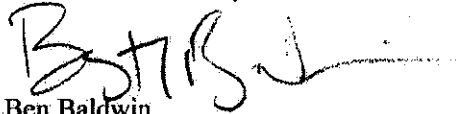
6. Review of minutes

The minutes of 10/28/2013 were approved as submitted (Stuart Cole, Tim Bell). Passed unanimously. Rick Newton asked about the Executive Session that the Commission entered into on 12/16/2013 and whether it was proper and necessary.

The minutes of 12/16/2013 were approved as amended with a notation that no votes were taken within the Executive Session (Stuart Cole, Walter Grant). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn (Grant). Made at 9:54 p.m.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin
Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved at a regular meeting on 2/24/2014.