

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on April 28, 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, Jim Friedlander, Sheila Lyons and Tim Bell. Ben Baldwin arrived at 7:10 pm. Member Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent. Members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

2a. PZ1404RA Town of Stonington PZC - Zoning Regulation Text Amendment to eliminate ZR 4.7.3.21 (the previously approved regulation allowing retail sales by Special Use Permit within the M-1 Zoning District under certain conditions). The reason for the change with discussed. MOTION: The CC recommends leaving the current Special Use Permit as is in the M-1 zone (Cole, Grant). Cole, Bell, Grant, Baldwin, and Simm in favor, Friedlander opposed and Lyons abstained.

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

MOTION: Move to **New Business** and add item **5a. Land Acquisition Funds** to the agenda (Cole, Friedlander). Passed unanimously. Chairman Simm recused himself and left the table. Discussion was held regarding the recommendation that the Town contribute \$200,000 toward the acquisition of development rights on about 168 acres of the Davis Farm. The open space account has a balance of about \$384,000 which is largely funded through the fee in-lieu of open space provision of the subdivision regulations. The Stonington Land Trust is the sole entity in the effort to acquire development rights on a 48-acre parcel on the Pawcatuck River with much archaeological significance. Development rights will also be acquired over all of a parcel of about 120 acres of forest with fields along Greenhaven Road. SLT will accept and manage the easements. The purchase price is \$2 Million and the Town's contribution would be significant at 10%. About \$800,000 has been raised to date and the transaction must occur by November 2015. Federal funding through the DOI's USFWS and the USDA's NRCS is being sought. MOTION: Recommend to the Board of Selectman to spend \$200,000 for acquisition toward the Davis Farm effort (Grant, Bell). Passed unanimously. Chairman Simm returned to the meeting.

MOTION: Move to **Old Business**, item 3a (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

3a. Mystic River Dam Committee –Bell said that the Connecticut Fund for the Environment was leading the Hyde Pond dam removal.

3b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees –

Stonington Garden Club has a new president and they wish our input on the notable trees project. Past planting programs on Moss St (maple, plane, hawthorn) and East Main Street (copper beech, saltwater-tolerant maple) were discussed. The Commission's list of trees is available at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ccc?key=0Ao1MvI3MXi3kdHZ5NkFjQ3RwZiZZaHI1N2FzOU9TZUE&usp=sharing>.

3c. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing and Past Subdivisions. Baldwin said no changes were known. The former O'Keefe property on Mistuxet Avenue was discussed.

3d. Discussion of 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development – Walter Grant said the 2nd draft of the POCD had been distributed by email and that a 3rd draft will be distributed on May 16th for feedback in June. Completion is hoped by September 30, 2014. Conceivably the State could penalize the Town if it were not accepted by July 1, 2015. Comments on the 2nd draft are welcome at this time.

3e. Discussion of Updates to 2007 Open Space Plan – The POCD subcommittee did not like the name change for the document and couldn't incorporate it into the POCD as the acquisition examples hadn't been written yet. Jim Friedlander will write about the addition to ALC's Hoffman Evergreen Preserve from the Sunrise Estates open space development subdivision, Ben Baldwin will write about SLT's Fusina conservation easement, and Chairman Simm will write about SLT's Thomas Miner Nature & Wildlife Preserve acquisition. The idea of changing the zoning of dedicated open space to a new zone was discussed. A map of open space for the POCD by the Town Planner was discussed; he will be asked to distribute it.

3f. Installing signs on Town open space properties. The Town attorney is currently reviewing the question of changing the deed recreation use of Moss Park to open space. It is expected that Moss Park

and the former Faulise land behind the Post Office will be transferred to a land trust, but that the paper streets will not.

3g. Any Other Old Business. Eastern rabbit, New England rabbit and Snowshoe hare discussed.

4. Open Space Parcels

4a. Discussion of parcels for preservation – Already sufficiently discussed.

5. New Business

MOTION: Add **5a. Expenditure of Funds** to the agenda (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

MOTION: Fund the following: Barn Is. & Spellman Park field trips \$1,900, buses \$700, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Assn \$100, Avalonia Land Conservancy \$200, Save The Bay \$150, The Nature Conservancy \$100, Connecticut Land Conservation Council \$100, CACIWC \$100, and Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center \$150 (Cole, Friedlander). Passed unanimously. Chairman Simm recused himself and left the table. **MOTION:** Allocated fund of \$500 to the Stonington Land Trust (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously. Chairman Simm returned. Walter Grant will ask the DPNC for an invoice. The total allocated is \$4,000, as follows:

Field trips	\$1,900
Buses	700
WPWA	100
ALC	200
Save The Bay	150
TNC	100
CLCC	100
CACIWC	100
DPNC	150
SLT	500
	<hr/>
	\$4,000

Sheila Lyons said that the \$1 line item for open space expenditures in the capital improvement program budget was due to her submission of a request for funding for the Walsh Property acquisition.

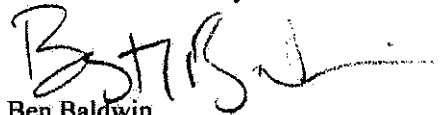
6. Review of minutes

The minutes of 3/24/2014 were approved as amended (Grant, Baldwin). Passed unanimously.

The minutes of 2/24/2014 were reviewed but not approved as they were not on the agenda.

7. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn (Lyons). Made at 10:02 p.m.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin
Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved at a regular meeting on 7/28/2014.