

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on July 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 7:05 p.m. Commission members also in attendance were Stuart Cole, Ben Baldwin, Jim Friedlander, Sheila Lyons and Tim Bell. Members Walter Grant, Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent. Members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

2a. PZ1411RA Bethany Geary c/o Nicholas Kepple - Zoning Regulation Text Amendment to add Health Clubs less than 10,000 square feet as a use allowed by Special Use Permit within the LI-130 Zoning District. The town planner had previously distributed a copy of the application via email. Attorney Nicholas F. Kepple presented application. The applicant's fitness business has outgrown the Road Church and she is a prospective tenant of Building #44 Taugwonk Spur Road (M-B-L 84-1-3). The business does not generate much traffic. The recently repealed regulation allowing retail use in the M-1 zone near limited access highways was discussed. **MOTION:** The Conservation Commission is in favor of this proposal with the proviso that the use be permitted no farther than 1,000 feet of an Interstate highway (Cole, Friedlander). Passed unanimously. The intent is to keep such activity near the main thoroughfare.

2b. Preliminary Discussion of Proposed 2 lot Subdivision of 10.9 acre property. Property located on Pequot Trail. Assessor's Map 96, Block 3, Lot 4. Property Owner, Woods Road Development, LLC. The town planner had previously distributed a copy of a letter from Michael J. Scanlon, III, LS of DiCesare Bentley Engineers/Surveyors/Planners asking about the subdivision potential of the lot and a 1987 survey of the property showing a woods road and wetlands. Mr. Scanlon distributed a schematic sketch map and asked if a fee in lieu of open space might be appropriate in this situation as there would be insufficient land for 2 lots (1 front and 1 rear) after transferring a 15% to open space. The CT General Statutes were read, but did not appear to address this issue for the fee in lieu. There is no adjacent dedicated open space, but Stony Brook and Avalonia's Fenner Preserve are about 600 ft. east. Ben Baldwin distributed a news article from The Day of 1/22/1985 describing a proposed subdivision of this land into 4 lots which noted it provides access to a rear lot 97-1-5 of Eyles. It is unknown if this is deeded access. While much is still unknown, no Conservation Commission members expressed the opinion that a 15% set aside should be required for subdivision.

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

Chairman Stanton Simm departed at 8:05 pm and Vice-Chairman Stuart Cole chaired the meeting.

3. Old Business

3a. Mystic River Dam Committee – Tim Bell said that no activity had yet occurred at the Hyde Pond Dam. Ben Baldwin said it was being coordinated by the Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE).

3b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees – Tim Bell noted trees had been posted for removal on North Main Street at a point north of Barnes Road and south of Route 1. Ben Baldwin noted one at West Vine Street School had also been posted and that he was unsure of who to contact at the Stonington Garden Club regarding the tree project now that the tour weekend is over.

3c. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing and Past Subdivisions. No known change.

Chairman Stanton Simm returned at 8:14 pm and resumed control of the meeting.

3d. Discussion of 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. It was noted that Walter Grant was at the 2014 POCD Subcommittee's meeting which was running concurrently with ours.

- A letter from Donald Woolley and Dexter Anderson of the StoneRidge Perkins Farm Committee to the 2014 POCD Subcommittee was read expressing their opposition to a text amendment submitted by the Economic Development Committee (EDC) which suggests a zone change to allow commercial use of the Perkins Farm owned by the estate of Mr. Lattizori.
- It was reported that additional wording for the POCD had been requested by Rick Newton to recommend the Town form a Municipal Land Acquisition & Development Authority, per CT General Statute 7-13p, where the Board of Selectmen would be 'leader' of the Authority with Conservation

Commission as 'partner.' He has also suggested merging the Conservation Commission with the Inlands Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. There was also discussion regarding the difference between an independent land trust versus a municipal land trust and how some State lands held as State Forest or Wildlife Management Areas have no deeded restrictions on their transfer from the State, even for development.

MOTION: Stuart Cole is to write a letter to the 2104 POCD Subcommittee regarding the Conservation Commission's opposition to an expansion of the 'Golden Triangle' and a commercial use at the Perkins Farm highway (Cole, Friedlander). Passed unanimously. The Conservation Commission will address the land trust issue at the next meeting.

3e. Discussion of Updates to 2007 Open Space Plan – None.

3f. Installing signs on Town open space properties. No new signs were posted.

3g. Any Other Old Business. None.

4. Open Space Parcels

4a. Discussion of parcels for preservation – No discussion was held.

5. New Business

5a. Sheila Lyons said that the Conservation Commission should be aware of the new Charter Commission and also noted that an Ethics Commission is to be formed.

Jim Friedlander departed at 9:00 pm.

5b. Ben Baldwin noted that some Commission members' terms had expired or were expiring shortly.

5c. Jennifer Herbst and others' concerns regarding the clearing and regrading of the Masonicare property at 45 Clara Drive and other properties was discussed. Non-disturbance areas should be noted on site plans and observed.

6. Review of draft minutes - 2/24/2014, 4/28/2014 & 5/19/2014

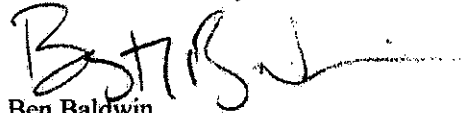
MOTION: Approve the minutes of 2/24/2014 as submitted (Stuart Cole, Tim Bell). Passed unanimously.

MOTION: Approve the minutes of 4/28/2014 as submitted (Stuart Cole, Tim Bell). Passed unanimously.

MOTION: Approve the minutes of 5/19/2014 as amended (Stuart Cole, Tim Bell). Passed unanimously

7. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn (Tim Bell). Made at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission