

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on September 24, 2007
Stonington Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Called to order by Vice Chairman Cole at 6:12 PM. Commission members also in attendance were Bell, Lyons, and Swenarton. Simm arrived at 6:14 PM and took the chair. Herbst arrived at 6:45 and Baldwin at 8:15. Dewire was absent.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:

2a. *Preliminary review of development proposal for "Rockridge Estates – Phase IV" Property located at the ends of Johnson St. and Oakwood Ave., Pawcatuck. Map 13, Block 1, Lot 12, owned by Skirig Development.* The applicant is proposing 66 units of age-restricted attached housing on the 8 buildable acres of the 26.3-acre total lot size. Dora Hill spoke out regarding deed restrictions on the parcel placed by her mother, a previous owner of the lot, which limits development on the site to single family residences. No comment at this time.

2b. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals – none received.

3. Open Space Committee

3a. *Open space plan update – discussion on parcels for preservation* - no discussion.

3b. *Discussion on parcels for preservation in Pawcatuck* – no discussion.

3c. *Discussion on possible referendum for open space bonding*- no discussion.

4. Old Business

4a. *Discussion on Open Space Plan*- no discussion.

4b. *Mystic River Dam Committee*- Chuck Thompson is interested in joining the committee. Tim Bell will contact him.

4c. *Discussion on recommended procedures for Town's acceptance of conservation easements and open space* - Chairman Simm spoke with the First Selectman re: Donahue subdivision. CC recommended easement placed on open space be granted to a land preservation entity (e.g., a land trust). J. Vincent recommended the Town accept the easement and the BOS voted in favor. The complicated language in the easement was reviewed. Motion: 1) CC will meet with the Town Planner to develop standard language for easements accepted by the Town in the future; 2) following this, CC will meet with the First Selectman, the Town Planner, and the owner of the Donahue property to discuss the possibility of redrafting the current easement on their property to be consistent with the aforementioned standard language easement template (Lyons/Bell). Approved unanimously.

4d. *Discussion on utility providers' use of herbicides on Town roads* - no discussion.

4e. *Discussion on Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees* - The Stonington Garden Club will organize a campaign to get the word out for nominations of possible trees for designation.

As Town Planner Brynes prepared to leave, Carlene Donnarummo spoke regarding the recent approval of the Aborn Smith application. The approval ignored CC recommendations for open space preservation over FILOS and also included a detention basin on an adjacent lot without any easement or agreement of that property owner. Motion: Chairman Simm will set up a meeting with BOS and up to 2 CC members to discuss potential legal action against PZC regarding their decision on the Aborn Smith application (Bell/Herbst). Approved unanimously.

4f. *Discussion on Anguilla Brook Preserve* - Stonington Land Trust has voted to accept the parcel. The terms of the transfer is still under review by the Town Attorney.

4g. *Discussion on PA-490 Open Space Preservation* - no discussion.

4h. *Discussion of forum on land preservation* - Tentatively planned for October 22. No word from Rep. Diana Urban yet.

5. New Business

5a. Sheila Lyons provided summaries and comparison of water quality reports from Westerly and Aquarion water companies and concerns were expressed as to the quality of the Mystic water supply.

5b. First Selectman Bill Brown would not give CC the authority to speak to the Town Attorney on the supermajority issue currently before PZC.

5c. Planimetric's draft Strategy Options for Route 1 and the Wequetequock area were reviewed.

6. *Review of August 27, 2007 meeting minutes*- Motion to accept (Lyons/Bell). Approved (5 in favor, 1 abstention (Swenarton)).

7. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn (Swenarton). Approved at 9:10 pm.

Submitted by John Swenarton, Acting Secretary