

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2007
Stonington Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Called to order by Chairman Simm at 6:10 PM. Commission members also in attendance were Bell, Cole, Herbst, Lyons, and Swenarton. Dewire and Baldwin were absent. Town Planner Brynes and members of the public were in attendance.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:

2a. PZ0747SD John Williams, et al - *Subdivision Application for a 3-lot re-subdivision of two parcels approximately 95.96 acres). Property located at Prentice Williams Rd., Stonington. Assessor's Map 137 Block 1 Lot 1 & Map 147 Block 2 Lot 3. Zone GBR-130.* Swenarton recused himself as an abutting property owner and sat in the audience. Family determined that a free split was taken many years ago. Subdivision meets the definition of a "Family Subdivision" and therefore is exempt from open space set-asides.

MOTION: Williams subdivision is not required to set aside land as open space. (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

2b. PZ0748POCD Town of Stonington (Route 1 Corridor Study) - *Plan of Conservation and Development Amendment for the adoption of the Route 1 Corridor Study.* CC discussed the letter that Simm read at the public workshop on December 11th. Public Hearing is scheduled for January 15, 2008.

2c. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals. Arthur Hayward of Hayward Holbrook Engineers came before the CC seeking advice on two projects. First project is a three-lot subdivision on Greenhaven Road owned by Suzanne Medeiros (3.75 acres). Applicant is seeking to create a new, third lot consisting of 1.04 acres that contains no wetlands and would prefer to pay the fee in lieu of open space rather than provide open space. The Conservation Commission is favorable to fee in lieu of open space in this situation. The second project involves Arthur Hayward's personal property and a potential acquisition adjacent to his land. Mr. Hayward inquired whether he could swap 22.5 acres of existing open space from his original property onto the newly acquired parcel. This option looks favorable since it would provide protection to Copps Brook but the legality of the swap needs to be investigated. No motions made.

MOTION: Go to 5b, New Business (Swenarton, Lyons). Passed unanimously.

5b. Terra Firma Farm (Brianne Casadei and Ethan Grimes). A discussion of Terra Firma Farm's lease agreement was held. Swenarton will draft a letter to the landowners, The Antiquarian and Landmark Society, expressing concern that TFF is being burdened financially by taxes and rental fees despite the fact that they are a non-profit entity and a good fit for the vision of how this property was to be used.

MOTION: Return to order on agenda, 3 Open Space Committee (Bell, Lyons) Passed unanimously.

3. Open Space Committee

3a. Discussion on parcels for preservation in Pawcatuck – Ben. Not discussed.

3b. Discussion on possible referendum for open space bonding. Not discussed.

4. Old Business

4a. Mystic River Dam Committee- Bell spoke with Chuck Thompson, resident on Cow Hill Road, who is very interested in the quality of the river. Thompson has been invited to join the committee and has accepted. He will be invited to a meeting when Gephardt of DEP attends.

4b. Discussion on recommended procedures for Town's acceptance of conservation easements and open space - no discussion.

4c. Discussion on Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees – Bell reported that Kate Love of the Stonington Garden Club reports no progress in what seems like "a huge undertaking", but will proceed with school contacts. First Selectman Haberek is interested in the Pawcatuck Streetscape Project and the preservation of planted trees. He would like a member of the CC to be involved with assessing the donated trees' condition. Bell volunteered to tell Haberek of his interest in doing this.

4d. Discussion on Anguilla Brook Preserve –Town Attorney is reviewing the ability to transfer the property.

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

4f. Discussion on Open Space Forum and Updates. Previously covered.

5. New Business

5a. *Review of Open Space Development Regulations* – Will be discussed at next meeting.

5b. Michael (Mik) Morales of Sterling Property Group addressed the Conservation Commission. A few years back, he represented a number of Wequetequock Cove property owners who entered into sales agreements with Tarragon Corp that never materialized. He suggested that the Conservation Commission and the town seriously consider purchasing one or both marinas on the cove (Coveside Marina, which is 9.5 acres and Cove Ledge Marina, 4.5 acres). He is willing to work with the Conservation Commission to make this happen since the waterfront property has a lot to offer the residents of Stonington.

6. *Review of November 26, 2007 meeting minutes*- Motion to accept as modified (Swenarton, Bell). Passed unanimously.

7. *Adjournment* - Motion to adjourn (Swenarton). Approved at 8:50 pm.

Submitted by Jennifer Herbst, Acting Secretary

Approved at a special meeting of the Commission on 1/28/2008.