

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on October 27, 2008
Stonington Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Called to order by Chairman Simm at 6:13 p.m. Commission members also in attendance were Bell, Baldwin, Herbst, Cole and Lyons. Swenarton and Dewire were absent. Town Planner Brynes and members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:

2a. PZ0825RA Town of Stonington (PZC) - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to Article VII to create regulations for Alternative Energy Systems: Section 7.23 (Renewable Energy Systems) and Subsection 7.23.1 (Small Wind Energy Systems). Brynes distributed "Proposed Amendment to Zoning Regulations – Renewable Energy Systems (Section 7.23)" dated 10/24/2008 for review. Residential and commercial use discussed, including bird-kill issue. MOTION: The Conservation Commission supports the amendment, but there should be no specific limitation on number of turbines (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

2b. PZ0826RA & ZC Town of Stonington (PZC) - Zoning Regulations Text & Map Amendments to establish a "Downtown Pawcatuck Parking Overlay District," modifications to existing Sections 7.10.2.3 (Parking Reductions), 7.10.2.4 (Dedicated Off-Site Parking), 7.10.2.5 (Shared On-Site Parking), and 7.10.4 (Parking Space Requirements); deletion of Section 7.10.2.6 (Agreements) to be replaced with new 7.10.2.6 (Residential Parking Agreements); and addition of new Section 7.10.8 (Downtown Pawcatuck Parking Overlay District). MOTION: The Conservation Commission supports the amendment which will aid in the redevelopment of downtown Pawcatuck and help preserve outlying areas (Baldwin, Herbst). Passed unanimously.

MOTION: Move to item 5a New Business: Discussion of potential workshop on the future of Perkins Farm Property (Bell, Baldwin). Passed unanimously.

5. New Business

5a. Discussion of potential workshop on the future of Perkins Farm Property. Chairman Simm proposed inviting the POCD Implementation Committee and Conservation Commission members discuss what the intent was regarding the transitional zone (described on pages 6-8 and 9-13 of the 2004 POCD) on the western portion of the Perkins Farm.

Lyons requested that item **5c, Condolences to two members who have lost their wives recently**, be added to the agenda and departed temporarily. MOTION: Move to item 2c (Baldwin, Bell). Passed unanimously.

2c. PZ0829SD Charles & Michelle Lekites - Subdivision Application for a 4-lot re-subdivision of a 25.8± acre parcel. Property located off New London Turnpike, Stonington, CT. Assessor's Map 138, Block 3, Lot 7. Zone GBR-130. This is a new application, but is unchanged from one reviewed on November 26, 2007. MOTION: Our comments are the same: Fee in lieu of open space is supported with the stipulation that a conservation easement be placed on the upland review areas and wetlands (Baldwin, Bell). Passed unanimously.

2d. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals. Chairman Simm reported that the Meehan Subdivision (aka Clairemont Estates) application with the road modifications will soon be heard by the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. MOTION: The redesign of the through-road to two cul-de-sacs connected by a 12-foot wide fire lane instead of a 30-foot wide road will reduce the impact on the open space and eliminate the need for a detention basin (Bell, Cole). Passed unanimously.

3. Open Space Subcommittee

3a. Discussion on parcels for preservation in Pawcatuck. Negotiations are underway for 18 acres in Pawcatuck to be given to the Stonington Land Trust. Walsh property is back on the market.

4. Old Business

4a. Mystic River Dam Committee. Bell inspected dam; meeting should be held.

4b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees. Garden Club starting up project again.

4c. Discussion of Anguilla Brook Preserve Transfer. Transfer should occur within a few weeks. Chairman Simm intends to walk the land. Its access point is located between 95 and 105 North Anguilla Road.

4d. Discussion of Waivers In Land Use Regulations. Not discussed.

4e. Discussion of Updates to Plan of Conservation and Development. Saved for discussion after Lyons' return.

4f. Discussion of HI-60 Zoning Regulations. MOTION: Chairman Simm to write a letter to the PZC requesting the following regulation amendments that would apply to lots of a minimum of 5 acres within the HI-60 zone: the 20-foot bufferyard (4.9.4.11) should be increased to 50 feet; the 25-foot front, side and rear setbacks increased to 100 feet. The side and rear setbacks (Bulk Requirements at 5.2.1) should be increased from 25 to 100 feet where the property abuts a residential use. This would not affect buffers or setbacks between commercial uses (Herbst, Bell). Passed unanimously.

4g. Discussion of Alternative Energy Regulations and Public Information and Participation. Discussed under item 2a.

4h. Discussion of Revisions to Neighborhood Development District (NDD) Zoning Regulations. Chairman Simm reported that Director of Planning Haase requested changes to the draft letter including a request for an immediate moratorium on NDD applications and the elimination or drastic reduction in the areas where the NDD could be used. MOTION: Chairman Simm to write the letter (Bell, Cole). Passed unanimously.

4i. Discussion of Possible Capital Improvement Program Requests. To be discussed for next year.

5. New Business

5a. Discussion of potential workshop on the future of Perkins Farm Property. Chairman Simm expects a new development application to be submitted. Public workshop proposed for Mystic Middle School to include the Conservation Commission, POCDIC, interested residents of StoneRidge and the public. The special Conservation Commission meeting will include clarification of the POCD's "transition zone." MOTION: Chairman Simm to arrange the meeting (Bell, Herbst). Passed unanimously.

5b. Discussion of policies to provide zoning relief for homeowners with pre-existing, non-conforming properties. A Homeowner's Bill of Rights to eliminate the Catch 22s brought about by the Poirier Act was discussed.

Lyons returned. MOTION: Return to item 4e, *Discussion of Updates to Plan of Conservation and Development* (Baldwin, Herbst). Passed unanimously. Lyons said that no meeting was held.

5c. Condolences to two members who have lost their wives recently. Chairman Simm offered his condolences on behalf of the Conservation Commission to Stuart Cole on the passing of his wife Melinda Plourde-Cole on September 17th and to Bob Dewire on the passing of his wife May Jean Dewire on October 25th. MOTION: Make two donations of \$100 to the Hospice of Southern Connecticut in memory of Melinda Plourde-Cole and May Jean Dewire (Lyons, Bell). Passed unanimously.

6. Review of September 22, 2008 draft minutes - Motion to approve as amended (Bell, Herbst). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn (Bell). Approved at 9:14 p.m.

Submitted by Ben Baldwin, Secretary

Approved at a regular meeting of the Conservation Commission held November 24, 2008.