

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on May 23, 2011
Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by Chairman Stanton Simm. In attendance were Walter Grant, Tim Bell, Sheila Lyons and Ben Baldwin. Members of the public were present. Absent were Stuart Cole, alternate Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

2a. PZ1115RA TOS Conservation Commission - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to Section 3.1.4 Residential GBR-130, RC-120 Zones Buffer Requirements & Section 5.1.1 Residential Zone Bulk Requirements. Changes to 100-foot non-infringement area & side yard setback (GBR-130 only).

Chairman Simm described the proposed amendment which returns sideyard setback to that of the RR-80 zone (from 75 feet each to 100-feet combined, 25 feet minimum). Due to the Poirier Act undeveloped subdivided lots use the old setbacks while developed subdivided lots use the updated zone setback, often creating a hardship. The elimination of the 100-foot non-infringement zone from the zoning regulations will allow the IWWC to continue to regulate this 'buffer' area. The process for the Conservation Commission to apply or recommend the RA change to the PZC has been referred to the State Attorney General.

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

3. Open Space Parcels

3a. Discussion of parcels for preservation. The waterfront Crowley 2 acquisition is expected to close in June. The Conservation Commission, for the Town, contributed \$100,000 from the open space acquisition fund. A balance of about \$275,000 remains in the account. The Toll Brothers open space will not be dedicated until after the sale of lots begins and will be transferred at the same time as the constructed road (now called Nautilus Way in the Old Mystic Estates at Stonington subdivision). Baldwin described his concern that open space parcels have been transferred to private parties. One is 185 Cove Road that went from the Kidd Way developer to a nearby homeowner and the other was a small lot between the Mystic River and Bay Street that Mystic Seaport Museum sold to nearby homeowners. A 'private' sign now faces the Bay Street parklet adjacent to the Isham Street Boat launch. Baldwin also mentioned that Director of Public Works Joe Bragaw is working with residents of River Road to replace the posts along the road with steel barriers. The town has a concern for motorist's safety while preserving scenic views.

4. Old Business

4a. Mystic River Dam Committee. Bell reported open ladders at Whitford Brook/Hyde Pond and at Vargas Pond, but no fish observed.

4b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees. Chairman Simm said that he had some nominees and suggested that funds could be raised for town-wide tree care. Baldwin asked about replanting on North Main Street and Simm said that a committee of residents was coordinating that effort. Lyons said that she felt the removal of trees had had only a slight visual effect along the road due, in part, to trees on private land outside the stonewalls. Baldwin stated that he feels trees should be replanted along the road in front of the walls, within the right of way. He also said that the Town should go after insurance money to repair roadways and walls and replace trees damaged in accidents.

4c. Discussion of Alternative Energy Regulations. The Wind Reg application was reviewed and changes were made to the draft of 4/12/2011. Resident Julia Roberts expressed an interest in getting the regulation amendment submitted to PZC. She will review the document and investigate submitting it as a private individual to expedite the process.

4d. Discussion of Progress on Plan of Conservation and Development's Open Space Plan. Lyons said the POCD Implementation Committee has lost members and has not met and now lacks a quorum. There are three members left on a potential five member Commission. Baldwin recommended reading about Open Space Plans in the winter 2011 copy of *The Habitat*, continued in the spring issue.

4e. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing Subdivisions. The town's process needs oversight as open space is just shown on too many subdivision plans and then never transferred or dedicated (discussed under 3a as well).

4f. Discussion of Retention of Approved Building Envelopes on Existing Properties. Not discussed.

5. New Business

5a. Discussion of Encumbrance of Funds for FY 2010-2011 Budget. Chairman Simm proposed the following encumbrances for the end of the fiscal year (June 30th, 2011):

\$75	Connecticut College Arboretum
\$100	Connecticut Land Conservation Council
\$100	The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter
\$200	Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
\$200	Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, for programs
\$100	Avalonia Land Conservancy
\$500	Stonington Land Trust
\$75	Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions
\$1,900	Naturescapes, student educational fieldtrips
\$725	Buses, student educational fieldtrips
<u>\$3,975</u>	Total

Chairman Simm wished to add the Arboretum in return for the services received by the town in recent years from Glenn Dreyer, its director. MOTION: To encumber the funds, with any excess funds to be returned to the Town (Lyons, Bell). Passed unanimously.

5b. PZ1112SD & SUP Richard C. Panciera Remainder Trust II – Eight-lot Resubdivision and Special Use Permit applications for the development of 68 attached-housing units and 7 single-family residences. Property located at Mary Hall & Greenhaven Roads, Pawcatuck, CT. Assessor's Map 7, Block 1, Lot 44. Zones RA-20, RM-20, & RR-80. Lyons stated that nearby residents had expressed concern to her that blasting will be conducted on this property, and in bringing water to it, which might affect their wells. Concern was also expressed about the open space dedication process with the Town serving as an intermediary holder before it is transferred to a land trust, possibly the Stonington Land Trust. Lyons showed special concern about large undeveloped acreage not part of the official 9.2-acre open space acreage, and its "maybe" open space status.

5c. Lyons said that Peg Moran would like to make a presentation to the Conservation Commission about domestic-scale agriculture in Town.

5d. Correspondence.

- Spring 2011 issue of *The Habitat*.
- Notice from CT DEP OLISP application #201101961-MG, a dock at 104 Cove Road.
- Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association renewal form.

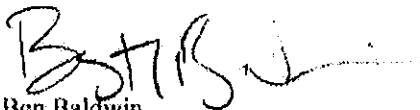
6. Review of May 2, 2011 draft minutes

MOTION: That the minutes be approved as presented (Bell, Grant). Passed unanimously.

Executive session. No members of the public were present. MOTION: That the Commission go into executive session for discussion of possible acquisition of open space under agenda item 3a, *Discussion of parcels for preservation* (Baldwin, Bell). Passed unanimously. The Commission discussed the possible acquisition of a property for open space. The Commission exited from executive session. MOTION: That the acquisition be investigated further with the town acting as a contributor with other government agencies and private contributors taking the lead (Baldwin, Bell). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment. Bell made a motion to adjourn at 11:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin
Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved by the Commission on June 27, 2011