

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission  
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on September 26, 2011  
Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

**1. Call to order:** Vice Chairman Stuart Cole called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. In attendance were Ben Baldwin, Tim Bell, Sheila Lyons. Chairman Stanton Simm arrived at 7:11 pm and Walter Grant arrived at 7:32 pm. Absent were Jim Friedlander, Bob Dewire, and Town Planner Keith Brynes. Also present were members of the public Rick Newton of Avalonia Land Conservancy and Carlene Donnarummo.

**2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:**

**2a. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals.** None.

**PZ1121RA Julia Roberts - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment for Small Wind Energy Systems.** Add to Section 1.2 Definitions and add new Section 7.22 Renewable Energy Systems, 7.22.1 Small Wind Energy Systems. Chairman Simm that the PZC had proposed changes, most notably limiting use of one device per residential lot, two within commercial areas. He forwarded these changes to members by email and said that these SWES tend to cost from \$40,000 to \$60,000, installed.

**Review of Proposed Conservation Easement for PZ0349SD Derek S. Tyrseck - Approved two-lot subdivision.** Property located at 266 Cove Road, Stonington. Assessor's Map 132, Block 2, Lot 3. Zone RC-120. Baldwin asked the status of this application. He gave Cole a copy of a draft conservation easement presented on the Town of Haddam's website and said he would forward it to Town Planner Brynes.

**3. Open Space Parcels**

**3a. Discussion of parcels for preservation.** Bell said he had spoken with Eva Franchi and that she is not ready to discuss preservation of the 205-acre estate's open space. Rick Newton said that the Mystic Seaport Museum's parcels on Hewitt Road had been transferred to Avalonia and would probably be dedicated as open space. He said the Museum has sold or is trying to sell properties extraneous to its mission. Chairman Simm said that the Stonington Land Trust is hoping to close on the 18-acres adjacent to its Anguilla Brook Preserve on North Anguilla Road from the Carl Grande Estate. Rick Newton noted some large properties listed for sale in town: The Meader property on Route 184 and Lantern Hill Road, and a 105-acre lot west of the reservoir. Lyons asked if the Pfizer Farm was still on the market and whether the neighborhood's groundwater had been contaminated by activities on the property. Grant arrived.

**4. Old Business**

**4a. Mystic River Dam Committee.** Bell said that a group will walk the area of the dam in October. It was noted that the name of the committee should be changed as the watercourse is known as Whitford Brook north of Haley Brook.

**4b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees.** Baldwin said that we need more nominees as he has about two dozen listed. Simm said that Joe Bragaw, Director of DPW, has asked for a copy of the list. Cole said that the result of Tropical Storm Irene was mild and that Stonington hasn't experienced a high wind event in decades, that trees have grown very high and are often located in fragmented residential subdivisions where it is uneconomical for foresters to harvest them and homeowners often cannot afford to take them down. Baldwin noted that many of the Town-planted maples at the north end of North Main Street dating from the 1980s are in poor condition. Simm said that one is dead and the former tree warden Chris Duncklee had practiced timber stand improvement by clearing around large trees in Fenner Woods.

**4c. Discussion of Progress on Plan of Conservation and Development's Open Space Plan.** Lyons said that Kate Robinson is chair, but that they haven't met recently. The next POCD will be done inexpensively and will probably use the Open Space Plan that was approved in 2007. She reminded members to review the POCD and bring suggestions for changes to the next meeting.

**4d. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing Subdivisions.** Rick Newton said that Avalonia would be accepting the Mystic Hill subdivision open space parcel on Mistuxet Avenue from Ronald O'Keefe. It was noted that developers have been allowed to sell lots before the open space has been transferred and accepted.

**4e. Other Business.** The historic site of an execution [of Narragansett chief Canonchet in 1676] is at what is now the Walsh property. Simm said that the Davis Farm has been found to contain the site of a Pequot encampment of during the period after the 1637 Mystic Massacre and the establishment of the reservation. Thomas Stanton, an interpreter, went with Mason to Southport and was able to return with ±150Pequots to Osbrook Point.

## **5. New Business**

**5a. Report on recent Planning & Zoning Commission meetings (Sheila Lyons)** Lyons attended about 10 hours of hearings over two nights for **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.** Among her and other's concerns were the effect of blasting on neighboring wells, some of which are shallow, a berm or dam for a water detention basin, the cutting of trees throughout the lot and along the frontage or the rerouting of the driveway to be adjacent to a neighboring property owner in order to avoid a town-managed roadside tree. Lyons said that there was some question as to whether rock-crushing onsite is allowed in the residential zone and discussion about the intended nature of the Trust, which is said to fund charities.

**5b.** Chairman Simm noted that the recent news of linking additional Irene-related FEMA expenditures to cuts in alternative energy research funding had brought to light development of an oil find which has not been covered by most media. He said that a Saudi-sized deposit in North Dakota, Colorado and Wyoming are being developed using fracking while US use is declining and that the US may become a net exporter.

**5c.** Baldwin said that the 2012 meeting schedule needs to be set. Meetings will continue to be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month with exception of May when it will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday and in December when there will be no meeting. A meeting will be scheduled for early January 2013.

### **5d. Correspondence.**


- Fall 2011 *Avalonia Trails* newsletter of Avalonia Land Conservancy
- Summer 2011 *Watershed* newsletter of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
- *ECCD Outlook* newsletter
- DEEP Permit 201103014-MG, 97 River Road, Thavenet, for a new dock
- NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) letter

## **6. Review of August 22, 2011 draft minutes**

MOTION: That the minutes be accepted as amended (Lyons, Bell). Passed unanimously.

**7. Adjournment.** Baldwin made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved by the Commission on 10/24/2011.