

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on November 28, 2011
Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Chairman Stanton Simm called the meeting to order at 7:14 pm. In attendance were Stuart Cole, Ben Baldwin, Tim Bell, and Walter Grant. Jim Friedlander arrived at 7:30 pm. Sheila Lyons and Bob Dewire were absent. Town Planner Keith Brynes and members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:

2a. PZ1131SD & CAM Clara M. Coogan Trust - *Subdivision and Coastal Area Management Review applications for a 2-lot subdivision. Property located at 162 Greenmanville Ave., Mystic. Assessor's Map 172 Block 2 Lot 5. Parcels included as part of proposed Open Space are Assessor's Map 163 Block 1 Lots 5A & 9. Zones RM-15, RA-20, & RA-40.* Dick Strouse, land surveyor and engineer with CME Associates, showed the subdivision plan for the Coogan Farm dated 12/11/2011. 11 acres in the southeast corner are proposed for the open space set aside. 18-acre Lot 1 is proposed for development on a hilltop off Clara Drive. 34.14-acre Lot 2 on the west with frontages on Greenmanville Avenue is not proposed for development at this time and would contain the historic foundation or 'folly.' The proposed 11-acre open space parcel is subject to an easement to CL&P for transmission lines that run down a valley from the Mystic Hilton to the east of the proposed hilltop development site to the 10-acre Mystic substation at 148 Greenmanville Road. The open space lot would be subject to an easement for a storm drainage detention basin that would extend onto 47,150 sq. ft. (1.08 acres) of the lot from the 18-acre development lot to the north. It would also be subject to a sewer easement from the 18-acre development site to Pleasant Street as the Seaport Heights neighborhood sewer has a higher capacity than Clara Drive's. Strouse said that the Coogan Trust has an agreement to purchase the 0.45-acre Cocco III, LLC lot (163-1-9), connecting it to the intersection of Pleasant Street, Schooner Drive and Clipper Drive. The Cocco lot is a stub for an extension of Clipper Drive onto the Coogan property, but will be used for public trail access to the open space. Strouse said that the lot layout was designed before it was realized that the detention basin would have to extend into the open space lot and that the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center or The Denison Society would hold the open space. It was noted that the Denison Society's adjacent Morgan Farm may not be formally dedicated open space. A dirt road reportedly runs under the high tension transmission lines on the proposed open space lot and a number of trails connect the adjacent parcels, but the subject property is currently fenced off and gated due to cattle currently occupying the property. Rick Newton of Avalonia Land Conservancy said that the POCD proposes preserving 30% of the town as open space which indicates a rate of 550 acres per year and that losing the Coogan Farm as a potential open space property will make this goal more difficult to obtain. Simm said that this goal may not be reasonable and that the town missed out on bargain priced acquisitions in the past including Quanauck Golf Course in 1972, Elmridge Golf Course in 1989 and Bishop's Cove.

Friedlander arrived at 7:30 pm. Baldwin recused himself as one of the applicants might be client.

MOTION: The open space and subdivision plan is acceptable as shown. The easement area as outlined in the open space plan of 12/11/2011 should be shown as part of Lot 2 depending on whomever accepts it, but there is sufficient acreage either way (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously. Baldwin did not vote.

2b. PZ1132SUP & CAM Clara M. Coogan Trust – *Special Use Permit & Coastal Area Management Review applications for phased development of a 245-unit Congregate Living Facility on 18.02 acres to be created through subdivision of a ±52.07 acre parcel. Phase 1 proposes 125 units and Phase 2 proposes 120 units. Property located at 162 Greenmanville Ave., Mystic. Assessor's Map 172 Block 2 Lot 5. Zones RM-15 & RA-40.* Baldwin recused himself and stepped down. Friedlander acted as secretary. Joseph Mastronunzio of BROM Builders presented slides showing the proposed development. Phase I would consist of a 95-unit assisted living and a 43-unit acute memory care facility in attached buildings of 1 and 2 stories. Phase II consists of the balance of the 245 units as market rate monthly rentals in attached buildings of 3 stories. Archeologist Dr. Sarah Holmes said that 90 test pits were studied and that nothing significant was found. Carlene Donnarummo was concerned that there might not be sufficient lot recreation area. Mastronunzio said that lawns and courtyards would be sufficient at 3.6 acres.

MOTION: The Conservation Commission has no issues with the proposed facility (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously. Baldwin returned to the meeting and resumed as secretary.

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

3. Open Space Parcels

3a. Discussion of parcels for preservation.

Chairman Simm said that the Stonington Land Trust should acquire the Grande property, Assessor's Map 39-1-2C and 39-1-2D, adjacent to its Anguilla Brook Preserve. Simm said the Conservation Commission, Avalonia Land Conservancy and Stonington Land Trust should work together on creating a priority list of properties and asked Town Planner Brynes to print three large format town parcel maps for this purpose. Parcels discussed for dedication as open space included:

- 770 Pequot Trail, land with a bulldozer for sale adjacent to Exit 91 which might itself be for sale and abuts the Avalonia Land Conservancy Fennerswood Preserve's O'Neill Tract. This preserve contains part of a marsh on Stony Brook.
- The Watsky Property (830 Stonington Road, 57-2-11) which will be walked by the Commission at a date to be scheduled with the owner next spring.
- Properties on both sides of South Anguilla Road at Pequot Trail.
- ALC's acquisition of the Birdland Tract addition to the Anguilla Brook Preserve, the 15.2-acre open space set-aside for the Lindsay Lane subdivision off Greenhaven Road with the trolley line trail (35-2-3).
- The open field on the west side of North Main Street between Route 1 and ALC's Paffard Woods Preserve and Quana Duck Cove. The Paffard/Anderson family, the owners, has reportedly expressed an interest to retain this property (99-2-4A) opposite Stone Acres at this time.
- Myles Meader's property at Routes 201 & 184. Jim Friedlander offered to contact Mr. Meader (Believed to be 56.5-acre 145-1-5 of HGM, LLC).

4. Old Business

4a. Mystic River Dam Committee. Bell reported that he will be walking the Saddle Rock dam in Wequetequock with the Taylors, the owners. A meeting on the Hyde Pond/Whitford Brook dam is planned for spring.

4b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees. Baldwin said that he needed nominees.

4c. Discussion of Progress on Plan of Conservation and Development's Open Space Plan. Town Planner Brynes said that the PZC was forming a steering committee. Baldwin said that he had read in the Selectman's minutes that letters were being received from those interested in serving on the committee. Baldwin said that all members should come up with a list of the top items for the 2014 POCD, as suggested by Sheila Lyons. One of his suggestions was to allow the State to hold open space dedications.

4d. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing Subdivisions. Brynes and Baldwin said there was nothing new. Chairman Simm said that he had met with the former owner of the Grandview Farm open space and had received a check to pay off the back taxes. He said that they would be walking the property to observe and discuss other items needing attention before the Stonington Land Trust can fully accept the parcel.

4e. Any Other Old Business. None.

5. New Business

5a. Discussion of Nature Conservancy's January 2012 Coastal Resilience Workshop. Town Planner Brynes distributed a handout and said that the TNC was looking for attendees to its "Eastern Connecticut Climate Risk Assessment Workshop" at Waterford Town Hall on 1/11/2012 from 9 am to 3 pm and for commissioners to complete an online survey. Baldwin said that he may be able to attend. Brynes said that they may have a certain session for those unable to attend all day.

5b. Report on 2011 CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions Annual Meeting. Walter Grant distributed a handout from a workshop at the recent CACIWC meeting, "Rainfall as a Resource: A Resident's Guide to Low Impact Development In Connecticut." He suggested the we google Horsley Witten Group, Inc. and look for their Low Impact Development (LID) PowerPoint presentation on the lower left (<http://www.horsleywitten.com/presentations.html?reloaded=true>).

5c. Correspondence.


- *Connecticut Wildlife* magazine
- *Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation* newsletter for Fred Burdick, Town Historian
- *Letter from FEMA to First Selectman Haberek* re: updated preliminary DFIRMs (Digital Flood Ins Rate Maps) and updated preliminary Flood Insurance Study report for coastal area.
- *Rhode Island Coastal Resource Management Council public notices* re: 35-foot dock proposed for Potter Cove off the Pawcatuck Rive at 7 Wapan Road, Westerly and along the Weekapaug Breachway.
- *CT DEEP Inland Water Resources Division – Notice of Dam Safety Permit application DS-201105083* re: removal of the Rutan Dam on Lane Way coordinated by Avalonia.

6. Review of October 24, 2011 draft minutes

MOTION: That the minutes be accepted as distributed (Bell, Grant). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment. Bell made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin
Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved at a regular meeting on 2/27/2012.