

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on March 26, 2012
Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Vice Chairman Stuart Cole called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm. In attendance were Jim Friedlander, Ben Baldwin, Tim Bell, and Walter Grant. Chairman Stanton Simm arrived at 7:12 pm. Members Sheila Lyons, Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:

2a. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals. None beyond items 2b & 2c. Item 2c was reviewed because Arthur Hayward of the applicant for item 2b had not arrived.

2c. PZ1209RA Town of Stonington PZC - Regulation amendment to allow "temporary drive-in events" by Special Use Permit, in suitable locations within the TC-80 Zone. Additions to ZR Section 4.5.3 Tourist Commercial (TC-80) Uses Allowed by Special Permits: Section 4.5.3.24 & 4.5.3.34; and Section 5.2.2 Commercial & Industrial Zones (Use Chart). The commission discussed the regulation amendment, noting that the PZC had granted permission for a temporary drive-in to Mystic Aquarium for the upcoming season. It was stated that the most important criteria should be buffers and not the number of parking spaces.

MOTION: We recommend decreasing the number of parking spaces required by half or more, an increase in the buffer to 200 feet, and the inclusion of other commercial and industrial zones beside TC-80. We do not see why the number of parking spaces should be a criterion. The screen and speakers should face away from residential properties (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

2b. PZ1207SD & GPP Cops Brook Property, LLC - Re-subdivision and Groundwater Protection Permit applications for a 2-lot subdivision of a 25.56± acre parcel. Property located at 445 New London Turnpike, Stonington. Assessor's Map 117 Block 1 Lot 1C. Zone RR-80. The applicant was not present. A plan of the 2006 subdivision was reviewed and members wondered who owns the subdivision's open space and who holds the open space easement. **MOTION:** Before the resubdivision is approved the fee ownership of the open space and the ownership of the open space easement must be resolved. They cannot be held by the same entity and one or both should be a land conservation organization (Grant, Cole). Passed unanimously.

3. Open Space Parcels

3a. Discussion of parcels for preservation.

Rick Newton asked what "Pawcatuck family land trust" property was proposed for affordable senior housing as was recently reported in the news.

4. Old Business

4a. Mystic River Dam Committee. Bell reported low stream flow on Whitford Brook at Route 184. It was noted that we are entering a drought.

4b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees. Not discussed.

4c. Discussion of Progress on Plan of Conservation and Development's Open Space Plan. Walter Grant said that he had applied for the 2014 POCD steering committee and that interviews would be held by the PZC on May 1st and 15th. Chairman Simm said that Sheila Lyons would continue to participate in the 2004 POCD implementation committee.

4d. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing Subdivisions. Baldwin said he had forwarded the Town of Mansfield's "Planning, Acquisition, and Management Guidelines for Mansfield Open Space, Park, Recreation, Agricultural Properties and Conservation Easements" to Town Planner Keith Brynes with the idea that it could be adapted for Stonington. It was noted that the subdivision reviewed tonight appears to be another case of where the open space set-aside has not be transferred.

4e. Any Other Old Business. Walter Grant reported that he attended the 2012 CT Land Conservation Conference on Saturday and felt that it was oriented toward land trusts.

5. New Business

5a. Discussion of 2014 POCD Committee. Discussed under item 4c.

5b. Correspondence. None received.

6. Review of February 27, 2012 draft minutes

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

7. Adjournment. Friedlander made a motion to adjourn at 8:21 pm.

Minutes submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Baldwin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved on April 23, 2012.