

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting

November 9, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Meeting Room 3, Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

These minutes are subject to approval by the Conservation Commission

Present: Holly Kocet, John Dixon, Mark Boland, Michael Ablondi, Justin Kaiser, Mark Lurie

Staff: Rob Sibley, Deputy Director of Land Use, Dawn Fried, Clerk

Ms. Kocet opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Dixon moved to approve the minutes of October 26, 2021. Mr. Ablondi seconded. All in favor. The minutes from October 26, 2021 were approved.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Regulation Regarding Native Plants for Commercial and Industrial Landscapes

Ms. Kocet moved to recommend text amendment "Article VIII – Supplemental Regulation, Section 4 – Landscape, Screening and Buffer Requirements", be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission for approval and implementation into the Newtown Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Dixon seconded. All in favor.

High Meadow

Ms. Kocet received the High Meadow study conducted by Bryan Connolly. Ms. Kocet gave an overview of the study to the Commission and stated it was a good study. The vegetation study highlights the species on the property in comparison with the study done in August 2017.

Mr. Connolly observed 52 species which is 16 more species than in 2017. He also noted that invasive and woody species are on the rise. Mr. Connolly recommended removal of all invasive species especially the mugwort. Ms. Kocet discussed various ways to remove the invasives.

Ms. Kocet will reach out to Carl at Parks and Rec. Mr. Connolly also suggested mowing once every 3 years in order for the high pollinator species to further expand.

Ms. Kocet stated there are approximately 40 species that need to be preserved. Ms. Kocet will call Tom Philbrick, former Commissioner, to ask if he can store the species at Western CT State University.

Pedestrian Access to Lower Paugussett State Forest

The Commission continued the discussion regarding pedestrian access to the lower Paugussett State Forest, which starts on Russett Road. Mr. Sibley stated he was contacted in April of 2020 to close the trail access on Russett Road, at which time Mr. Sibley put up "No Trespass" signs. He explained that DEEP foresters and a private land owner spoke of an easement that runs through private property. Mr. Lurie suggested moving the easement off of the private property. The easement would be approximately ten feet wide. The Commission agreed it was not their purview.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ablondi moved to adjourn the CC meeting. Mr. Lurie seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Dawn Fried