

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of December 11, 2018 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, Gail Friedman, Mark Lurie, John Madzula, Mike Santora, Mark Boland, John Dixon

Staff: Robert Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning & Land Use, Dawn Fried, Clerk

Ms. Kocet opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Ms. Kocet welcomed Mr. Dixon to the Commission.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES for November 13, 2018**

Mr. Santora moved to approve the minutes from November 13, 2018. Ms. Friedman seconded. All in favor. The minutes from November 13, 2018 were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Fried presented a letter from Keith Ciociola, website designer, regarding the Town CC link on the CC website. It was agreed that the Town link should be under "About the Commission" and in the footer of each page on the CC website.

**AGENCY REPORTS**

Board of Finance – Mr. Boland stated Robin Hill was approved.

Park and Rec – Mr. Lurie stated nine members were chosen for the newly formed "Bike and Trail Committee". Mr. Lurie and Ms. Mangold were chosen as advisors.

Inland Wetlands – Ms. Friedman stated that the Planters' Choice application is being heard.

P&Z – Mr. Madzula gave an overview of two P&Z applications; one was Church Hill Road for a modification of an existing application and the other was an application for a special exception use and text amendment for a fiber mill.

**DISCUSSION**

Hubbard Construction - Ms. Kocet stated the construction on the Hubbard project will be delayed until March. The bridge has been constructed but no work has been done on the site.

Fracking Ban – Ms. Kocet stated the Fracking Waste ban has been approved by the Legislative Council. Mr. Sibley gave an overview of the fracking process and the ordinance.

**Deputy Director Report**

- Mr. Sibley stated that Robin Hill is waiting on approval from the Legislative Council.
- Mr. Sibley has been receiving requests for metal detecting on open space properties. Mr. Sibley stated metal detecting is allowed but no items may be removed from the ground and there can be no disturbance of soil.
- Mr. Sibley has been receiving requests from local organizations looking for "camp friendly" open space properties.

- Mr. Sibley described geocaching and the draw it would have on open space properties.
- Mr. Sibley gave an overview of the Proposki Farm and how they were denied a grant by NRCS's division of agriculture for a portion of the cornfield. Mr. Sibley stated they are applying again with the First Selectman.
- Mr. Sibley received a call regarding the open space property on Brushy Hill and Huntingtown Road. The neighbors have put up a "do not trespass" sign on the open space property. Mr. Sibley will improve the signage and add open space markers so people can distinguish between private property and town open space. Also, Mr. Sibley stated the parking is not ideal on the road and he will ask about parking on the grass.

Pole Bridge – Mr. Lurie did not get out to the property due to the snow. He will be going on Saturday and will reach out to the Commissioners.

Pollinator Pathway – Ms. Kocet passed out a sample brochure to show what other towns are doing with "Protect our Pollinators". Ms. Kocet asked anyone if they would like to take the lead on the project in the early spring. Ms. Kocet stated it would be nice to connect with other towns and put aside open space areas for the pollinators.

Native Plant Policy - Ms. Kocet stated that she and Ms. Friedman will be updating the plant policy.

Permanent Conservation Table – Ms. Kocet met with Steve Maguire, Land Use Agency, to discuss inland wetland ideas for the table. January will be an inland wetland theme. Ms. Kocet would like to increase the awareness of the importance of animals and erosion control. The Commission had a discussion on how to make homeowners aware of wetlands on their property. One idea was have realtors pass out a "What is a Wetland?" brochure when the house has been purchased. Another idea was to have educational PowerPoint presentations given by the Conservation Commission. Also have wetland information available on the CC website.

Invasive Plant Task Force – The Commission discussed creating a task force as an ad hoc committee to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Sibley suggested asking the First Selectman to create the task force and the CC would have the authority to create a policy. The Commission agreed that High Meadow would be a good starting place and possibly creating a group that would "adopt a patch".

Website – Ms. Kocet asked the Commission if anyone would like to volunteer to keep the CC website updated.

Mr. Sibley invited the new Commissioners to stop by the office and become acquainted with the Conservation files and set up a meeting with Rob for an overview.

Mr. Lurie would like to create a new document on Google.docs to replace "Criteria for Open Space". Mr. Lurie stated he can also connect the data on a spreadsheet.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION – Discussion of Possible Land Acquisition

Mr. Boland moved to open the Executive Session at 7:52 pm for the discussion of possible land acquisition. Mr. Lurie seconded. All in favor.

Ms. Friedman moved to close the Executive Session at 8:12 pm. Mr. Santora seconded. All in favor.

Mr. Boland moved to accept the acquisition of OS #18-01. Mr. Madzula seconded. All in favor.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boland moved to adjourn the CC meeting. Mr. Santora seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Dawn Fried, Clerk