

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of September 26, 2017 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, Cindy Joyce, Karlyn Sturmer, Mark Boland, Tom Philbrick

Also Present: Harrison Hoffert

Absent: Chris Smith, Jim Ryan

Staff: Robert Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning & Land Use (departed at 7:40pm),
Dawn Fried, Clerk

Ms. Kocet opened the meeting at 7:04 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for August 14, 2017

Mr. Boland moved to approve the minutes from August 14, 2017. Mr. Philbrick seconded. All in favor. The minutes from August 14, 2017 were approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for September 11, 2017

Mr. Philbrick moved to approve the minutes from September 11, 2017. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. The minutes from September 11, 2017 were approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Boy Scout, Harrison Hoffert, presented his Eagle Scout project to the Commission. Mr. Hoffert is a senior at Newtown High School. His project entailed staking out the trail at Laurel Trail Preserve in Sandy Hook by using a digitized GPS system. Mr. Hoffert's goal is to benefit the community by giving them the opportunity to stake out other trails throughout Newtown. This would be accomplished by an interactive program on a website server. Mr. Hoffert also feels his project will be sustainable and will continue to impact the community in the future. The Commission agreed this would be a great town-wide resource. Mr. Hoffert will return to the Commission after the project is completed.

Mr. Philbrick moved to endorse Mr. Hoffert's Eagle Scout project. Mr. Boland seconded. The Commission appreciates Mr. Hoffert's initiative and looks forward to Mr. Hoffert moving forward to achieve his goal. All in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Kocet presented a letter from Robert Mulholland, P&Z Commission, dated September 11, 2017 regarding CGS 8-24 Mandatory Referrals for 125 Great Quarter Road and 78 Mountain View Road. The P& Z Commission voted to recommend the approval of the open space land acquisitions as recommended by the Conservation Commission.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Philbrick moved to add "Al's Trail" to the next CC agenda. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor.

COMMISSION PRIORITIES

Web Page

Ms. Joyce gave the Commission an update. Ms. Joyce stated that the basic text and pictures are ready to be "rolled out". Ms. Joyce gave Ms. Fried a copy of the Yale Study. The Yale Study will be scanned and added to the website.

High Meadow Update

Ms. Sturmer stated that approximately ten Master Gardeners will be planting the plugs on October 4, 2017. Mr. Philbrick will call Bryan Connolly for an update on the study.

Stone Bridge

Ms. Joyce sent copies of the Stone Bridge articles from the Bee and the Voices to Ruth at Iroquois. The Commission will wait until the next CC meeting for Chris Smith to review the educational component.

Native Plant Policy

Ms. Sturmer presented a cover letter she wrote to present to the Board of Selectmen regarding the Invasive Plant Policy. The Board of Selectman requested the Invasive Plant Policy be submitted before the CC moves forward with the Native Plant Policy. Ms. Sturmer asked the Commission to add their comments and make revisions

Ms. Sturmer moved to accept the cover letter with edits to present to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Philbrick seconded. All in favor. Ms. Kocet will sign the cover letter and forward to Board of Selectmen.

Kiosks

The Commission discussed having the special features of each property presented in the kiosk. The Commission will ask Mr. Sibley to provide a list of the kiosk locations for the next CC meeting.

Next Open Space Project

The Commission discussed Pond Brook and Pole Bridge as potential options for upcoming open space projects. Ms. Sturmer suggested walking the properties as a Commission with Mr. Sibley as a guide. The Commission would also like to meet with Jerry Milne from CT-DEEP Forestry.

The Commission will discuss the following characteristics of the property to make a determination:

- potential of property
- traits of property
- nature area
- parking
- biking trails

Al's Trail

Ms. Joyce would like the Commission to walk parts of Al's Trail. Ms. Joyce would like to obtain information on which properties have conservation easements. The Commission agreed that Al's Trail is too large of a project for the CC to take on without the assistance from other groups. Ms. Sturmer suggested creating a sub-committee and getting guidance from Newtown Forest Association and the Trail Crew.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Sturmer moved to adjourn the CC meeting. Mr. Philbrick seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Fried, Clerk