

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of February 28, 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: Jim Ryan, Cindy Joyce, Karlyn Sturmer, Holly Kocet, Mark Boland, Tom Philbrick

Also Present: Julia Nable, 10 Walnut Tree Hill, Sharon Poarch, 9 Forest View Drive, James Beaty, 12 Nighthawk Lane, Frank Rohrbacher, 8 Nighthawk Lane, Chris Weaton, 6 Nighthawk Lane

Absent: Chris Smith

Staff: Dawn Fried, Clerk

Mr. Ryan opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for February 13, 2017

Under "Action Items" delete "mowing and". Ms. Sturmer moved to approve the amended minutes from February 13, 2017. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. Mr. Philbrick abstained. The minutes from February 13, 2017 were approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Julia Nable with SandorMax.com gave a presentation to the Commission regarding website strategies. Ms. Nable gave examples of her work and explained to the Commission that most of her clients are not-for-profit. Ms. Nable pointed out that a good website will increase exposure, widen awareness, and serve as a platform for education. The Commission will discuss their options and available funds and contact Ms. Nable at a later date.

The abutters of the Stone Bridge property, Sharon Poarch, 9 Forest View Drive, James Beaty, 12 Nighthawk Lane, Frank Rohrbacher, 8 Nighthawk Lane and Chris Weaton, 6 Nighthawk Lane discussed their concerns regarding the "destruction" of the clear cut area and the potential impact the forester will have on the remaining Open Space after he crosses the Iroquois pipeline. The Commission discussed the benefits of the forestry management plan. They explained that the area will serve as a diverse wildlife habitat and that the remaining fallen trees and brush will provide protection from predators. The forester, Don Moon Logging, was told not to cross the pipeline until the Commission walks the site. A meeting was tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 5, 2017 for 1:00 pm with Jeremy Clark, the Commission and the neighbors. Mr. Ryan will reach out to everyone to confirm.

CORRESPONDENCE

Eagle Scout Project - Mr. Ryan presented an email given to him by Robert Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning. The email came from Robert Lombardo regarding an Eagle Scout project. Mr. Ryan described Mr. Lombardo's project titled "Great Ring Pond Area Clean Up". The Commission liked the premise of the project but had some questions regarding the clean-up process. They were concerned that native plants might be mistaken for invasive plants and the brush, which serves as protection for wildlife habitats, might be removed. Mr. Ryan will reach out to Mr. Lombardo and set up a meeting at the site. The Commission agreed the volunteers

need to be instructed on the removal of the debris. They also agreed this would be a great educational opportunity for the volunteers.

Follow-up to 6 Meadow Brook Road - Mr. Ryan had a follow up discussion regarding Susan Genua, 6 Meadow Brook Road, regarding an overgrown area of brush adjacent to her house which is on town Open Space. Mr. Ryan is meeting with Ms. Genua and asked the other Commissioners to join him.

ACTION ITEMS

Election of Officers

Mr. Philbrick moved to nominate Mr. Ryan to serve as Chairman for the Conservation Commission for 2017. Mr. Boland seconded. The Commission had a discussion. All in favor.

Ms. Sturmer moved to nominate Ms. Kocet to serve as Vice Chairman for the Conservation Commission for 2017. Mr. Boland seconded. The Commission had a discussion. All in favor.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Board of Finance – Mr. Boland noted that Parks and Rec gave a presentation regarding the clearing of snow on the trails at High Meadow. Mr. Boland was concerned that Parks and Rec might use salt to melt the snow and the salt may have a negative impact on the meadow.

Parks and Rec – Mr. Ryan reached out to Amy Mangold and is waiting to hear back. He is planning on going to the March 14th Parks and Rec meeting. Ms. Sturmer will join him.

Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial Committee – SAC field is underway.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

High Meadow – Mr. Ryan hand delivered the document titled “High Meadow Management Plan, dated February 2017” to the First Selectmen’s office to be added to the next Board of Selectmen’s agenda. Mr. Ryan will call Sue Marcinek to follow-up.

The Commission discussed available funds for the High Meadow Management Plan. They are exploring options to accept additional quotes from meadow experts.

Earth Day April 22, 2107 – The Commission will discuss Earth Day at the next CC meeting with Mr. Smith in attendance.

MISC

Ms. Joyce will invite Peter Cloutas to the next CC meeting. Mr. Cloutas is an expert on trails.

Adjournment

Mr. Philbrick moved to adjourn the CC meeting. Ms. Kocet seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Fried, Clerk