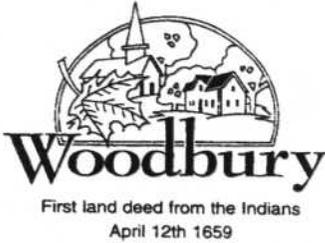


# TOWN OF WOODBURY

281 Main Street South

Woodbury, Connecticut 06798-0369

(203)263-3467 ~ www.woodburyct.org



## TROLLEY BED PLANNING COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, August 22, 2016

7:00 p.m., Senior Center

### Members Attending:

Nancy Bailey	Chris Wood
Tom Ecsedy	Ron Taurick
Terri Hale	Bob Travers

Also attending: K. Doyle, R. Walker, T. Anderson, M. Petrocelli.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Travers seated the six members present; a quorum was established. Chairman Travers referenced Section 8-21 of Connecticut General Statutes and Section 921 of the Town Charter, Conflict of Interest.

**PRESENTATION BY CHRIS WOOD** – Mr. Wood, Committee member, consultant, former Town Planner, and avid naturalist, gave a presentation compiling his thoughts on potential uses for the Reservoir property. He spoke about three facets/uses of the property: as a recreational park, as a natural resource preserve, and as a place for quiet contemplation. He noted that this property is part of a large, mostly contiguous, undeveloped forest complex which provides buffer between higher development areas. He summarized potential passive uses, such as pedestrian, picnicking and outdoor education. He detailed the hiking trail potential from existing maps, noting that some trails are currently impassable. Mr. Wood also listed potential active uses including fishing, hunting, horseback riding, and camping (some of these may be restricted by DEEP easement or Town ordinances). He summarized some of the recreational issues the Town should consider: safety, waste removal, access/parking, use conflicts, habitat protection, erosion/water quality impact and volunteer opportunities. Access issues include poison ivy, litter and parking. Maintenance issues include “widow makers” (dangerous branches) and conflicts of use between bikes, walkers and horses. Longer term recreation issues include whether to expand parking at both access points, Whittemore trails connection, and Middlebury Greenway connection. He noted the challenges of a pedestrian connection to Whittemore as it includes a crossing of route 64. Mr. Wood then gave his thoughts on the property as a natural resource preserve. This facet includes water supply and quality, foresting, land management demonstration, healthful recreation, quiet contemplation and global/local air quality. He noted that important aspects are watershed protection, habitat diversity/health, invasive plants, agriculture and forestry. He detailed the variety of habitats on the property, from hardwood/evergreen forests to beaver pond/swamp land, vernal pools and streamside riparian habitats. He noted that it is better long term for habitat diversity to have large protected parcels. He spoke about the interconnected nature of different natural features and habitats. Many birds such as thrushes and tanagers depend upon woodland habitats. The property includes pine groves and “wolf trees” (large, old trees) that provide many places for wildlife. Wetland habitats also abound, and Mr. Wood noted that riparian ecosystems protect water quality and specialty habitats. Issues that may affect habitat health are invasive plants (knotweed and olive), and

erosion/sedimentation. Mr. Wood concluded by listing some general management obligations, which include safe access, necessary and appropriate signage, necessary rules and dog controls, dam safety and maintenance (unlikely), site cleanup and neighbor relations. He stressed that he would like to see a natural resource inventory, an environmental assessment, and a stewardship plan.

**PRESENTATION BY BOB WALKER** - Mr. Walker, president of the South Brook land owners' association, spoke about the homeowners' concerns. South Brook residents own their land privately and in common per their establishing documents. South Brook association property is partially surrounded by Town-owned property and the reservoir property, and they also own the first portion of the Middle Quarter entrance to the reservoir property. The Town of Woodbury holds an easement across their property, in a strip roughly the width of the old trolley bed trail. Mr. Walker showed a map of various features of the lower South Brook property. He said that there have been problems in the past with unauthorized use of their trails or parking areas, which have mostly been resolved by speaking to the individuals involved, but the residents are concerned that these types of incidences may be a problem. The trails run fairly close to their property and in some cases individual homes, and they do not wish to have persons wandering onto private property. Mr. Walker said he would like to see the boundary marked and trails kept back far enough so as not to disturb neighbors. He said that he has observed parking issues in the area, including cars blocking the gate and people parking in the private South Brook overflow parking area. He noted that the Middle Quarter bridge is going to be replaced, and that it must meet DOT standards for a two-lane road. This will add about seven to ten feet to the width of the current bridge. He said the bridge could possibly be made for one-way use, with a walkway on the side. The new width will also leave no good parking options in that area. Mr. Walker noted that, according to maps, some utilities and piping also are located on their land close to the trolley bed trail, and that there is a possibility in the future that changes may need to be made on those locations. He said that it is imperative that the easement limitations be marked and enforced, and that private open space land be respected. Liability is a concern on the private lands. Ms. Petrocelli, also a South Brook resident, added that their open space property has restrictions against motorized vehicles and horses. The easement document (which should be on file in the Town land records) is about thirty-eight pages. Mr. Walker also commented that the speed of traffic on Middle Quarter Road is already a problem. Chairman Travers said there is no way the Committee will encourage parking on the private South Brook areas.

**OLD BUSINESS – DEEP EASEMENT DRAFT** – No new information. Chairman Travers asked the Committee members if they were in agreement with the idea that he write a request to the Selectmen for the easement to be modified to include previously discussed concerns, or at least to have a written DEEP comment on such concerns. Committee members all agreed, asking to see a draft before it is sent.

**MEMBERS' TIME** – N, Bailey mentioned a speaker she had heard that might have some interesting history about the Trolley, and said this speaker may be willing to present to the Committee. After discussion, Ms. Bailey will gather more information about the nature of the information and the availability of the speaker. Chairman Travers said that C. Wood has volunteered to draft a document for the Committee to begin the process of producing the Committee's final report/recommendations. Mr. Wood will receive thoughts and concerns by email, then produce a draft possibly for the first or second September meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – The Inland Wetlands Commission sent a message to Chairman Travers noting that, during their August 8 meeting, they discussed the reservoir property and were opposed

as a Commission to any paving on the property. Sharon Sherman wrote a letter to the Voices editor which was copied to Chairman Travers.

**MINUTES** – C. Wood moved to approve the July 25 meeting minutes; seconded by N. Bailey. Minutes unanimously (6-0) approved.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR** – T. Anderson said he was happy to see the input of a neighboring group, and agreed they had many important points. He noted that the Town has been widening Scuppo Road, but during that process he noticed rain caused severe runoff, and asked if there was a way the runoff could be controlled so as not to negatively affect the reservoir property.

**ADJOURNMENT**- T. Hale moved to adjourn, seconded by R. Taurek. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Linda G. Kaelin, Clerk

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
This 25 day of Aug 2016  
at 11:40 o'clock AM  
Suzanne Cooper  
Asst Town Clerk