



Town of Woodbury Conservation Commission

281 Main Street South
Woodbury, CT 06798
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WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 6, 2022

7:00 p.m., – Senior Center, 265 Main Street South

MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman
L. Peters
J. Sherman
B. Hickey
C. Aberg

MEMBERS ABSENT:

T. Clark
D. West

1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Taylor began the meeting at 7:01 p.m. A quorum was established. Chairman Taylor informed the Commission that the First Selectman would like a few moments to speak.

First Selectman Perkinson addressed the Commission to thank and acknowledge them for their service. Unfortunately due to Covid, she had not been able to do this in person and would now like to take that opportunity. Ms. Perkinson thanked and shook hands with the members individually.

2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the September 6, 2022, Conservation Commission meeting for consideration. He called for discussion. There was none.

MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the September 6, 2022, Conservation Commission as presented.

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by B. Hickey

Vote: 5-0-0 –Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, Sherman, Hickey, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

3. CORRESPONDENCE

- Chairman Taylor noted that next month the Commission should be ready to talk about the calendar and schedule for meetings for 2023.
- The CACIWC conference will be held in person this year on October 29th with a number of workshops. One workshop is being led by Carol Cheah who headed the HWA project. Registration will go through the Land Use office. The early bird deadline is October 10th.
- A memo from the First Selectmen's office reminding the Commissions that an update on the status of POCD items will need to be communicated to the Planning Commission and the Land Use office. Chairman Taylor would like to add discussion of this item to the agenda to talk about later in the meeting.

MOTION:

To add discussion of the POCD to the agenda

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by J. Sherman

Vote: 5-0-0 –Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, Sherman, Hickey, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

a) Municipal Composting

First Selectmen Perkinson stated that she attended a webinar with DEEP regarding the program. The program is supposed to begin in January. However, there has been no educational material provided to the Town to pass on to the public as of yet. Ms. Perkinson will keep the Commission informed when she learns more. There was frustration at the preparation of the program so far, which could mean that it might not start until spring.

b) Minortown Road

J. Sherman updated the Commission on the project effort. He has applied for a permit with the IWA, and is on the agenda for the October 11, 2022, meeting. He spoke with IWA Chairman, Mary Tyrell and gave her a copy of the overall proposal. There was discussion regarding the digging up and transporting of the knotweed. J. Sherman noted that CACIWC is having a seminar on Japanese Knotweed that he is looking forward to attending. The Commission explored the idea of burning the knotweed and thought it best to involve the Fire Department; perhaps for training or at the Christmas tree burn. This project could have a fairly long term time frame for completion. Chairman Taylor noted that the property has an easement on it. He researched to see if chemicals could be used on the property. His findings showed that the project is an agriculture operation and so it would be legitimate to use herbicides. J. Sherman stated that they are not putting in a crop and it is not agricultural. Chairman Taylor's findings were that agriculture consists of working with the land.

c) Invasive Plants

Chairman Taylor noted the Regulations Regarding Native Plants initiative that has been presented to the Land Use office. He is not aware of the timing of when this will be taken up at the Zoning Commission. The Commission will wait to get more information from the Land Use office.

d) Open Space Issues

There were no issues to discuss at this time.

e) POCD Action Items

Chairman Taylor stated that the Commission has until November 18, 2022, to submit the status of the Implementation Summary strategies and actions to the Town Planner and the Planning Commission. There are two areas that help is needed on. One is to review the existing Zoning Regulations that deal with Conservation; the other is to work with the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition to review the water plan and see how the Conservation Commission can advise the Town on steps that it should take in conjunction with the plan. C. Aberg volunteered to look at the Zoning Regulations and L. Peters volunteered to look into the PRWC water plan.

5. MEMBER TIME

J. Sherman gave the update on the Town clean-up day. It was a rainy, chilly day, so only a few people showed up. It was suggested that next time some yard signs should be put up.

B. Hickey stated that he had gone over to the Stomsky property and enjoyed it. Discussion continued about the property. B. Hickey was told that the pipe on the location was for well monitoring.

L. Peters noted that Flanders is having a three part climate change series. She wanted to make mention if anyone is interested in attending. There was further discussion regarding how an easement can be used in lieu of a fee. She cited an area in Washington, CT where the open space easement was used to connect to other open space parcels. Chairman Taylor noted that the purpose of the easements is not only to create open space but also to ensure that portions of land remain in their natural state. L. Peters would like to see an overall strategy in place for how these easements and open spaces are decided. Any fees collected should be put into the Open Space fund. She feels that the Conservation Commission should be included in the discussion for that.

6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Dennis Roberts, 2 Minortown Road Ext., addressed the Commission. Mr. Roberts has fished and hiked the Minortown Road and Stomsky property for many years. Even though it is a 25 mph speed limit, there have been many accidents around the curve near his home. He feels that the set-up is a bad plan and very unsafe. There is only enough room for three cars up against the gate and then you have to back out right onto the bridge. The gate is always locked. Senior citizens will ask if they can park on his property so they can walk down to the park. He implores the community to move the gate 100 feet in to allow for safer parking. This is a beautiful property. He questions why it is a park if you can't access it.

Sharon Morkus, 12 Minortown Road Ext., addressed the Commission. Ms. Morkus was a member of the Conservation Commission when they purchased the Stomsky property. The sign says the park is open from dawn to dusk but the gate is always locked making the park inaccessible to many. It goes against the ADA compliance. People used to sit peacefully by the river, but they cannot anymore. Senior citizens or moms with strollers cannot get past the gate or back out of spaces and turn around properly. Chairman Taylor stated that the control of the gate is the Park & Recreation Department's purview. The Conservation Commission has no regulatory authority. He recommended going there to see if she can facilitate change.

Bud Neil, addressed the Commission. He would like to see farming continue on the property. He would also like to plant an oak forest of red, white and swamp oaks since they provide food for so much wildlife. He is in favor of the idea of a pollinator garden. He also has experience with getting rid of knotweed. The Southbury commission has had effective use dealing with herbicides on the edge of the Pomperaug River for getting rid of knotweed. This is the time of year to spray knotweed to get down into the rhizomes. Another option is to cut it down before goes to seed and then dig it out.

Chairman Taylor acknowledged all the members of the public and what they had to say. He appreciated their help and support. The Commission will definitely pass these concerns along and see what can be done.

7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2022.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

To adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Made by C. Aberg, Seconded by J. Sherman
Consensus of the Commission in favor 5-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Wright

Robyn Wright
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY CT
This 11th day of Oct 2022
at 7:00 o'clock PM
Maria M. Mancini
Town Clerk

Copies of documents and meeting audio are available at the Land Use Office