



# TOWN OF WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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## WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, November 4, 2021 7:00 p.m., – Shove Building, 281 Main Street South

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman  
L. Peters  
J. Sherman  
T. Clark  
D. West

### MEMBERS ABSENT:

D. Schultz  
A. Musso (*on leave of absence*)

### 1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Taylor began the meeting at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

### 2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the October 5, 2021, Conservation Commission meeting. He called for discussion. L. Peters noted a spelling error that should be corrected.

### MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the October 5, 2021, Conservation Commission meeting as amended:

- Section 4.e- 7<sup>th</sup> sentence: correct spelling of word “repel” to “rappel”

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by D. West

Vote: 5-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Sherman, Peters, West, Clark

Nays: None

Abstain: None

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to be covered.

#### **4. CURRENT BUSINESS**

**a. Email Account (progress)**

Chairman Taylor stated that he had spoken to Selectman Perkinson regarding an email account. Selectman Perkinson will look into this more, which gave Chairman Taylor some hope.

**b. Library Display**

Chairman Taylor stated that the Commission has been given permission to put a display in the library case for the month of April. The case was previously booked but the library arranged to move it around so that the Commission could have it in conjunction with Earth Day. The Commission needs to start formulating ideas as to what to focus on with the display. Discussion ensued with ideas of composting, the mine project, open space information and the HWA project. The display should be colorful and eye catching.

**c. EDA American Rescue Program**

Selectman Perkinson had contacted Chairman Taylor regarding the EDA (Economic Development Administration) American Rescue Program. This is a Federal program with grant opportunities for projects that are connected to outdoor recreation that encourage economic growth within a community by bringing people into town. The grant amounts range from \$100,000 to 10 million dollars. This would allow for a large scale project. The submission deadline is March 15, 2022. The Commission began brainstorming on what projects could be accomplished. It could be a portfolio of projects for several spaces. There was much discussion regarding how to improve the Trolley Bed property, maybe bringing the trail into town, where people could buy some lunch. Extending the greenway from Middlebury, cleaning up the reservoir area, educational programs and informational and historical plaques were also discussed. D. West remembered that there were some preliminary project assessments from a few years back. She will try to locate that information from town offices. Chairman Taylor noted that a main objective of the project is that it needs to be of benefit to or attraction for residents of urban areas.

**d. Open Space issues (if any)**

T. Clark noted that Three Rivers Park was looking better since the hay ride. The park had many issues after the storm that were really not safe and now they seem to be fixed. The consensus is that the Lions Club probably did the work.

L. Peters noted that she had seen information in Voices newspaper on the last Inlands Wetlands meeting where some funding for work to be done on Jack's bridge was mentioned. No one else was aware of this project.

**e. Guided Walk (animal tracking) ??**

Chairman Taylor told the Commission that he had been on a guided walk in New Milford with a woman from the Wolf Recovery in Salem, NY. The walk was about looking for tracks, scat, tree rubbing, bones etc. He said it was a very good program. He spoke with Vincent LaFontan from Flanders and they will try to do a joint Flanders / Conservation Commission walk in the spring. He would like to get the same guide for the hike. The idea of one hike for adults and one for kids will be explored. Chairman Taylor highly recommends the book "Mammals Tracks and Sign" by Mark Elbroch.

Chairman Taylor and J. Sherman attended the program “Follow the Forest” at Flanders which focused on how satellites are being used to locate “core” forests that are protected, and then using that information to identify animal corridors between those forests to protect the animals. The idea of connecting to Flanders properties is being explored.

**f. Municipal Composting**

L. Peters stated that she has worked up her final draft and will email it out to the members soon so that she can get feedback and make final revisions before getting it posted to the website. Chairman Taylor asked her also to find out why items posted to the Conservation page seem to disappear off of it.

**g. Mapping Hemlock Stands**

J. Sherman stated that he is working up a preliminary Microsoft form to list hemlock locations. He will send this out when he gets it set. The Hemlock Woolly Adelgids will become active now with the cold weather. In May is when another application of the predator beetles will take place. He noted that there is a GIS application which can be used to find every lot in Woodbury. He is hoping to identify Hemlock stands off of this application. He noted that people are willing to contribute to special projects such as this. The Commission agreed that the Trolley Bed, Orenaug Park, Castle Rock / Sherwood property and the Stomsky property would be focused on in May with more beetle applications. At the end of November to the beginning of December an assessment will need to be made as to how bad the infestations are and how many beetles will be needed. Funding will be needed in January in order to secure the beetles for May.

**h. “Friends” of Conservation** *(This topic was covered in tandem with the Mapping Hemlock Stands)*

Discussion continued regarding how the Commission is allowed to collect funds and how to go about doing it. Any money collected needs to be used on Town properties. Citizens can also specify which project they would like their donations used on. L. Peters will talk to the Selectmen’s Office on where to direct any money and what funds are available for certain committees.

The Commission needs to understand how having a group of “Friends” of Conservation would be managed. It was noted that the Town has trustees that manage donations and approve the applications for funds. There is the question of who would be able to manage this administrative work for the Commission. Chairman Taylor will continue to speak with the First Selectman in regards to how the Commission raises funds.

**i. Sustainable CT**

There was no further information on this initiative at the moment.

**j. Nominations**

Chairman Taylor called for any nominations for the Commission positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman. David Taylor was nominated for Chairman and Jeff Sherman was nominated for Vice Chairman.

## **5. MEMBER TIME**

D. West stated that she had spoken with Town Planner Will Agresta to invite him to a meeting. D. West will let him know that the Commission would like to go over the Sustainable CT initiative with him at either the January or February meeting.

Chairman Taylor highly recommended the book "Water- a biography" by Giulio Boccaletti.

## **6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Stephen Sant Andrea, 105 Westwood Ave., addressed the Commission. Mr. Sant Andrea submitted a proposal for an open space acquisition located on Stone Pit Road, lot 16. He hikes much of this property which is a 23 acre parcel. It is very raw wilderness. The property borders the Flanders "Finch" property. He suggested that the Town acquire the property or at least the portion that is adjacent to the Flanders property. Maybe some trails could be made. It is a very quiet, heavily forested property with a lot of wildlife. The road needs some work, but there is no development. Lot 17 on the road is currently under contract.

The Commission recommended bringing the proposal to the Selectmen's Office as well as to Flanders. The proposal he submitted will be distributed to the Commission for review. The item will then be discussed at the next meeting to decide if a letter of formal support will be given to the Selectmen's Office.

Kathy Doyle, 35 Washington Road, addressed the Commission. Ms. Doyle was thrilled for the library cabinet space in April. She recommended making the Trolley Bed property handicap accessible. She also gave information regarding the Inlands Wetlands meeting. There is funding for repair work on four bridges in town to help maintain them for the next couple decades before being replaced. The bridges slated for repair work are Judson Ave., Pomperaug Rd., Jack's Bridge and Minortown Rd.

Ms. Doyle also recommended getting everything together to get recertified for Sustainable CT. She feels there are many community members who would be happy to help to accomplish those short term goals. She believes that the library cabinet and the HWA project will count toward recertification.

## **7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 7, 2021. The election of officers will take place.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION:**

To adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Made by D. West, Seconded by J. Sherman

Vote: 4-0-0 – Approved  
Ayes: Taylor, Sherman, Peters, West, Clark  
Nays: None  
Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted,

*Robyn Wright*

Robyn Wright  
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

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

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
On 8<sup>th</sup> day of Nov 2021  
at 11:40 o'clock A M  
Glenn A. Cook  
Town Clerk

# **Stone Pit Road Lot 16**

Open Space Acquisition Proposal

**Stephen Sant Andrea  
105 Westwood Road  
Woodbury, CT  
stvfallt@charter.net**

**Purpose:** The recent listing of Lot #16 in Stone Pit Hollow for sale presents an opportunity to add a piece of raw, unimproved woodland to Woodbury's open space inventory.

**Description:** Stone Pit Hollow is located on either side of Stone Pit Road between Westwood Road on the east and Stagecoach and Lighthouse Roads on the west. While the Hollow shows evidence of having been agricultural land in the past, currently it is completely forested and is zoned OS-100.

The area of Stone Pit Hollow is a very quiet and serene environment with much natural beauty. It is a prime area for all types of outdoor pursuits that benefit from a forested area that is as close to the raw wilderness of Connecticut in pre-European times as can be achieved today.

**Reasons for Acquisition:** The following reasons support the acquisition:

- a. 23.3 acres of native forest
- b. Excellent environment for a variety of outdoor activities, such as: walking, hiking, bird watching, wildlife observations, photography, etc.
- c. A substantial part of Lot 16 borders the existing Flanders Land Trust Finch property. The opportunity to link the Flanders property with Lot 16 will allow the construction of hiking trails that would benefit both parcels and provide increased recreational opportunities for Woodbury residents.
- d. Woodbury's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) provides the following support for the acquisition:
  1. In response to the 2019 survey question: "What about Woodbury do you value the most?", 55% of the respondents answered "Parks and Open Space." A further 77% answered that the "Rural Character of the Community" is most valued. An unimproved, forested area adds to "Open Space" and "Rural Character."
  2. The POCD priority theme of "Attract and Retain Residents will be supported by the acquisition's recreational opportunities.
  3. The POCD priority theme of "Excel in Stewardship" through the addition of added open space.
  4. Woodbury's 19% of protected open space area is below the state minimum of 21%. The acquisition of all or part of Lot 16 will aid in meeting the state minimum.

**Acquisition Plan:** Referring to Map 1, there are four possible acquisition strategies:

- a. The minimum acquisition, indicated by the blue line and the area south. This would include a wide stretch of the Flanders property on the west and access to Stone Pit Road on the east, where a parking area could be located.

b. The second strategy, indicated by the violet line, would encompass more of the Flanders property border and a larger frontage on Stone Pit Road, while still allowing for residential development in the remainder of the parcel.

c. The third strategy, as indicated by the green line, would not add any Flanders property border but would increase the amount of forest protected and also afford more frontage on Stone Pit Road while still leaving a substantial area for residential development.

d. The final strategy would be the acquisition of the entire property.

**Conclusion:** I hope the Commission will give this proposal serious consideration in the short term. It should be noted that Lot 17, a larger parcel (34 acres) in Stone Pit Hollow is also for sale and is currently under deposit. We can assume that shortly a large residential development will encroach upon the quiet environment of the Hollow. As the remainder of land in the Hollow is also privately owned, it would be reasonable to foresee all of the Hollow being developed over the next 10 years.

This is a short-lived opportunity to preserve a small part of this natural woodland environment.





South