



TOWN OF WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

281 Main Street South
Woodbury, Connecticut 06798-0369
(203)263-3467 ~ www.woodburyct.org

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman
L. Peters
J. Sherman
T. Clark (*on phone line*)
D. West

MEMBERS ABSENT:

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

1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Taylor began the meeting at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was established.

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the November 4, 2021, Conservation Commission minutes. He called for discussion. J. Sherman and L. Peters noted the following changes to be made:

MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the November 4, 2021, Conservation Commission meeting as amended:

- Section 4.g – 1st sentence: change “Microsoft” to “Google.”
- Section 8 – adjournment motion: “Vote” should be 5-0-0

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by D. West

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

Ayes: Taylor, West, Peters, Sherman, Clark

Nays: None

Abstain: None

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Taylor read the notice of the Public Hearing for O & G Industries, Inc. two year renewal for Earth Materials Permit for the quarries located at Park Road and Stiles Road to be held on December 14,

2021. Discussion commenced regarding if the Commission had any questions or concerns, and if it was typical to be notified of this renewal. Members discussed if they should attend the Public Hearing. Clerk Robyn Wright who is also the clerk for the Zoning Commission answered some of the member's questions. Ms. Wright stated that the company's permits get renewed every two years. She noted the approximate length of life of the Park Road quarry is 10 years. Many reports and maps are presented to the Zoning Commission regularly monitoring water quality, the vernal pool and the salamander species that is present. The company works with many conservation efforts. Chairman Taylor also noted that the company is planning a quarry walk for the public tentatively set for April 9, 2022.

Chairman Taylor also noted that the PRWC has requested Hollow Park on April 30, 2022, for Earth Day events. He then passed around a flyer from the CT Land Conservation Council for the members to look at.

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

a. Discussion of "Sustainable CT" & POCD Projects

The Commission was planning on discussing these items with the Town Planner. However, Mr. Agresta was not present. These items will be put on hold until he is present.

b. Review and Approval of 2022 Meeting Calendar

The Commission reviewed the proposed calendar. The discussion resulted in making changes to the October and November dates.

MOTION:

To accept the Conservation Commission 2022 Annual Meeting Schedule as amended:

- The October meeting to be held on Thursday, October 6, 2022, due to Yom Kippur
- The November meeting to be held on Thursday, November 3, 2022, due to Election Day

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by D. West

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

Ayes: Taylor, West, Peters, Sherman, Clark

Nays: None

Abstain: None

c. Election of Officers

Chairman Taylor stated that no other nominations were made for the officer positions. A vote was taken for the following:

- Jeff Sherman will remain the Vice Chairman with a vote of 4-0-1
Ayes: Taylor, West, Peters, Clark
Abstain: Sherman
- David Taylor will remain the Chairman with a vote of 4-0-1
Ayes: Sherman, West, Peters, Clark
Abstain: Taylor

d. HWA Updates

J. Sherman gave an update to the Commission. He had gone to the site at Nonnewaug Falls where the beetles had been released in May to see the status of the adelgids. He was very pleased to find that there were no adelgids on the branches that had been marked. There was one small spot that had a newer infestation. He reported these findings to Carol Cheah of CT Agricultural Experiment Station; of which Nonnewaug Falls is a research site. She was happy to hear of the progress. They will wait and see what happens as the site is monitored.

D. Taylor and J. Sherman had visited two private properties to assess the hemlocks. One property bordered the Castle Rock property and is approximately 40 acres. This property along with Castle Rock and Sherwood Forest are infested. The owner was agreeable to purchasing and applying the predator beetles. Ms. Cheah recommended finding “hot spots” where the infestations generate from and apply the beetles there.

The other property was on Minortown Road along the Nonnewaug River. The property is approximately seven acres with a large continuous hemlock stand. There was no indication of an infestation on this property, which was great news. The Town owned Minortown property has some adelgid presence, but much lower than other areas. This area will not be on the top of the list to treat yet.

J. Sherman explained that his next steps will be to send out a Google document to gather information. He had hoped to have worked on it last month, but within the next couple of weeks he would like to get notices out to create a database of where there are hemlocks and then where there are infestations. He will send out the document to any who responded to the article on the project in the Republican American newspaper. He will also send the notice out to the Conservation mailing list.

Discussion continued regarding the project and figuring out how many beetles will be needed for this year’s application. The next step will be engaging the public over the next few weeks to assess the needs, set the priority locations, and then soliciting funds from the public for Town properties. L. Peters stated that if someone wants to donate to the project they can write the check to the Town of Woodbury and notate in the memo what project they want funds allocated to. The Commission will be notified of any funds being held for a project. She also noted that the Shade Tree and Sidewalk Committee just sent out an appeal letter to prior donors. Last year the Commission obtained \$2000 from Town funds for the project. The Commission brainstormed on what the letter / email needs to say and what information should be included to stay on the timeline for ordering the beetles in January. Chairman Taylor will draft a letter. J. Sherman will work with him on this starting next week.

e. “Friends” of Conservation

Chairman Taylor stated that this item will be put on hold since it is not a good time of year to engage people to be out on the trails. It will stay on the agenda for the future. It was noticed that the Parks and Recreation Department is asking for monitors to assist with Town properties.

f. Open Space Issues (if any)

T. Clark gave a report to the Commission about a property on Stone Pit Road that Mr. Sant Andrea had called attention to. She stated that the property is very inaccessible. The access is barely a road and not in good condition at all. The existing neighbors are not interested in

having it paved. It is a very forested area of approximately 23 acres. She did not recommend the Town move forward with purchasing this property unless the road is improved for safety concerns.

Mr. Sant Andrea, 105 Westwood Road, addressed the Commission. He agrees that the road is very poor. His concern is that there is no access for even emergency services if needed. He thought the Town should provide at least a fire access road. The property abuts with the Finch property owned by Flanders Nature Center on Lighthouse road. There is space for parking there. He thought the Town might like to work with Flanders. The Commission recommended speaking to Vince LaFontan at Flanders first to spur interest. The property might also provide a wildlife corridor and Flanders is currently working on connecting corridors to other forests.

g. Municipal Composting

L. Peters presented the Commission with what she was planning to have posted on the Conservation page. The Members gave some feedback for improvement. The Commission will reach out to Member Musso for old newsletters whose links have been lost so that they can be reposted permanently to the website. L. Peters will continue to look into municipal composting companies that could work with restaurants since Woodbury has so many.

h. EDA American Rescue Program

Discussion commence regarding this grant program. D. West had dug up some old material that the Parks & Rec Department had done for the Trolley Bed property through the CT Trails Association. That along with the management plan for the reservoir is a starting point that can be expanded upon. The deadline for submission is March 15, 2022. The old Trolley Bed paperwork will be distributed to the Commission for them to start working on the application. Chairman Taylor will start to put it together and D. West will assist. D. West noted that a resource may be at the NVCOG who had worked on the idea of connecting to the Middlebury bike path and helped put together the CT Trails application.

i. Library Display

The members talked briefly about what will be included in the display. The features will be Conservation values, a map of Open Space, the HWA project, composting and the copper mine project.

5. MEMBER TIME

L. Peters noted that the CT Audubon Society had previously issued caution that disease from bird feeders may be killing birds. They have now stated that is not the case. It is fine to put your bird feeders out.

6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Kathy Doyle, 35 Washington Road, addressed the Commission. Ms. Doyle stated that she had read the tracking book recommended at last month's meeting. She found it very interesting and requested the library to purchase the book. It has now been added to the library.

Ms. Doyle commented on the Castle Rock area which has a history and beautiful vista that include a lot of hemlocks. She mentioned again the funds in the Open Space Maintenance fund which could be used for purchasing the predatory beetles to protect the vista. It would be devastating to lose hemlocks there. Chairman Taylor is not sure that the fund has significant money. Ms. Doyle inquired about gathering some money from multiple places such as funds from farm contracts and the reservoir property. She also suggested speaking to O & G since they abut the Sherwood and Orenaug properties. They are very good regarding conservation issues, so why not send a letter to them and other businesses near these areas. This year's budget of \$2000 was for education and awareness. This could be done again by bringing other people in to educate and assist with the project.

Lastly, Ms. Doyle commented on the Sidewalk Committee. They are working on an activity in April around Arbor Day to raise awareness for trees. She suggested coordinating with them to raise awareness for the hemlocks. Discussion arose regarding the budget and that any additional funding requests need to be made by early January.

Robyn Wright, Clerk, addressed the Commission. Ms. Wright recommended the Netflix documentary "Kiss the Ground." The film is a documentary dealing with climate change and how grass can be helped to reduce emissions.

7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 4, 2022.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

To adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Made by D. West, Seconded by J. Sherman
Vote: 5-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed
Ayes: Taylor, West, Peters, Sherman, Clark
Nays: None
Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Wright

Robyn Wright
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT
Filed 9th day of Dec 2021
at 2:50 o'clock P M
Suzanne A. Cook
Town Clerk

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