

Town of Woodbury
Conservation Commission
281 Main Street South
Woodbury, CT 067989

WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 27, 2017

Members in attendance:

L. Peters D. Taylor
J. Sherman S. Hobson
D. Leavenworth

Members absent:

J. King
G. Madsen

Also attending: K. Doyle.

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:01 am. A quorum was established.

Minutes – D. Leavenworth moved to accept the March 23 meeting minutes, seconded by S. Hobson. D. Leavenworth asked for an addition to the minutes under the LID section to read “Town board and commission personnel”. Minutes unanimously approved as amended.

New Business –

Woodbury Cleanup Day Recap – J. Sherman reported that the annual Cleanup Day on April 8th was successful, although turnout was a little lower than usual due to weather and vacation week. He noted that some new people signed up. J. Sherman wanted to put a photo in Voices with the collected garbage, but they do not publish photos without people in them. L. Peters said that some areas look like the garbage is back, which is discouraging. D. Leavenworth suggested ways to work with the police and the Selectmen to come up with ways to enforce littering laws and discourage people from throwing trash on roadsides. D. Taylor will follow up. J. Sherman said the next year date should be in mid-April after Easter and Passover. The October cleanup date will be set after checking the holiday calendar. S. Hobson suggested litter cleanup/prevention could be a newsletter topic.

Earth Day Planning – Chairman Taylor reported that there was a decent turnout at the Conservation Commission booth, and that the celebration had good turnout, especially after noon. He thanked members who helped out that day.

CFPA Trails Day – Chairman Taylor said that Flanders will team up with Parks and Rec to sponsor a hike of the Trolley Bed on June 3 from 10-11 am. They are looking for a leader, but D. Taylor suggested that Conservation Commission members could be stationed at various spots along the trail to give hikers more in-depth information about the property and its conservation value. D. Leavenworth will be at the entrance and the Commission banner can be hung there also.

POCD Planning Update – Chairman Taylor reported that the Planning Commission will not get the funding they requested for consultants to do the Plan of Conservation and Development, so different Boards and Commissions will likely get assignments to do sections of the Plan. D. Leavenworth said he thinks the Town is being short-sighted by trying to save money on planning, and that future generations may make poor and costly decisions because of this lack of in-depth review and planning. As an example, he mentioned that Town traffic studies have not been updated since 2000. He also recommended public meetings to get input. Chair Taylor asked for ideas for what should be covered in the Conservation sections. One idea from last meeting was river health and riparian areas. L. Peters said that the goal of 20-25% open space should be discussed, emphasizing that only 13.6% (according to the new open space map) is currently protected open space. She also noted concern about Town-owned properties that are unprotected such as Nonnewaug Falls and parts of Orenaug Park, and she suggested that we should be working toward protecting these areas. D. Taylor said perhaps the POCD should include goals of identifying and protecting specific properties. He noted that legal

advice may be needed on exactly how to protect the properties, for example how and to whom easements should be given. Discussion was also held on the obligation to monitor easements and properties held by the Town. D. Taylor said he would contact Library Director S. Piel to see if the new open space map and other related information could be displayed in the library. D. Taylor asked if the Conservation Commission should be looking at how open space is being used and advising the Selectmen. An example is the farming lease at Three Rivers, in which Logue Farms is leasing land for \$4000 to grow corn. This year the desire for a single year lease limited the crop to corn, but that is one of the worst crops environmentally to grow near the river. D. Taylor asked when and in what forum these discussions should take place. D. Leavenworth said some State statutes address open space uses and restrictions, but otherwise the discussions come up randomly. He thinks they should be planned. D. Taylor would like to see this somehow addressed in the POCD. D. Taylor also brought up S. Hobson's previous suggestion that contiguous open space acquisition, including a better review of payments-in-lieu from developers, should be targeted. D. Leavenworth suggested re-establishing a method for funding the open space acquisition fund, but the Town and public would have to be sold on this idea. Chair Taylor also said LID should be included, and although he was told this is Zoning Board purview, he would like the POCD to include language for the Conservation Commission to have input in getting this into the land use regulations. L. Peters would like to see a definition of agriculture, and specifically what activities constitute agricultural uses, as these are not bound by the same wetland and conservation rules. D. Leavenworth said that State has a definition, but the Town may want to expand it. D. Taylor asked for members to keep thinking of what topics should be included in the POCD.

Old Business

Reservoir Property Management Committee Update – Chairman Taylor reported that the Aquarion property is now officially titled "Trolley Bed Preserve", with the trolley bed itself titled "Leavenworth Way". An RFP was issued for a consultant to produce a management plan, and the contract was awarded to Hunter Brawley. The Committee met and walked the property with Mr. Brawley to discuss issues. Chair Taylor said he thinks that conservation minded members of the public will have to be vocal and talk up the values of the property in order to get things prioritized. The Committee is walking the Waldo property in Southbury on Friday at 9 a.m. to see an example of mountain biking trails. D. Taylor pointed out erosion problems on the trail that will need addressing and will cost some money. He also noted many invasive plants on the property.

Open Space – Chairman Taylor said the data collection is done and the map is complete, but there is still no mechanism in place for capturing new land record data on easements/open space.

Low Impact Development – no new information.

Invasive Plants – J. Sherman said that spring has brought the invasives back, and he has noticed a lot of garlic mustard. He also said he hammers a copper nail into invasive vines and bushes to kill them.

Nonnewaug Falls – PRWC is doing a walk at this site for Trails Day.

Member Time – S. Hobson asked what has happened to the newsletter. He will write articles but a publishing coordinator is needed. Lori Hart used to do this, and no members had her template. J. Sherman will send past issues to D. Taylor to take a look. S. Hobson said he really thinks the newsletter should be published four times (minimum) per year, as the Commission is always talking about educating the public. Even updating and reprinting old newsletters would be an option. Open space would be a good topic, including definitions of protected/unprotected and the value of having open space. The Commission may need to find a paid person to produce the newsletter.

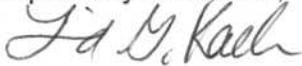
L. Peters reported on the March 28 Zoning meeting. The multi-residence district proposal was withdrawn. The barrel-racing proposal was deemed not under zoning regulation because it is an agricultural activity. L. Peters said she thought that was a stretch, and that it could be a slippery slope to identify such activities as agriculture and thus not subject to certain regulations. O&G quarterly reports on Stiles and Park Road quarries were presented. D. Leavenworth said the Stiles Road quarry has Jefferson salamanders, which are endangered; the O&G permit requires them addressing any effects on the habitat.

Correspondence – Chair Taylor had a letter that was forwarded from the Selectmen from a resident regarding how the Town can help with the many amphibians crossing a particular Town road. Discussion was held on whether there were any possible solutions such as rerouting traffic, but most agreed that this would have to be done through the police department, and that volunteers could help on their own but safety was a concern. Chair Taylor received a request for nominations for Aquarion's Environmental Champions Award.

Privilege of the Floor – K. Doyle noted that the O&G report should be available, as all Zoning Board members received an electronic copy. She asked whether the Conservation Commission had been consulted about the MS4 Stormwater Management Plan that the Town must submit to the State. Zoning Board members were given a copy, and the plan is posted on the Town Planner's website page. Ms. Doyle expressed surprise that the Conservation Commission was not given a copy to provide comment. The plan includes policies on use of pesticides and fertilizers. The Town is establishing a Stormwater Management Committee, and she thinks the Conservation Commission should be represented. She also said she would like to see the Land Use Boards meet together to discuss and further understand subjects like LID, the new open space map and the POCD. She is worried that no money is being put into the POCD development.

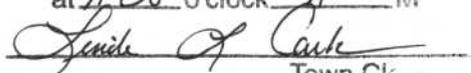
D. Leavenworth moved to adjourn; seconded by S. Hobson. Unanimously approved.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Linda Kaelin, Clerk

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IN WOODBURY, CT

This 18th day of May 20 17
at 11:30 o'clock A M

Town Clerk