

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

WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 22, 2017

Members in attendance:

D. Taylor                      D. Leavenworth  
S. Hobson                      A. Musso

Members absent:

J. King  
J. Sherman  
L. Peters

Also attending: K. Doyle.

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:00 am. A quorum was established.

**Minutes** – D. Leavenworth moved to accept the May 25 meeting minutes, seconded by S. Hobson. Minutes unanimously approved.

**New Business** –

**CFPA Trails Day** – Chairman Taylor reported that there were about two dozen people at the June 3 Trails Day walk at the Trolley Bed Preserve. D. Taylor, J. Sherman and L. Peters volunteered to provide information and the event was very successful. D. Taylor noted that some cleanup/repair of the main walking area is needed.

**POCD Planning Update** – Chairman Taylor said the Conservation Commission input action is on hold while the Planning Commission discusses the format and process that will be used, since they did not get budget money for a consultant. Chairman Taylor said they may possibly form a subcommittee or parcel out sections to other Commissions to be completed. D. Leavenworth asked if that money could be put in next year's budget, since the POCD is not due to be completed until next year.

**Summer Meeting Schedule** – July and August meetings have been cancelled.

**Old Business**

**Reservoir Property Management Committee Update** – Chairman Taylor reported that J. Sherman will be assisting with an Eagle Scout project for marking the property boundaries. Other possible scout projects have been proposed, but the group is not yet at the point of approving other projects. Chairman Taylor noted that a beaver is at the pond/reservoir, and that one project might be planting saplings to encourage the beaver to stay. D. Leavenworth noted that the State prefers the dam to be breached and the pond to dry so there will be a continuous cold-water stream going through, but he said there are other benefits to the pond. Hunter Brawley has been hired to draft a management plan, which is now being reviewed by the RPMC. Decisions still need to be made on property usage. Their next meeting is June 26 at 1:30 pm at the Park and Rec House.

**Open Space** – Chairman Taylor said the Board of Selectmen tonight will discuss and take comment on the possible purchase of the Sherwood property and the Strong property. Chairman Taylor noted that the Conservation Commission has already sent a letter in support of the Sherwood property. Discussion was held regarding the Strong property and the surrounding parcels, and how this piece could fit into the Town's plans. D. Leavenworth said the piece does have conservation value due to contiguous open properties and proximity to Orenaug Park, which is one of the POCD stated priorities for open space expansion. It also has possibilities for commercial or economic development due to a provision allowing the purchase of O&G quarry property after it has been mined, which would be approximately 10-15 years in the future. D. Leavenworth also mentioned there could be a possibility there for bypass of Main Street to relieve traffic. D. Leavenworth will attend the meeting and present his research on the area. The Conservation Commission did not take a formal position. Chairman Taylor said he feels this is almost more an economic decision with some protected open space surrounding. Chairman Taylor said the two parcels should be discussed differently; the Sherwood

property could be purchased with existing open space funds, but the Strong property would need bonding. He also noted that a discussion needs to be held within the Town on how to build up the open space funds. D. Leavenworth said another survey like the ones in 1989 and 2000 could be done, with results helping to inform decisions related to the POCD. Chairman Taylor noted that another discussion that needs to be started is how to properly manage the Town's open space, and who/what groups should be responsible for this. He asked Commissioners to consider this so an in-depth conversation can be conducted in September.

Low Impact Development – D. Leavenworth handed out a Northwest Conservation District flyer with some articles on low impact development.

Invasive Plants – Discussion was held on whether removal of invasives could in some cases hurt wildlife that had become accustomed to feeding on the non-native plants, and that removal should not be done just for the sake of removal, but carefully considered when native plants can repopulate an area. S. Hobson said he has articles on invasives and other conservation topics that could be used to produce 3 years' worth of newsletters. He said he feels strongly that informing the public is one of the primary charges of the Conservation Commission, and that a regular newsletter should be produced. A. Musso said she is willing to try to help with the production of the digital newsletter.

Nonnewaug Falls – First Selectman Butterly stepped into the meeting and mentioned that he would like ideas from the Commission about improving access to Nonnewaug Falls, as well as ideas for dealing with problems of erosion and ATV damage. Chairman Taylor said there are also some problems with trail markings and condition, and he noted that this is the type of thing that land stewarding plans would deal with.

Member Time – D. Leavenworth suggested a project to review all subdivision plans to find the open space set-asides and follow up on deed restrictions and monitor/manage these spaces. He will talk to First Selectman Butterly and the assessor's office; perhaps the developers could provide some of the records.

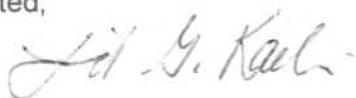
Correspondence – Habitat magazine distributed.

Privilege of the Floor – K. Doyle asked if there was a definition of "unprotected open space" on the new open space map. D. Leavenworth said essentially that there is no easement or deed restriction to keep those properties from development. K. Doyle asked how those properties, such as Orenaug Park sections and Hollow Park sections, could be protected legally from development. D. Leavenworth said that ownership of open space by Towns and the State bring up many questions of how to protect the land and who should own easements. A third party, such as a land trust, should ideally own the easements. This requires legal resources. K. Doyle said she has concerns about the Town acquiring more open space without addressing the protection questions. D. Leavenworth said acquiring and protecting are two separate issues. K. Doyle said the PRWC-led walk of Nonnewaug Falls on June 4 had about 15 attendees. She said the question of whether to try to acquire easement rights for better parking and access should be discussed again. She asked who helps figure out what to acquire and what to enhance on Town open space. D. Taylor said the POCD is a good place for those priorities to be sorted through and planned for. K. Doyle said she thought several aspects of the Sherwood property were appealing, such as the gradual access to Castle Rock and to possible future river walk areas, and asked what Town investment would be needed in the property. D. Taylor said there are some parking areas and established logging roads, and all else was to be determined. Little initial investment would be required for use. K. Doyle said she would like to see money set aside for open space land management.

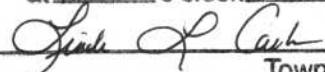
Next Meeting Agenda – the next meeting will be September 28 unless other issues require a special meeting. A special meeting in September may be needed to plan the October cleanup.

S. Hobson moved to adjourn; seconded by D. Leavenworth. Unanimously approved.  
The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Kaelin, Clerk



RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT

This 26<sup>th</sup> day of June 2017  
at 11:00 o'clock A M  
  
Town Clerk