



Town of Woodbury Conservation Commission

281 Main Street South
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WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

7:00 p.m., – Shove Building, 281 Main Street South

MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman
L. Peters
T. Clark
D. West
B. Hickey
C. Aberg

MEMBERS ABSENT:

J. Sherman

1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

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

2. APPROVAL OF MAY MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the May 2, 2023, Conservation Commission meeting for consideration. He called for discussion. There was none.

MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the May 2, 2023, Conservation Commission meeting as presented.

Made by D. West, Seconded by L. Peters

Vote: 6-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, West, Hickey, Clark, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

3. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to consider at this time.

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

a) Pollinator Pathway Task Plan

B. Hickey started the discussion by showing the members a book he had obtained from the library on pollinator plants. He will be meeting with Jami Gore of the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss not mowing some fields for the time being. He is mainly focusing on the field by the dog park at Three Rivers Park. He is trying to come up with a list of possible sights to create gardens in. The members discussed already established gardens and possible locations for new ones. The Commission will coordinate with the Garden Club since they currently maintain all the town greens. Chairman Taylor passed out "Toolkit for Starting a Pathway in Your Community" sheets with information of steps to take. The Commission discussed basing a newsletter on this subject. Chairman Taylor instructed the members to look at the town open space properties to see if any are good for a pollinator garden.

b) POCD Joint Land Use Meeting

Chairman Taylor informed the members that the joint land use meeting will be held on September 13, 2023. All members are invited. D. West stated that she had spoken to the Town Planner regarding if the Park and Rec Department should be included. The department will be invited to attend. B. Hickey wondered if this could be an opportunity to discuss the town being part of Sustainable CT again. Chairman Taylor felt the main focus should be what is in the POCD. He instructed everyone to obtain a copy of the POCD Summary, read and review it and be ready to discuss the areas where the Commission is the lead organization.

c) Stomski Way, Minortown Road

A certified sprayer has been selected for the knotweed problem and the spraying should occur the end of August to September. J. Sherman will be sending the application to the Inland Wetlands Agency. The Park and Rec Department is trying to address the gate issue. A gate design and budget are still being worked on. In the meantime the gate has been unlocked and an area mowed to allow for parking cars. There are stumps providing blockage so cars cannot drive down further. There should be more information by the next meeting. This led to a discussion of the town farm leases and what types of pesticides can be used on the town property. Surprisingly the leases do not seem to have many restrictions. They will be up for renewal in 2024. The Commission supports the town leasing land to the farmers but would like to see some regulations in place for the next renewal.

MOTION:

To change the agenda to allow Privilege of the Floor at this point in the meeting.

Made by D. Taylor, Seconded by T. Clark

Vote: 6-0-0 – Approved – Motion Passed

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, West, Hickey, Clark, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Chairman Taylor called for any comments from the floor.

Charmaine Samoska, 180 Minortown Road, addressed the Commission. Ms. Samoska informed the Commission about the website <http://millionpollinatorgardens.org> for the pollinator pathways. The site allows for mapping out a garden, looking at other gardens and registering your own. She will also get this information to the Garden Club. She then continued about the conversations she had with Jami Gore also and with Bud Neil regarding what he would like to see for the Stomski Way area. Ms. Samoska brought the Commission up to date on the struggle between a neighbor and the Park and Rec Department. Currently the chain on the gate is permanently removed and the gate is officially owned by the Department. They are planning on installing a new gate but are looking for funding. ARPA funding may be available. It was noted that there is property to the left of the park that could sell. It is important for the Town to keep control of open space areas. The park space will be officially open with a sign on June 7, 2023. Ms. Samoska offered any help she can give to help obtain funds for the project.

Dennis Roberts, 2, Minortown Road Ext., entered the conversation. He had spoken to First Selectman Perkinson in hopes of getting some ARPA funds. She will also be talking to the farmer leasing next to the park to see if the town can have an area for parking along the left hand side. Mr. Roberts expressed his appreciation for all that the Commission had done to get the gate unlocked and the river stocked. Discussion continued about the location. Ms. Samoska noted that Minortown is the only ADA Park with river access. She suggested looking to the ADA for possible grant money. She mentioned how Flanders, Ferriday Gardens and Roxbury Land Trust all have beautiful ADA trails. Mr. Roberts was also concerned because he heard there would be spraying of the knotweed again soon. The spray goes directly into his yard. Chairman Taylor said he will look into it.

The meeting returned back to the next item on the agenda.

d) Open Space Brochure

There was nothing to cover on this topic at this time.

e) Newsletter

C. Aberg stated that she is hoping to have the next newsletter out for July 1st. She will send out the draft in the next 10 days for revisions. The focus is invasive species and pollinator pathways. She would like any updates on other projects that she can include such as the HWA project and composting. She will include an article on how the garbage from the composting project is going to an anaerobic digester to produce electricity and then residual fertilizer. She would like to have an area for upcoming events also.

f) HWA Update

Chairman Taylor and J. Sherman did a small release of the predator beetles. They did find a small outbreak at Nonnewaug Falls. L. Peters and T. Clark reported their findings on the trail day hike there also. Fortunately the deep freeze had killed the majority of the adelgids.

g) POCD Items

L. Peters had contacted the BOE about the Mitchell School repaving project. She was interested to know if they will be using permeable paving since the funding has been made available for the project. She had correspondence with several people. The Department of Finance for Region 14 informed her that the parking lot at the time of installation had met all the requirements and that the repaving will continue to meet the requirements. In reviewing the conceptual plans from Fuss & O'Neill it showed the retrofit repaving will be a 1% reduction in DCIA (Directly Connected Impervious Areas). There will be swirl chambers which separate debris prior to properly disposing of the water. The POCD section 2.3 shows that the BOE should be encouraging sustainable practices for storm water runoff. Discussion ensued about how to handle the issue.

The consensus is that the project will probably start soon and there won't be any change; However, L. Peters will send a letter to the Superintendent, the BOE, the Planning Commission, the First Selectman and the Town Planner to inform them that it is disappointing there were not better alternatives such as permeable asphalt considered for this project; but could there be a conversation regarding best practices if not for this project but moving forward for future projects. She will send out a copy to the members also.

h) Open Space Issues

D. West inquired about the cement at Stomski Way. Chairman Taylor informed her that the matter is still pending with the Public Works Department. Chairman Taylor also noted an issue at Hollow Park involving cut trees next to the river. D. West also stated that at Three Rivers Park there are three logs set up to help erosion near the river. One has rolled down the side of the bank and is almost in the water. Chairman Taylor will take a look at the area.

4. MEMBER TIME

L. Peters attended a virtual meeting on May 25th regarding the composting program. About half of the approximate 1900 transfer station users have picked up bags and are participating in the program. During the period of February 8 to May 25 about 13,000 pounds of food waste had been collected to go to the anaerobic digester and garbage waste is down by 15%. Woodbury is also doing a good job sorting materials and has a low contamination rate. Waste Zero is the company processing the waste and will be developing a program to present to the participating towns for how to proceed forward after the pilot period is done. Participant comments indicated that the process was "easier than they thought it would be."

7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday July 6, 2023.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

To adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m.
Made by D. West, Seconded by T. Clark
Consensus of the Commission in favor 6-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Wright

Robyn Wright
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT
This 8th day of June 2023
at 9:00 o'clock M
Maria M. Brennan
Town Clerk

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