



TOWN OF WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JULY 6, 2021 7:00 P.M. – Senior Center, 265 Main Street South

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

L. Pittari

1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

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

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the June 1, 2021, Conservation Commission meeting. He called for discussion. L. Peters noted some corrections needed.

MOTION:

L. Peters moved and J. Sherman seconded to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2021, Conservation Commission meeting as amended:

- Section 4.c- 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence—change the word “onto” to the word “into”
- Section 4.g- 3rd sentence—change the word “water” and to the word “observation”

Vote: 6-0-0 in favor. Motion unanimously approved.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Taylor reviewed a letter dated June 7, 2021, from Peter Fazekas, Director of the Aquarion Water Company. The Company will be holding their Annual Aquarion Environmental Champion Awards program. The deadline for nominee submissions is Friday, July 16, 2021. The Commission did not have any candidates to nominate at this time. If any members think of someone to nominate, they are to contact Chairman Taylor.

Town Planner, Maryellen Edwards forwarded a letter to all Land Use Commissions. The State House has passed a bill HB-6448 stating that all meetings can now be full in-person meetings. Remote meetings no longer need to be available. Chairman Taylor read parts of the letter. Each Commission needs to decide what format of meeting they will hold and if they will continue to use the Senior Center or return to the Shove building. The Land Use office needs to be informed of the decision so as to put proper instructions on the agenda. The consensus of the Commission was to continue with hybrid meetings, having the phone-in option. The Commission will commence meeting at the Shove building at their next meeting.

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

a) Newsletter

Chairman Taylor asked A. Musso if she has received content sources for the newsletter. She replied that she has, but there is a lot of information she is trying to condense and could use some help. The main topic will be the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid project. Discussion of what the main points that should be brought out ensued. The resulting key points will be:

- The Nonnewaug Falls project and the use of a natural predator
- Why the Commission took the action that it did
- The consequences of what happens to the trees if nothing is done
- The cascading effects on the water and fish
- What can people do and where to go for more information

b) Mapping Hemlock Stands

Chairman Taylor asked if anyone had identified any other Hemlock stands. L. Peters noted there were some on the Flanders Whittemore property. Flanders is aware of the issue and will be monitoring it.

J. Sherman related a story regarding a hike to Castle Rock where some Woolly Adelgids were noted near the Minor property. During the hike there was a coyote that came out on the trail and barked at them. It is believed she had cubs and people should be aware when hiking that area during the summer.

c) Riparian Project at Three Rivers

Chairman Taylor informed the Commission that the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition is looking to have a presentation sometime in October with Conservation, the Inland Wetlands Agency, the Selectmen's Office, Parks and Recreation, Public Works and some land owners. The presentation will be regarding river flow and issues. The information needs to be made simple and interesting.

Chairman Taylor noted that prior to this meeting, he would like to walk the area in order to describe at the meeting what is actually wrong with the Three Rivers area and what is being proposed to remedy the situation. Once there is a plan established, it then needs to be decided where funding for the project will come from. No one in the Town departments is actually trained in this area and so expertise and specialized equipment will be needed. The Long Island Futures Fund is the prime resource to look to for grants and funding.

d) Municipal Composting

L. Peters stated that she has a draft she is working on for how to do simple home composting. She is trying to keep all the information to one page that will be highlighted on the Conservation website. There will be a link from the newsletter to this page. The benefits and simplicity of the process will be noted. A short list of what can and cannot be composted will be included along with some pictures as well. Discussion arose regarding the HRRA and possibly becoming members. A. Musso stated that it is such an excellent resource to tap into. There is most likely a fee involved. Many neighboring towns are already partnered with the HRRA. The focus will be on promoting home composting for the time being.

e) Sustainable CT

There has not been any information from Town Planner Maryellen Edwards regarding this initiative.

f) Open Space Issues

Chairman Taylor opened this discussion and noted that this should be a regular conversation for the Commission. A. Musso reported that there had been a problem of cans being hammered into trees at the Trolley Bed property. L. Peters added that the Board of Selectmen meeting noted that there are complaints of dirt bikes at the Trolley Bed property as well. This activity is not allowed and the police will be notified. J. Sherman stated the same problem occurs at the Nonnewaug Falls property. Discussion ensued about how dangerous it is and how difficult it is to enforce this this issue. This might be added into the newsletter as well. Discussion arose regarding using cameras to monitor the property; however this is not within the realm of the Conservation Commission's purview.

J. Sherman asked if there was any progress made regarding repair work of the Trolley Bed trails. He stated that if the trails were maintained that may resolve the dirt bike problem. Chairman Taylor noted that he can only keep nudging the proper departments regarding maintenance. T. Clark said something was posted that there would possibly be a ban having dogs at Three Rivers. This could not be confirmed and the Commission did not believe it to be so.

g) Suggested Readings

Chairman Taylor suggested Economist Magazine 6/19/21 issue, the section Technology Quarterly: "Protecting Biodiversity." While this is a business magazine this section focused on the "other environmental emergency," the real issue of diversity of animal and plant life.

5. MEMBER TIME

L. Peters noted that at the Board of Selectmen meeting there was a letter from Tom Arras regarding debris dumping and inadequate parking at the Stomski preserve. She felt the Commission should be aware of this issue. T. Clarke read portions of Mr. Arras's complaint. The Board of Selectmen minutes of 5/27/21 indicate that Selectman Perkinson will speak to the farmer regarding the dumping.

6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Kathy Doyle, 35 Washington Road, addressed the Commission. She noted that Mr. Arras had suggested sliding the gate forward to allow for more parking at the Stomski preserve. She wondered if there is anything in the contract with the farmer that could give the Town more leverage regarding the dumping issue. She noted that if there is not, she believes the contract is coming up for renewal and the language of the contract could be amended to support this.

Ms. Doyle also wanted the Commission to be aware that the Zoning Commission is in the process of making regulation revisions which includes agricultural and farming regulations. This could be a good time for Conservation to offer their thoughts on river and stream pollution from agricultural waste. She was thinking maybe compost piles should not be within a certain distance of rivers or streams. While the Zoning Commission is trying to make things easier for farmers and businesses, some instruction should be given. Chairman Taylor noted those types of regulations fall within State law or the Inlands Wetlands Agency.

Ms. Doyle mentioned the riparian project for the river. The PRWC has a 20 second video posted for brook trout fishing. It shows the river shaded by trees. She felt this was an excellent video to use to show how shade trees are needed for encouraging fish environments. She noted the Sidewalk and Shade Tree Committee could assist with this effort. She will bring this to their attention at the Committee's next meeting.

Ms. Doyle was also concerned about the reservoir when she heard of ATV use on the property in addition to the bike trails being formed near the historic Tuttle side. The Woodbury Athletic Club is another bike group looking to form more trails in the reservoir area. The Town had paid for the Hunter Brawley report which encouraged the Town to have a management plan and specific committee for the reservoir and other areas. There are so many basic erosion issues and she fears that these resources will be lost if we do not care for them and preserve them properly for recreational use. Currently the Parks and Recreation Department is in charge of maintaining these areas, but she is not sure if that is the best fit. There are currently no capital funds listed by the P&R Department for the reservoir. She will bring her concerns to the Board of Selectmen and put them into writing.

Chairman Taylor appreciated Ms. Doyle's thoughts. J. Sherman agreed that more should be done so that when more land becomes available to the Town, residents will not say that the Town has not handled or managed what it already has, so there is no need for further purchases.

7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on August 3, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. at the Shove building.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

J. Sherman moved and A. Musso seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Vote: 6-0-0 in favor. Motion unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Wright

Robyn Wright
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

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

RECORDED & FILED
IN WOODBRURY, CT
This 9th day of July 2021
at 2:14 o'clock P.M.
Guida S. Cook