



# Town of Woodbury Conservation Commission

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## WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, August 6, 2024**

7:00 p.m., – Senior Center, 265 Main Street South

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

L. Peters  
J. Sherman, Vice Chairman  
T. Clark  
D. West  
W. Ryan  
C. Aberg

### MEMBERS ABSENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman

### 1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Vice Chairman Sherman began the meeting at 7:00 p.m. a quorum was established.

### 2. APPROVAL OF JULY MEETING MINUTES

Vice Chair Sherman presented the minutes of the July 2, 2024, Conservation Commission meeting for consideration. He called for discussion. There was none.

### **MOTION:**

To approve the minutes of the July 2, 2024, Conservation Commission meeting as presented.

Made by D. West, Seconded by L. Peters

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

Ayes: Sherman, Peters, West, Clark, Ryan, Aberg

Nays: None

Abstain: None

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE & OPENING REMARKS

There was no correspondence to consider.

#### 4. CURRENT BUSINESS

**a) Proposed Solar Farm**

Vice Chair Sherman noted the emails that have been sent out to the Commission regarding the proposed solar farm on 36 acres at Fawn Meadow Lane. He notified the members of the Public Hearing that will be held on October 3, 2024. The hearing will be on Zoom and begin with an evidentiary presentation by the installer (Greenskies Solar) at 2:00 p.m. Whether the public net benefit outweighs the environmental effects will be considered. The public can make comments beginning at 6:30 p.m. Those who would like to comment would need to register or can make their comments in writing.

The topic is of great interest since the landowner is not going to leave it a meadow. The property will either be used for the solar farm or a development. T. Clark inquired if a Zoning regulation change will be required. L. Peters wondered if the Inlands Wetlands Agency will be involved since there are wetlands and a vernal pool on the property. The members are not quite clear on the process when the Siting Council is involved. T. Clark noted how the other developments in the area have caused drainage issues to the surrounding properties so she is in favor of solar rather than a development. Some members raised concerns about other effects of solar panels. The consensus was for the members to do more research on this topic to be better educated as the hearing approaches.

**b) Stomski Way**

J. Sherman has been in touch with the contractor and the spraying for the knotweed is planned for early October. Since the Conservation Commission can manage the field, he would like to configure the meadow to be good for ground nesting birds. He attended a presentation about Bobolinks and they need about five acres to nest in the middle. Stomski Way has about nine acres. He raised concern for dogs not to be off leash especially during the spring. The Commission agreed that having good signage indicating there are ground nesting birds would be best for creating public awareness.

**c) Three Rivers Park**

J. Sherman stated that the permits are delayed. He noted that there are two sycamore trees leaning in and slowly sliding. Unfortunately, with recent storms and the permit delays, more damage is occurring to the riverbank.

**d) Pollinator Pathway**

D. West requested having a link to the Pollinator Pathway website in the newsletter. She will be starting conversations with the PRWC in September to collaborate on initiatives for the Pollinator Pathway program. She had an idea that maybe for next year from May to September the Commission could have a contest for the public to send in pictures of their gardens and each month select a winner with a gift certificate. Everyone liked this idea and offered ideas for publicizing. T. Clark suggested using the Parks and Rec Facebook page with a link.

**e) Open Space Monitoring**

The members spoke of the properties they are supposed to monitor and will confirm with Chairman Taylor. It was recommended that they walk the trails after the storms coming.

**f) Next Newsletter**

C. Aberg stated that she will be sending out the draft by the end of the week. T. Clark said she will add cleanup day to the upcoming events.

**g) Open Space Issues**

There were no other issues to consider.

**5. MEMBER TIME**

D. West would like the Commission to look into if the town could pick up garbage bags after cleanup day. This would be in addition to the normal cleanup day at the Hollow. She has mentioned previously that other towns have handed out garbage bags to the public encouraging them to clean up areas near their home and then leave the bag out front for the town to pick up. She believes there would be greater participation from the community. T. Clark suggested using the funds from the nips bottles to help fund the initiative since in theory the funds are supposed to be used towards the environment. L. Peters stated that it would need to go through the Board of Selectmen. D. West said she will help draft the proposal for the BoS.

L. Peter stated that last month the question had come up if it was all right to put invasives into the compostable food waste. She spoke to the company involved and they said, "absolutely not as it would contaminate the load." The load would be rejected and the Town would actually be charged. This information needs to go into the newsletter.

L. Peters has also been corresponding with Cindy Eastman who is Annie Musso's mother. She remembered that the Conservation Commission mentioned wanting to do something in Annie's name as a memorial. They are creating a non-profit organization to support causes that were important to Annie. The consensus was to wait and discuss this once Chairman Taylor is back.

**6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Elizabeth Lasley, resident, addressed the Commission. Ms. Lasley attended the meeting because she is interested in the solar array project. She mentioned similar projects that had been done in Litchfield and New Milford. She will forward links regarding these projects to J. Sherman. She noted that the New Milford project had the size decreased and parameters put on the project for plantings and trails. All were interested to learn about that.

Bob Burke, 213 Church Hill Road, addressed the Commission. Mr. Burke has adjoining property to the proposed solar farm. Previously the field was used for corn and that resulted in more water on his property. Currently, the field is growing hay and that has been much better. He is very interested in the outcome and what will be done for mitigating any water issues. He wonders what the process is with the Siting Council, seeing as he did not receive any notification from them regarding the upcoming Public Hearing.

Chris McDevitt, 465 Main St. N., addressed the Commission. Ms. McDevitt hopes that the Commission can approach the solar project with the benefits of meadows and perhaps limit the size or help with wildlife and water issues.

Ms. McDevitt was also interested to know the status of the Strong Meadow farmer lease. She would like to know when the town will be discussing the lease terms as it comes up for renewal. Vice Chair Sherman stated that the Selectmen's office is working on the lease. Ms. McDevitt hopes that the Commission will get involved in working with the farmer. She is wondering how she should pursue this. The Commission recommended speaking with the First Selectman's office and going to the Board of Selectmen meeting for her input to be on the record. Vice Chair Sherman stated that he will also look into how the Commission can work with the farmers and have input on the leases.

**7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 3, 2024.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

To adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Made by D. West, Seconded by J. Sherman  
Consensus of the Commission in favor 6-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

*Robyn Wright*

Robyn Wright  
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

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

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT  
This 9th day of Aug 2024  
at 9:20 o'clock AM  
Melissa M. Mascini  
Town Clerk