

**Final / Approved**

**WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**Thursday, March 12, 2020, 7:00 p.m.  
Basement Conference Room, Town Hall  
45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chair Mary Heffernon and Commissioners Jared McQueen, Brad Sammis, Mike Miller and Dianne Saunders, and Environmental Planner Erin O'Hare.

**Absent:** Vice Chair John Lathrop and Commissioners Dianne Lendler, Carl Arsenault and Jeffrey Borne.

Chair Heffernon called this Regular Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**, Regular Meeting, Feb. 13, 2020

These corrections were made:

- p. 3 at 2.C.2., sentence 2, to delete "*re-post this open space property*" and to insert "*re-post these several open space properties.*"
- p. 3 at 2.C.4., sentence 3, to delete "*Chair Heffernon said the Commission is willing to help.*" and to insert "*Chair Heffernon said she is willing to help them with ideas for the garden.*"
- p. 4 at 4., sentence 3, to delete "Ms. O'Hare said the budget must be submitted by March 2<sup>nd</sup>." and to insert "Ms. O'Hare said the Mayoral budget meeting is March 2<sup>nd</sup>."
- p. 5 at 8.D., sentence 2, to change "*Adult*" to read "*Adult Education*".

**Motion was made by Commissioner McQueen to accept the Minutes of February 13, 2020, as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Miller, and approved unanimously.**

**2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

**A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

- 1. Stewards of Tyler Mill – report, D. Saunders & D. Lendler

Commissioner Saunders said that she and some Stewards did litter pickup at a couple of trails. Commissioner Saunders will ask Commissioner Arsenault about an issue on the Purple Trail. On the Pink Trail there is an area by a huge oak where the ground is mushy. Commissioner Saunders said March 22<sup>nd</sup> is the annual gathering date for the Stewards of Tyler Mill. Ms. O'Hare handed out a list of names of the current Stewards.

- 2. Trail head signage

Vice Chair Lathrop has done both trail signs for the Pink Trail, and he made the sign for the Green Trail. He is in the process of painting them.

3. Kiosk sign correction

Ms. O'Hare did not go see the sign yet. The sign maker will fix it and Ms. O'Hare will check to see that it is done.

4. Yellow Trail – proposal to address wet trail

Ms. O'Hare said that she and Commissioner Lendler met with Steward Scott Gray about this. Mr. Gray proposed to re-route the trail by 40 feet to go around the wet area. *The Trails Committee will meet at the trail with Mr. Gray.*

5. Other reports

Commissioner Saunders reported a dumping incident at Tyler Mill, and the police officer told her the result. Public Works staff cleaned it up.

**B. Fresh Meadows**

1. Private memorial request

Ms. O'Hare said there was a meeting about two weeks ago in the Mayor's Office on this memorial request. The Mayor requested that Public Works will take out the existing bench that faces the boulder, preserving the cement pad there. Public Works will put the bench into storage. He is requesting in a letter that the family will purchase a duplicate bench and also buy a plaque to go on it. Public Works would install it on the same concrete pad. We are waiting for the family's response.

**C. Other properties**

1. Cooke Road property – boundary & trespass issues

Ms. O'Hare said the abutting farmer is trespassing, and she wrote a letter asking him to stay off the property. The Commission would like to lease the property, and Ms. O'Hare showed the marked map to the Commissioners. *Chair Heffernon asked the Farmland Lease Committee to consult with Ms. O'Hare and to recommend a lease amount.*

2. Hope Hill Road area – incident – open space boundary markers removed

*Ms. O'Hare will call the police officer to inquire about possible consequences for the students.*

3. Grand Street Park

Chair Heffernon is waiting to hear from the Director of the Boys and Girls Club. If student assistance falls through, we will have to come up with another way to plant that garden. Maybe the Commission budget will include plants.

4. Other – No report.

**3. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

**A. Farmland Lease Committee – bid proposals**

Ms. O'Hare said the Farmland Lease Committee will meet next week. Ms. O'Hare said she had requested the Engineering Department to post Field 5A and the recently designated Field 5B. When Engineering surveyed Cooke Road, they had found a 35-foot encroachment by the farmer on the other side, so the installation of posts by Public Works was requested.

**B. RFQ Autumn olive tree removal - Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Rd./Scard Rd.**

Commissioners Arsenault and Saunders had looked at these Autumn olive trees. Commissioner Saunders said they decided to put out a Request for Quotations on Field 4C because there is no ordinary way to move that material. Commissioner Saunders said the entire area should be cut, but the vendor must leave some vegetation along the road. This work could wait until October. *Ms. O'Hare will write this Request for Quotes to cut and chip the Autumn olive and associated plants and to remove all the brush. She will obtain three written Quotes and report back to the Commissioners. Ms. O'Hare will get the Commissioners a copy of the Purchasing Ordinance that sets quote requirements.*

Ms. O'Hare had sent a letter directing Mr. Bozzuto to mow the field on the corner of Northford Road and Cooke Road, which is now in with Field 6B. *Commissioner Saunders said she will check it.*

#### **C. Field 7A, Northford Rd. – hunter parking proposal & vehicle trespass issue**

Ms. O'Hare said that Director of Public Works Rob Baltramaitis agreed to look at this area. The object is to enlarge the area beyond the Town Right-Of-Way and to have telephone poles or Jersey barriers define the parking area. Commissioner Saunders said adequate parking area is needed because the sight line to drive out is dangerous. *Ms. O'Hare will have a parking sign installed, hopefully before April 17<sup>th</sup> for fishermen.*

#### **4. BUDGET FY20-21**

Ms. O'Hare submitted the proposed FY20-21 budget.

#### **5. NATURAL RESOURCES PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FY 19-20 – discussion**

Discussion was held about uses for the remaining for Natural Resources Professional Services line in this year's budget. Suggestions were: \$250 for plants at the butterfly and pollinator garden in Grand Street Park; having at least five trees planted, such as young tupelos (male and female) approximately 6 feet tall and with deer plastic protecting the lower bark, on both sides of the pond at Fresh Meadows; purchasing supplies of trailblazing paint and kiosk cleaning materials; and some tupelo plantings at Field 8B along Northrop Road—to go in at the base down by the wetland at the bottom of Northford Road, where they can be seen from the trail overlook.

Also, Commissioner Saunders asked if the money to pay for the Autumn olive removal could come from the Open Space Management Resources Fund. *Ms. O'Hare will look into it.*

*Commissioner Saunders will specify the paints and stain by color and amount for each project. Also, Commissioner Saunders suggested renting an Orec brush mower from Taylor Rental, and the other Commissioners agreed. Rental cost is \$85 per day plus a \$15 fee for the tracks to put it up on a vehicle. Total cost would be about \$500 for three days.*

#### **6. PUBLIC EVENTS**

##### **A. History Hike in Tyler Mill Preserve**

The Commission will hold a history of Tyler Mill hike in connection with the Town's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Commissioners are asked to participate, since there will be different hikes: 0.33 mile at from 10:00 a.m. to noon and up to 4.5 miles from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.—on June 6, rain date June 7. Commissioners will receive people at the parking places and lead them to the walks. Some Stewards will also help. There will be no handicapped access and no dogs allowed. Information will be on the 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration website and on the CFPA Trails Day website. *Commissioner Saunders will send the members an e-mail*

*about this History Hike/Jubilee Hike and about signing up to participate. This event will be discussed at the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting as to routes.*

**B. Spring Farm Day event** – Is cancelled for this year due to the Coronavirus.

**C. Pollinator Event** – Is cancelled for this year due to the Coronavirus.

**D. Big Event, Quinnipiac University students, April 4** – Chair Heffernon will find out if this has been cancelled. She will advise the Commissioners.

**E. Possible Earth Day Program** – This event was not discussed for this year due to the Coronavirus.

## **7. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE**

**A. Land Conservation Conference**, Wesleyan University, Sat., March 21, 2020 – was cancelled.

**B. Rockfall Symposium:** “The Birds and the Bees – What Your Mother Did Not Tell You – Landscape Practices for a Sustainable Future”, deKoven Community Center, 27 Washington Street, Middletown, March 26, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., has been cancelled.

**C. Claire Cain, CT Forest & Park Association**, trail relocation proposal on Town land near Tri-Mountain State Park. This is by Howd Road and beyond. The Water Department is reviving this proposal.

**D. Eversource notice re: Vegetative Management Work** in two transmission corridors; map attached; received 3/2/20. This notes vegetation removal in Wallingford by Eversource from now until fall.

**E. DEEP magazine**, *Connecticut Wildlife*, Jan./Feb. 2020 – was received.

Regarding Marcus Cooke Park, Commissioner McQueen said there is a “leaner tree” at about 200 feet into the trail. It is covered with brambles and needs to be cut out. This tree is 1’ to 1 ½’ in diameter.

*Property Reports are due in April from Commissioners Arsenault, Lathrop and Miller for their properties and from Commissioners Saunders and Lendler for Tyler Mill.*

**8. NEXT MEETING** – April 9, 2020

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Commissioner McQueen to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Sammis, and approved unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen L. Burns  
Recording Secretary