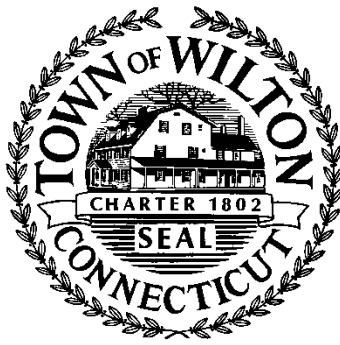


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Telephone (203) 563-0180

Fax (203) 563-0284



TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**May 4, 2011 – 7:30 P.M.**

**TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"**

Present: Kristen Begor, chairman, Dave Hapke, Patrice Gillespie, Nick Lee, Jeff Coppelman, Kim Young

Absent: Chris Coyle

Also Present: Patricia Sesto, Director Environmental Affairs, Recording Secretary Liz Larkin

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Ms. Begor called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.
- II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS – None
- III. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS - None
- IV. ONGOING BUSINESS
  - A. **Newsletter** – Ms. Sesto reported that Mr. Hapke’s article did not fit in this newsletter. Commissioners confirmed that they received their copies in the mail on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, in time for the events that weekend. The commission discussed the Fall 2011 newsletter and agreed that the process needs to start earlier to avoid delays in the mailing.
  - B. **Commissioner Assignments** - Mr. Lee and Mr. Hapke noted that their terms will end in December of this year. A discussion ensued relating to the process associated with appointing new members to the commission. The Board of Selectman reviews candidates nominated by the relevant political party. Both Mr. Lee and Mr. Hapke are registered Republicans. The commissioners were asked to think about possible candidates with technical expertise. Mike Rudolph is in charge of the Republican nominations so commissioners are urged to contact him with recommendations. Ms. Young suggested that Kate Throckmorton come back. Mr. Lee suggested Rob Hutchinson and Lars Cherichetti.

- C. **Parks** – Ms. Sesto noted that Mike Conklin had a baby and did not have a staff report for this meeting.

Ms. Sesto confirmed that Dave Francefort is re-routing some of the trails in the town forest. Portions of the red and yellow trails are now closed.

Ms. Sesto reported that the Town's Department of Public Works wants to store material at Schencks Island. In order to accommodate the room they need, the fence in the parking lot will be removed. They will utilize some of the wooded area and will install construction fencing to avoid unintended disturbance.

The commission discussed the tick study and Ambler Farm's letter to the editor in the paper. Ms. Sesto was planning on writing a Letter to the Editor to explain the process and how this study may actually reduce the amount of pesticide that is applied. Ms. Sesto feels that since Ambler Farm was the only entity to weigh in a letter from her may incite further debate and decided to forgo the article. She added her hope that a article following the conclusion of the study will recount the study's findings and reiterate that the best defense against ticks is mechanics (deer fencing), reducing the deer herd and if chemical application is the chosen reaction, the promote dragging for ticks to see if this action is warranted.

A discussion ensued relating to the bee keeper population in Wilton. Ms. Begor confirmed that there were no bee keepers that voiced concern at the meeting she attended. Ms. Young noted that she understands there are more than 100 registered bee keepers in Wilton. Ms. Young is a bee keeper and she was not notified when her neighbor was getting a pesticide application. The need to pre-register for this notification was discussed. Ms. Young was on a list to be notified of these activities but Mr. Lee was not certain if she would need to re-apply every year to be on this list. The commission noted that this would be a good topic for the next newsletter.

- D. **Recycling** - Mr. Hapke reported that the new scale has been installed at the Transfer Station. The project was put on hold until the regrading could be done this spring. When you enter the Transfer Station, there are now two lanes, one of which has the scale. He added that the recycling area layout will be different once this project is complete.

C. **Work with other Commissions/Committees**

1. **Tree/Bench Committee** – Ms. Sesto reported that the Arbor Day Celebration was well attended and honored George Symonds. There is one donated tree left to plant and one donated bench left to install. Ms. Gillespie noted that the crabapple trees in front of Village Market are doing great.

Ms. Young reported that she spoke to Bill Adamson who has American chestnut saplings or nuts to plant in test sites. She recommended planting these near chestnut trees as they have their own germ plasma.

Ms. Sesto noted that the Tree Festival will be held at Cranbury Park on May 21<sup>st</sup> from 11am – 3pm. Ms. Begor will check availability for manning the table.

2. **Energy Committee** – Ms. Gillespie reported that the Neighbor to Neighbor Launch went well at the Go Green Festival with 35-40 people in attendance. Rudy Marconi, First Selectman of Ridgefield, has added some friendly competition to this by stating that “Ridgefield will bury Wilton” in this challenge.
  
3. **Go Green Committee** – Mr. Lee noted that he spoke to a resident at the Go Green Festival who had the energy audit recently. He stated that it was recommended for her to install spray installation in her attic to save on energy costs, however, this application was not within the town regulations so it needs to be removed per the building code. He hopes that other residents do not have this same issue.

Ms. Gillespie reported that she has called the exhibitors after this event and some recommended the land and water tables be spread out among the other exhibitors to keep the areas more interesting and fun for attendees. The Earth Balloon was a favorite for this event.

## **E. Regional Projects**

1. **FFD Co. Deer Management Alliance** - Ms. Sesto stated that the Interviews are continuing with the hunters and land owners from Wilton’s effort in the 2010 hunting season. Once these responses are received, they will be reviewed with the committee.

Howard Kilpatrick, State Wildlife Biologist, specializing in deer management is coming to the Wilton Garden Club Conservation meeting in the fall. The club has invited the Conservation Commission to attend. Time and date are to be determined.

There was nothing to report on the Alliance’s activities.

2. **Norwalk River Valley Trail** – Ms. Sesto reported that the NRVT steering committee is holding public workshops in the five participating towns. Wilton’s meeting is May 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30pm in the High School Cafeteria.

Ms. Sesto announced that the State of Connecticut paperwork has been received and the NRVT has a contract number to proceed with implementing the grant.

**Bike to Work Program** – There is a program with the League of American Bikers in the month of May, which is the 2011 National Bike Month. Patagonia of Westport has chosen to sponsor the NRVT with its promotion. During the week of May 16<sup>th</sup> (bike week), if Patagonia employees ride their bike to work, they will earn \$1/mile to donate to NRVT. Patagonia of Westport also has some promotions for this event including free gear.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

**A. DEA's Drug Take Back Day/Program** – Ms. Begor reported that there were almost three full bags of prescription drugs that were turned over to the DEA on April 30<sup>th</sup>. She mentioned that the event was a little slow possibly due to the marketing materials not being distributed in time to get the message out.

Ms. Begor noted that there is a conference call on May 5, 2011, to talk about the permanent collection box in the Police Department. Ms. Begor is hoping that the Police Department can take the initiative to own this process. Mr. Lee suggested getting the Police Commission, specifically Matt Mason, involved. Ms. Young will contact Chief Lombardo to find out if he could assign someone. Ms. Begor stated that the Police should make a “big splash” to make residents aware of what is being accepted. Ms. Sesto noted that this piece can be coordinated through this commission and Kim Becker, a volunteer that assisted with the one-time collection.

**B. 350.org Presentation at Wilton Library** – Ms. Begor and Ms. Gillespie reported on this event which was held on April 28<sup>th</sup>. The speaker, Bill McKibben, spoke of his position as an environmentalist in this “changing earth”. He wrote a book, “*Eaarth: Making a Life on A Tough New Planet*” in which he focuses on scaling back to help preserve what we have left.

**C. Gift of Land from Perry Evens Estate** – Ms. Sesto noted that there is a vacant

corner lot at 5 Dirksen Drive, known as the Estate of Perry Evans, which is devised to the town, subject to maintaining the land for Open Space purposes. Ms. Sesto inspected the property and reported an even-aged forest with no indication of dumping. Mr. Lee noted that if there is a portion of the neighbor's driveway on the parcel, it should be removed. Ms. Sesto confirmed that the town could require the land be fixed prior to taking it over as the value is only visual.

Ms. Young MOVED that the Selectman accept the land, SECONDED by Mr. Hapke and CARRIED 6-0-0.

**D. Wampum Hill Scenic Road Designation** – Ms. Sesto noted that there is a request for Wampum Hill to be designated as a scenic road in Wilton. The scenic road will start at Aspetuck Land Trust property to the north and will continue west to Cannon Road. Ms. Sesto confirmed that this designation does not inhibit development. The change will mostly affect the Department of Public Works and how they handle road improvements. They would have legal flexibility to not meet certain road standards. The safety issues will still be addressed, but with greater flexibility. The existing scenic roads in town are parts of Ridgefield Road, Nod Hill Road, Tito Lane, Seeley Road, and Old Huckleberry Road.

Mr. Lee MOVED that the town accept the request, SECONDED by Ms. Young and CARRIED 6-0-0.

VI. LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Hapke thanked Ms. Gillespie for completing his liaison duties for the Inland Wetland Commission meetings in the month of April. He reported on the meetings he attended with the Planning and Zoning Commission. He explained the Caraluzzi's and Cannondale applications that were discussed.

Ms. Gillespie reported on the Cannondale application before the Inland Wetland Commission.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Sesto stated that she had nothing further to report.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 4/6/11 – Mr. Hapke MOVED to approve the minutes

and Ms. Young SECONDED the motion. The Minutes were APPROVED 6-o-o.

- IX. ADJOURN – Ms. Begor MOVED to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Hapke SECONDED the motion. The motion CARRIED 6-o-o. The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Next meeting will be June 1, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Larkin  
Recording Secretary

DRAFT