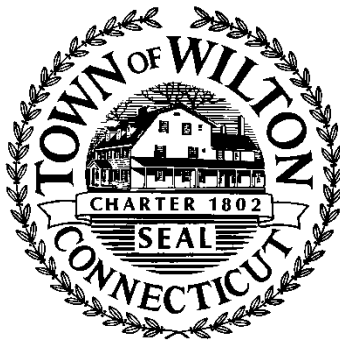


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

December 7, 2011 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"

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

Also Present: Patricia Sesto, Dir. Environmental Affairs, Liz Larkin, Recording Secretary, Kate Throckmorton 294 Nod Hill Road

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Ms. Begor called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.
- II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS - None
- III. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS – None
- IV. ELECTIONS

Mr. Hapke nominated Ms. Begor for another term as Chair, SECONDED by Mr. Lee and CARRIED 6-o-o.

Ms. Begor nominated Ms. Young for another term as Vice Chair/Secretary, SECONDED by Mr. Lee and CARRIED 6-o-o.

- V. NEW COMMISSIONERS

There was discussion about the potential new Commission members, Donna Merrill, Susan DiLoreto, and Mark DeSimone, touching on their backgrounds and how they become a Commissioner with the Board of Selectman and Town Clerk.

- VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Lee MOVED to shuffle the agenda for the public, Mr. Hapke SECONDED the Motion and it CARRIED 6-o-o.

A. Driveway Permit for 294 Nod Hill Road

Ms. Throckmorton described that she had received approval approximately 10 years ago for her new driveway construction and the need to get approval pursuant to the Scenic Road Ordinance was overlooked by DPW. The driveway is roughed in already and access was not possible off Branchbrook Road due to the presence of wetlands.

Mr. Lee MOVED to approve the driveway as shown on the plan, SECONDED by Mr. Hapke and CARRIED 6-0-0.

VII. DEPARTING COMMISSIONERS

The commission thanked Dave Hapke and Nick Lee for their 10 years of service to the commission. Ms. Begor highlighted some of their particularly valued attributes and noted they will be missed.

VIII. ONGOING BUSINESS

A. Parks –

Storm Damage Report

Chairman Begor noted the staff report distributed by Mike Conklin included a note that if issues are not reported timely, that there will be no chance to be reimbursed by federal funds. All Commissioners should be walking their respective parks to assess and report any damage. Ms. Sesto confirmed that there is no bidding process for the work that is done which makes it easier and faster to get items addressed quickly.

Spencer-Rice Preserve

Ms. Sesto reminded the commission that they walked this property a few months ago to assess the shed and driveway that were built on town property at 10 Gaylord and clearing in the Preserve behind 12 Gaylord Drive. The town had advised the 2 property owners involved of the situation and a zoning permit was issued for 10 Gaylord Drive to remove the shed. Ms. Sesto reported that the shed has not yet been moved. The owners of 12 Gaylord have ceased to respond to letters or emails. She inquired whether the commission would like this to be turned over to town counsel.

A discussion ensued relating to what the town can do at this time based on what correspondence has taken place. Ms. Sesto confirmed that the violators can be fined. Ms. Sesto was instructed to send a deadline letter to the owners of 10 Gaylord Drive. The neighbor at 12 Gaylord has received this deadline letter with no response. This violation will be turned over to town counsel at this time.

B. Recycling –

Mr. Hapke reported there is nothing new with town recycling as the Department of Public Works has been busy with post storm clean-up. Ms. Sesto added that the storm clean-up will not be completed until the spring. A discussion ensued about the storm clean-up and the chipping of all the debris. Ms. Begor stated that it was helpful for the transfer station to accept spoiled food free of charge during and after the power outages.

D. Work with other Commissions/Committees

Tree/Bench Committee –

Mr. Lee had nothing to report.

Energy Committee –

Ms. Gillespie reported that the Energy Committee has been very busy. They are meeting with a consultant to look at the efficiencies of town buildings.

Go Green Committee –

Ms. Gillespie reported on the “Bring Your Own Bag” initiative. Prior to the program, it was estimated that 8 – 10 % of shoppers used their own recyclable bag. The program gave away approximately 15,000 bags and six months later, up to 18% of shoppers use reusable bags.

A discussion ensued relating to banning plastic bags. The commission agreed that banning may not be desirable for all merchants. It was reported that Westport banned plastic bags in 2008. Whole Foods refunds 10 cents for reusable bags. Seattle has a \$.20 fee that is charged for single-use bags. It was also noted that Ireland merchants have a \$.30 fee for single-use bags which is a good deterrent for most residents.

Ms. Begor stated that it would be difficult to ban plastic, but charging is a good idea. Ms. Gillespie noted that places that charge 10 cents per bag have better participation than when charged 5 cents per bag.

Ms. Gillespie noted that there will be no Go Green Festival in 2012. The Go Green Committee is concentrating on a Neighbor-to-Neighbor community effort for the coming year.

E. Regional Projects

1. FFD Co. Deer Alliance –

Ms. Sesto had nothing new to report. The commission asked how many deer have been harvested this season to date in Wilton. Ms. Sesto reported that not all hunters check their deer with the town so it is difficult to gauge, but

the DEEP will provide season totals later on. Ms. Gillespie reported that her hunter has harvested 7 deer so far this season.

2. Norwalk River Valley Trail –

Ms. Sesto reported that the committee is working diligently. She reminded the commission that there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Budget

Ms. Sesto reported that the numbers have not been finalized by the Finance Department. She was able to meet the mandate of a less than 1% increase based on what information she had to date.

2. Meeting Schedule 2012

The commission received the 2012 Meeting Schedule via email prior to the meeting. The meetings fall on the first Wednesday of each month.

Ms. Young MOVED to APPROVE the meeting schedule, SECONDED by Ms. Begor, and CARRIED 6-0-0

X. LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Hapke reported on the Planning & Zoning meeting he attended where Affordable Housing was discussed. Ms. Sesto provided an update on the approval for Mr. Ramadani for Portofino's Restaurant with the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Ms. Gillespie agreed to be the liaison for January 2012. There are several new members joining the commission in January so a discussion will take place at the January meeting when members can decide which months work best to act as liaison.

XI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 11/2/11 –

Mr. Hapke MOVED to APPROVE the November 2, 2011 meeting minutes, SECONDED by Ms. Young, and CARRIED 6-0-0.

XII. ADJOURN – Ms. Begor MOVED to adjourn at 8:23pm, SECONDED by Nick Lee, and CARRIED 6-0-0.

Next meeting will be January 4, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Larkin
Secretary, Environmental Affairs