

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Telephone (203) 563-0180

Fax (203) 563-0284



TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

May 2, 2012 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"

Present: Patrice Gillespie, Acting Chair, Susan DiLoreto, Daniel Berg, Donna Merrill, Jeff Coppelman

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

Absent: Kristen Begor, Kim Young (notified of intended absences)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Ms. Gillespie called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS

- a. **WET#2106(S) SAXON – 197 Catalpa Road** – construction of building addition within 100 ft. of upland review including B100a and other site improvements

Ms. Sesto explained the plan for this building addition and defined the B100a system that is required per the Health Code. She described that the system is for 3 -5 bedrooms and noted the trees to be protected as indicated on the plan.

Ms. Sesto confirmed where the addition and the rain garden are proposed, and noted that there is an old pool that was obscured in the field by overgrown vegetation. She added that there is evidence of high ground water on the property from tree trunks and roots, plus the type of the home, a raised ranch, is frequently associated with high ground water.

Ms. Sesto described the construction activity as being 70 ft. from the wetland, but noted the overland flow path is actually 100 ft. from the wetland. The homeowner proposes reclaiming the area of pachysandra and creating lawn.

The commission discussed the lack of information included with the application. Ms. DiLoreto requested that the applicant include a project narrative as the intent of the activity is not clear. Mr. Coppelman added that trees are not shown on the plan, which makes it difficult to determine the disturbance.

III. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS - None

IV. ONGOING BUSINESS

A. Parks –

Ms. Sesto confirmed that all commissioners received Mike Conklin's Staff Report via email.

The commission discussed the Park Evaluation Form and Ms. Sesto asked that this form be completed each time a commissioner walks their park or open space. The form can be altered or recreated to suit the commissioner. Ms. Sesto encouraged commissioners to file a report even if no work or staff support is being requested. In her experience most of the reporting pertained to illegal dumping.

B. Recycling – None

D. Work with other Commissions/Committees

Tree/Bench Committee –

Ms. DiLoreto reported that the Tree Committee is working on spring events. The upcoming event is the Norwalk-Wilton Tree Festival which is being held on May 19, 2012 at Cranbury Park in Norwalk. Ms. Gillespie stated that she can assist in getting the Conservation Commission booth set up by helping deliver items on the day of the event as she will be sitting at another booth. Ms. DiLoreto volunteered to take the 11am to 1pm shift. Mr. Berg will check his schedule for the later half of the day from 1 – 3 pm.

Deer Committee –

Ms. Sesto confirmed that all commissioners received a copy of the 2012 Deer Management Plan via email. She explained that this is a report of what happened in the last hunting season and includes a plan for recommendations for the next season.

Ms. Sesto conveyed that sharp shooting is recommended in order to attain significant reduction in deer density. She stated that the committee will be concentrating on educating the public in the coming year. The committee will need to demonstrate to the DEEP that the past programs have not worked at the level that the town requires to bring the herd numbers down.

Ms. Sesto explained the recommendations included in the report such as adding Saturdays and holidays for hunting. The Thanksgiving holiday weekend will remain as a no-hunting weekend.

Ms. Sesto confirmed that the DEEP came to Redding and completed a town-wide survey. They received a 70% return rate from the surveys which gave them an idea of attitudes and understanding about hunting. Overall, people were in favor of hunting but there was a disconnect with those same residents being comfortable with hunting near their homes. She explained that Wilton will increase pressure on the DEEP to evaluate the adopted laws and challenge them to do away with those that compromise the ability to increase harvests without compromising safety or a humane kill. DEEP's involvement will also compel them to face the limitations of current hunting laws; this isn't just an issue of access.

Mr. Coppelman MOVED to APPROVE the 2012 Hunt Plan, as drafted, SECONDED by Mr. Berg and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Energy Committee –

Ms. Gillespie reported that Hal Clark, with the Energy Commission and Selectman, is helping to lead the initiative to get natural gas pipelines through town which is commencing in six to eight months. Ms. Sesto asked if the committee has discussed building the Norwalk River Valley Trail on top of these lines. Ms. Gillespie will check on this option.

Ms. Gillespie stated that Richard Creeth is attempting to get approval to lay fiber optic lines through town which could happen at the same time to avoid further disturbance.

Ms. Gillespie also confirmed that the town is implementing an energy management plan for all town buildings. Each building has an assigned Energy Champion to reduce energy consumption. The Town Hall Annex Building's champion is Mike Ahern, Field Engineer.

Go Green Committee –

Ms. Gillespie reminded the commission about the upcoming Green Homes Tour. She stated that it is worthwhile at \$20 per ticket, and they have only sold 4 tickets.

E. Regional Projects

1. FFD Co. Deer Management Alliance

Ms. Sesto reiterated that the Alliance is putting more pressure on the DEEP for assistance and recommendations.

2. Norwalk River Valley Trail

Ms. Sesto reported that the committee is working to create a new logo. She confirmed that the roll out of the routing study will begin by the beginning of June. The format was accepted with no major re-works. The Boards of Selectmen will “host” the presentation and invitations will be extended to land use boards and the public. She noted that Ridgefield suggested Wilton host Ridgefield and Redding as Wilton has shown strong leadership on the project. She added that Department of Transportation has informally provided their approval. All five towns have set a goal to have a portion of the trail completed within the next five months. Although the trail is being designed as a 27-mile trail, in actuality, with the addition of side trails, it will be closer to 40 miles total.

Ms. Sesto reported that a professional trail building company attended the last meeting. They will bring a unified design to the trail and will teach volunteers proper techniques for a natural look.

V. NEW BUSINESS - None

VI. LIAISON REPORT

Ms. DiLoreto reported on the Inland Wetland Meetings she attended in April. She explained the Wilton Plaza Condo Associates received approval to remove contaminated soil from the former dry cleaner site. She also noted the Wilton Bank application for 225 New Canaan Road was approved to be brought back to the original approved plan.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 4/4/12 –

Ms. Gillespie MOVED to APPROVE the meeting minutes as amended by Liz Larkin, SECONDED by Mr. Berg, and CARRIED 5-0-0.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

IX. ADJOURN – Ms. Merrill MOVED to adjourn at 8:50pm, SECONDED by Ms. DiLoreto, and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Next meeting will be June 6, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Larkin
Secretary, Environmental Affairs