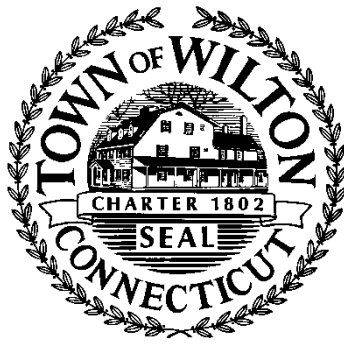


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY January 7, 2015 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"

MINUTES

- I. PRESENT: Dan Berg (Chair), Donna Merrill, Frank Simone, Jackie Algon
- II. ALSO PRESENT: Mike Conklin, Environmental Analyst; Liz Larkin, Secretary, Environmental Affairs; William Patty, Resident
- III. ABSENT: Susan DiLoreto (notified of intended absence)
- IV. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Berg called the meeting to order at 7:39pm.
- V. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS

A. **WET#2295(S) WILTON YOUTH FOOTBALL – 131 School Road**– renovation of an existing grass turf field to an artificial turf field at Middlebrook School

Mr. Conklin confirmed that he, Ms. Merrill and Mr. Simone attended a site walk of the property. Ms. Algon stated she also walked the property but not with the group.

Mr. Conklin stated that the application was submitted previously and withdrawn. He confirmed the task of this commission is to review the project and provide comments to the Inland Wetlands Commission relating to conservation concerns.

Mr. Conklin introduced Will Patty as the abutting neighbor who receives the storm water discharge from the existing school site. Mr. Conklin then provided a general overview of the plan and the proposed activities. He confirmed that the storm water management system is what the group should be considering because that is the bulk of the work in the regulated area.

Mr. Conklin explained the stormwater management system consists of a catch basin and underground drains that capture the rainfall runoff from the field. The runoff flows into underground infiltrators. Excess water is piped from the infiltrators into a bio-filtration basin and eventually discharges via the outfall pipe. He described the underground detention galleries as 24 inch perforated HDPE pipe surrounded by gravel. Mr. Conklin confirmed the proposed system is engineered to retain and infiltrate the first inch of rainfall. It has an infiltration rate of 3 inches per hour. He stated that he was concerned about what would take place if the ground is already saturated during a rain event as there would be no chance for infiltration.

Mr. Conklin explained the discharge pipe from the bio-filtration basin will be a stand pipe with riprap. The discharge being sent to the existing stormwater pipe is evident in a picture Mr. Patty brought to the meeting. There is a clear erosion issue in the photo. The applicant is proposing to address the erosion issue by cutting the pipe 15 feet back and installing a boulder wall and sump, with 6 inch granular fill and riprap. Mr. Conklin confirmed there is a 3-1 slope proposed along the edges of the sump area to slow the flow of water before it exits the site.

Mr. Berg inquired about what is currently contained in the runoff with the existing grass field. Mr. Conklin confirmed that there is no mention of the current runoff and he would suggest deep test holes to understand what is happening currently and what the ground underneath the field consists of today. Mr. Conklin stated that the engineering firm associated with the application only provided very limited soil data. He then noted that the construction vehicles needed for the project could compact the area when they drive over it.

Mr. Simone asked how quickly the artificial turf would drain in a rain event. Mr. Conklin confirmed that it is not clear and some may be well drained and some may not if there is bedrock present. Mr. Conklin then noted that there are a lot of pipes in the area and the test holes will be required to know if the drainage plan will fit.

Mr. Conklin stated he was concerned about the erosion potential during and after construction due to the placement of the infiltrator on the edge of the property in a steep area. He noted that the plan includes a silt fence but they are bringing in fill to bring the grade up in one corner. He suggested requesting hay bales or some other stronger erosion measures. Mr. Conklin was not certain if the pipe they are proposing would be enough to stop the erosion issue as there is no study provided that shows what currently runs out. Mr. Berg asked why the pipe is proposed in this location and Mr. Conklin guessed that it requires a certain pitch.

Ms. Algon raised concern about the safety of the ditches. Mr. Conklin confirmed this is a Planning & Zoning concern and it will be brought to their attention.

Mr. Conklin stated that the Pollutant Report shows that the stormwater that goes into the detention system will be higher in zinc with the artificial turf. He confirmed it may not be as much zinc that would be present with a parking lot, but more than the current grass field. He would like to ask what level of zinc is discharged from the outlet and if there are any negative effects on this specific wetland system.

Mr. Patty asked Mr. Conklin if he could determine how long the water is retained as he was concerned about thermal pollution. Mr. Conklin confirmed that the field will hold and cool the first inch as it will seep into the ground. After the first inch, the detention system will hold the next inch. Mr. Patty stated that when it rains, the water from the property washes over his driveway which has caused issues on his property. Mr. Patty confirmed that the current drainage from rooftops and parking lots on the site go through his property and adding "another parking lot" as this field will be considered from an environmental perspective, with rubber, will be worse for his property. He indicated that he has hired his own engineer, Steve Trinkhaus, to confirm his agreement with the numbers provided by McChord Engineering.

Mr. Conklin raised concern about the potential increased volume of runoff over time as the report provided in the application does not account for this. He stated there would be a potential issue if ice or other material is blocking the system from accepting the runoff. He is concerned about the best use of the site based on extreme engineering that is being proposed. He explained the "do nothing" alternative whereas the

commission could suggest that the field remain a grass field as an option.

Ms. Algon asked if the town was prepared to maintain the field and the pipes for proper function. Mr. Conklin was not in the position to answer this question but he will note it for the Parks and Recreation Department. A discussion ensued relating to the piping of the current field and the proposed turf field. Mr. Conklin suggested a holistic approach to all the school fields so that all residents and town employees have a clear indication of what is required to make the fields better as a whole, instead of field by field.

Mr. Conklin stated according to the application materials there is a report from the CT DEEP that states there are no negative impacts to wetlands or watercourses with the installation of a turf field. The commissioners were concerned about this report as they felt there may be inaccuracies. Mr. Conklin confirmed that we must accept the information from the DEEP as they are the experts but he will further review the details of the reports. Mr. Patty asked if that report speaks to the thermal impacts. Mr. Conklin stated it does not so this question will be raised in the Conservation Commissions comments.

VI. PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS - None

VII. ONGOING BUSINESS

A. Parks Reports – There were no updates on any parks. Mr. Conklin noted that he would contact Ms. DiLoreto as the champion of Bradley Park as he has some volunteers ready to complete work.

B. Conservation Activity Log Updates

Quarry Head Trail Consolidation - Ms. Merrill indicated that a meeting will be scheduled with Dave Francefort shortly to discuss the Quarry Head trail consolidation project.

Horseshoe Pond Long Term Management Plan - Ms. Merrill stated that she is thinking about what she would like to propose at Horseshoe Pond. She has switched her focus of cleaning up the buffer of the pond to concentrating on the biodiversity of the area. She noted that there is a meadow on one side of the pond which is Schencks Island, and a forest at Bradley on the other side. Ms. Merrill stated she would like to showcase these locations as they are very rare to be in such close proximity and can be a location for research and development. Mr. Conklin suggested a heavy impact plan that would include clearing invasives so the area would look more like a park setting. Mr. Simone asked if there was any funding for the invasive removal. Ms. Merrill stated that the first grant she considered did not work for this purpose so she is engaging area property owners.

Park Walks with the Garden Club – Ms. Algon confirmed a walk is being scheduled at Black Farm on February 22nd. If there is snow on the ground, snow shoes will be an option for this walk.

Invasives Workshop - Ms. Algon confirmed that the Conservation Commission of the Wilton Garden Club has booked a room at the Library and more information will be forthcoming.

C. Work with other Commissions/Committees

- i. Tree Committee – Ms. DiLoreto was not in attendance to provide a report.
- ii. Deer Committee – Ms. Merrill confirmed the hunt is ongoing and the number of deer harvested is low for this time of the year. She also confirmed that there is another parcel of the Land Trust that was recently opened up to hunting.
- iii. Land Trust – Ms. Merrill stated that the Land Trust sent a proposal to NRCS for assistance with the costs for removing invasives in the Gregg and Harrison Smith Preserves which would be a three year project including replanting native species.

D. Regional Projects

- i. Fairfield County Regional Conservation Partnership – Ms. Merrill indicated that there is a meeting on January 15th at the Weston Town Hall if anyone is interested in attending. She also described they have an intern who is looking at patterns of migratory birds.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS - None

IX. LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Merrill did not have to attend any meetings in December so there is nothing to report. There is an opening for the January liaison due to Kristen Begor's departure so Mr. Simone offered to be the January liaison.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 12/3/14

Ms. Algon MOVED to APPROVE the meeting minutes as drafted, SECONDED by Ms. Merrill, and CARRIED 4-0-0.

XI. ADJOURN – Mr. Berg MOVED to adjourn at 9:09pm, SECONDED by Ms. Algon, and CARRIED 4-0-0.

Next meeting will be February 4, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Larkin, Secretary, Environmental Affairs