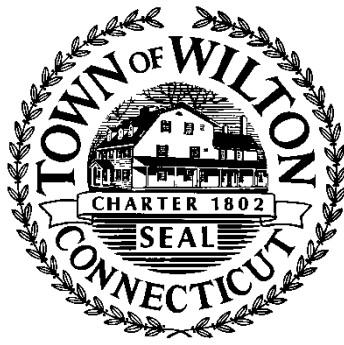


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**WEDNESDAY May 4, 2016 – 7:30 P.M.**

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

**MINUTES**

I. PRESENT: Dan Berg, Chair, Donna Merrill, Jackie Algon, Frank Simone, Susan DiLoreto, Colleen O'Brien

II. ALSO PRESENT: Liz Larkin, Secretary, Environmental Affairs

III. ABSENT: Jade Hobson (notified of intended absence)

IV. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Berg called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

V. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS

A. **WET#2388(S) SEEBERGER – 86 Old Belden Hill Road** – proposed pool, patio, and pool house

No review was completed as the commission was not able to complete a site walk.

B. **WET#2386(S) JONES – 6 Cardinal Lane** – “corrective action” to address unauthorized tree and brush removal

No review was completed as the commission was not able to complete a site walk.

VI. PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS

**SDP, State DOT (owner)/Friends of Norwalk River Valley Trail (applicant)**, intersection of Sharp Hill Road and Autumn Ridge Road, to allow a gravel parking area for 8 parking spaces

No review of the plan was completed as the commission did not have the opportunity for a site walk. Ms. DiLoreto suggested that signs be erected that ask visitors to carry out what they carry in as there is a trash issue on the trail. Ms. Algon suggested adding garbage receptacles at the trail heads. Ms. Merrill confirmed she is the May liaison so she would attend the Planning and Zoning Meeting on behalf of this commission. Ms. Algon asked that she relay the Conservation Commission's concern that they install the parking area away from the swamp in that vicinity.

VII. ONGOING BUSINESS

**A. Parks Reports – None**

**B. Conservation Activity Log Updates**

**Quarry Head Trail Consolidation** – Ms. Merrill stated she has been emailing with Dave Francefort to arrange the work day to rework the trails. He had suggested four dates: May 21<sup>st</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, July 16, or October 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. DiLoreto suggested we use all four days so the work is broken up over time. Ms. Merrill confirmed she would speak with Mr. Francefort to get more details and would communicate the plan back to the commission.

**Horseshoe Pond Long-Term Management Plan** – Ms. DiLoreto stated she wanted the success of the recent work at Schenck’s Island to help garner interest in Horseshoe Pond improvements. She confirmed she is working with Jeff Lapnow with Bolton Landscapes on a planting plan for the work being done at the stop sign area at the north end of the pond. The estimate for the plantings was \$4,000 which is wholesale pricing so fundraising needs to take place. Ms. DiLoreto noted the plants are available in the Spring, and then again in the fall, but not in the summer. Mr. Lapnow is pursuing a power source to operate a pump out of the pond for irrigation to establish the plants.

**Park Walks/Talks** – Ms. Algon stated that she contacted the Yale Observatory to find out if someone would be willing to lead a nighttime walk. The response she received was that school is about to go on break for the summer and nobody was willing to lead a walk in May. She confirmed she reached out to Stamford Nature Center and McCarthy Observatory in New Milford as well, and Robert Lambert from New Milford is willing to lead the walk. Mr. Lambert suggested that October is a good time as it gets dark earlier after the time change. Ms. Algon noted the ideal window of time would be 5 days before the full moon or 4 days after as the light of the full moon is too bright.

The commissioners discussed possible alternatives for the May walk which would be scheduled for May 15<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. The Town Forest was chosen as a possible location with an option to have a wildflower walk with Tina Duncan instead, if she is available.

It was discussed that the June walk could be lead by Victor DiMassio who is a butterfly expert. The locations that were mentioned are Schenck’s Island and Keeler’s Ridge. Ms. Algon will reach out to him and find out if July would be a better time. The date was set as June 12<sup>th</sup> and Mr. Berg stated he could lead a walk in Town Forest on that date if the butterfly walk does not take place.

**Carry In/Carry Out Initiative** – No update.

**GIS Trail Maps for Walkers Guide** – No update.

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

- i. Tree Committee – Ms. DiLoreto reported the Arbor Day Event took place with Carol Russell being named Tree Steward for the year.

- ii. Deer Committee – Ms. Merrill stated there was nothing to report.
- iii. Land Trust – Ms. Merrill stated the Land Trust is looking at a few new properties in town.

#### **D. Regional Projects**

- i. Fairfield County Regional Conservation Partnership – Ms. Merrill reported that a member of the group is going around to different Conservation Commissions and providing a Power Point presentation about what they are trying to accomplish with connectivity of Open Space. The commissioners agreed they would be interested in the 20-minute presentation for the June meeting.
- ii. Woodcock Nature Center – Ms. Merrill suggested that we invite Mike Rubbo, the new Director of the Center, to a meeting to learn more about, and possibly partner with them. The commissioners agreed that he can be invited to the July meeting. Ms. Merrill mentioned that Mr. Rubbo is hoping to work with High School students so he can teach them how to blaze trails and complete trail work which can benefit this Commission.

### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Conservation Newsletter** – Ms. Larkin noted that articles are due on May 13<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the list of topics to remind commissioners what they agreed to write. Ms. Merrill is submitting a shorter and corrected version of the Alice Levin article from the Fall. Mr. Conklin and Ms. Larkin are working on an article for educating the public on Deer Hunting, Ms. Algon is going to write something up about the site walks she is coordinating. There is an article written by Sarah Crosby of Earthplace, and Mr. Berg stated he could put something together for the carry in/carry out initiative. Additionally, Ms. Merrill will send Ms. Larkin the recent article that she read about how to avoid dog walking issues such as degradation of river beds and waste. Ms. Merrill added that Weston has started fining dog walkers for not picking up waste and Aspetuck Land Trust now has a warden to enforce the waste laws at Trout Brook Valley as they have had so many issues in the past.

**B. Townwide Cleanup Day Update** – Ms. Larkin provided a brief overview of the results where we collected 1,000 lbs. of litter.

### **IX. LIAISON REPORT**

Ms. DiLoreto reported that she attended the Inland Wetlands Meeting where Schenck's Island Restoration was discussed. She noted the 18 trees that this Commission was concerned about, will fit nicely into the proposed area. In addition, the Wetlands concurred with the Conservation Commission that a buffer planting between the lawn and the Norwalk River will be required, which will be a viewpoint.

Ms. Merrill is the liaison for the month of May. Ms. Larkin confirmed that the liaison should attend the Planning & Zoning meeting for Monday night, May 9<sup>th</sup>, as the Norwalk River Valley Trail parking lot at Sharp Hill Road and Autumn Ridge is on the agenda.

**XI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 4/6/16 Meeting, 4/23/16 Cleanup Event, 4/24/16 Allen’s Meadows Walk**

Ms. Algon MOVED to APPROVE the meeting minutes of April 6th, SECONDED by Mr. Simone, and CARRIED 6-0-0.

Mr. Berg MOVED to APPROVE the Cleanup Event Minutes from April 23, 2016, SECONDED by Ms. Merrill and CARRIED 6-0-0.

Ms. Merrill MOVED to APPROVE the Allen’s Meadows Walk Minutes from April 24, 2016, SECONDED by Ms. O’Brien and CARRIED 6-0-0.

**XII. ADJOURN – Mr. Berg MOVED to adjourn at 8:55pm, SECONDED by Ms. Algon, and CARRIED 6-0-0.**

Next meeting will be June 1, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Larkin, Secretary, Environmental Affairs