

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Telephone (203) 563-0180
Fax (203) 563-0284



TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
October 1, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL - MEETING ROOM A

PRESENT: Commissioners; Dave Hapke, Kristen Begor, Kim Young, Patrice Gillespie, Kate Throckmorton and Christopher Coyle

ABSENT: Nick Lee (noticed of absence)

ALSO

PRESENT: Patricia Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs; Karen DeSantis, Administrative Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hapke called the meeting to order @ 7:36 pm.

Chairman Hapke scrambled the agenda.

Ms. Sesto introduced Melanie Volker from Studer Design, Ridgefield, agent for the Ramadani Center Street Inland Wetland Application #1856.

Melanie Volker reviewed the existing site map. She expressed her desire to collect information from the Commission to be able to comply with the Inland Wetland and Planning and Zoning Commissions.

A discussion ensued concerning the corrective action plan that should include reducing the size of the patio, the small retaining wall and fill to be removed and an appropriate planting.

The Conservation easement was discussed and the service area of the restaurant fencing was considered questionable. The lighting and plant materials needs to be addressed and the fact that the dumpster leaks and the stormwater pattern was a concern.

Ms. Volker expressed her concerns that she would like to be able to satisfy the Inland Wetland Commission, Conservation and Planning and Zoning with plans to be submitted for review.

Patrice Gillespie requested a more consistent flow of man made areas with the river.

Ms. Sesto suggested the easement issues be resolved with pedestrian access on the easement.

Kate Throckmorton stated that she would desire to enforce and have the cooperation to improve the access for pedestrians.

Chairman Hapke suggested Ms. Volker explain the advantages to improve the property to invite pedestrian traffic to the establishment from the future River Walk to her client.

Ms. Volker asked the Commission what the vision of the River Walk is.

Ms. Throckmorton responded to Ms. Volker by saying it would be desirable to have a width of three to five feet for two people to walk side by side or a wheel chair.

Ms. Begor expressed the undesirable environment that currently exists.

Mr. Hapke invited Ms. Volker to meet with the Commission again next month.

Mr. Volker stated that she would like to visit the next meeting if she has made progress.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - 7/2/08

Kim Young MOTIONED to approve the Minutes of July 2, 2008, SECONDED by Kristen Begor and carried 6-0-0.

III. LIAISON REPORT

Kim Young provided a liaison report to the Commission.

III. ONGOING BUSINESS—

1. Proposed Nominees for Tree Committee

Patricia Sesto reported that two of the Garden Club members; Jessica Kaplan and Paula Byrde have volunteered and Bill Meehan and his been nominated by the Chamber of Commerce. She added that Junius Brown representing Kiwanis Club, Kate Throckmorton would fill the landscape professional position and Nick Lee, as the arborist would round out the Committee as designated in ordinance. She reported that there has not be a volunteer from the Planning and Zoning Commission as of yet and offered to follow up.

Chairman Hapke MOTIONED to proceed to the Board of Selectmen with the list of names with the possible addition from Planning and Zoning, SECONDED by Kristen Begor and carried 6-0-0.

2. Recycling – Begor, Hapke

Chairman Hapke updated the status of Wilton's recycling program. He reported that the fees for recycling are a drawback to encourage recycling. He will follow up with Bill Brennan, Hal Clark and Tom Thurkettle to try to improve on that aspect. He expressed his disappointment in the speed of progress being made so far.

Chairman Hapke reported that Kristen Begor has resurrected the five questions for recycling and he said he and Kristen will review them for the newsletter.

Kristen Begor reported that when she and Chairman Hapke had visited the transfer station in Wilton, they noticed that some vehicles coming in had stickers and some did not when drop off recyclables. She felt that the process was inconsistent.

IV. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS –

1. WET#1860(S) – KJC REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT, LLC – road improvements with wetland crossings at Old Huckleberry Road, Map#26, Lot#6.

Kate Throckmorton recused herself.

Ms. Sesto explained that this application had been submitted and withdrawn earlier and that the Commission had already walked the property.

Ms. Sesto reviewed the site plan and stated that more data is available compared to the last application. She pointed out the width of the proposed driveway at 16 feet wide, paved with a narrow gravel shoulder.

Kim Young suggested that the driveway width be reduced to 12 feet which is the minimum required for a driveway.

Chairman Hapke pointed out the intermittent pull off areas for passing which had little environmental impact and asked Ms. Sesto if she was satisfied with the revised application.

Ms. Sesto answered Chairman Hapke by saying she was satisfied with the application with the exception of the width of the driveway. She continued to say that the proposed house site is in the same area as the old house site that only the foundation remains.

Ms. Begor suggested the driveway be gravel instead of the proposed asphalt.

Ms. Sesto commented that the length of the driveway would be impractical to maintain if it were gravel.

The Commission agreed that the recommendation to the Inland Wetland Commission would be to reduce the width of the driveway to 12 feet.

Ms. Throckmorton was reseated.

2. WET#1861(S) – VILLAGE WALK CONDOMINIUM –
installation of curtain drainage swale and replacement at 5 River Road.

Ms. Sesto described the application.

A discussion ensued and the Commission had no comment.

1. WET#1865(S) – LUNG/YIJING – Site development for new house, driveway and septic installation at 79 Olmstead Hill Road.

Ms. Throckmorton recused herself.

Ms. Sesto explained that there is an existing permit with a smaller house already approved when the 50 foot setback regulation was in place.. She reported that the proposed house is three times the size of the original house approved.

The Commission suggested that the application not be approved as presented given that the existing permit provides a feasible and prudent alternative with a lesser impact to the wetland.

IV. PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS -

None

V. ONGOING BUSINESS– Cont.

1. Parks – All

Ms. Sesto reviewed Mike Conklin's report to the Commission. She reported that the quote for the paving of Sackett Preserve driveway is \$2,000.00 over budget.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the driveway was a priority and approved the paving of the driveway, agreeing to take the \$2,000.00 over budget out of the grounds and maintenance budget.

Ms. Sesto stated that Mr. Conklin has requested park evaluations from the Commissioners.

2. Open Space Preservation – Sesto

Nothing to report.

3. Plan of Conservation and Development – Throckmorton

Chairman Hapke gave report of the last meeting.

Ms. Gillespie stated that there was an issue concerning the controlled deer hunt.

A discussion ensued and it was decided that it should be presented as “white tailed deer management”.

Chairman Hapke reported that he brought up the Wilton Center 10 foot strip for trees and plantings which the Planning and Zoning regulation do include.

Chairman Hapke reported that the next meeting will cover development and infrastructure and that a public hearing is scheduled for the fall of 2009 and he suggested that a draft be posted on the website. He then requested Ms. Sesto to relay meeting dates to the Commission.

4. Center Tree Plan – Sesto, Lee, Throckmorton

Ms. Sesto stated that she gave a presentation to the Rotary Club and so far no trees have been donated as a result . She added that so far, 20 trees have been donated for the Center.

5. River Walk – Lee, Coyle

Chris Coyle reported that he had had a discussion with Bob Russell and felt he had been brought up to speed on the topic. He stated that he had spoken to a woman from Vernon, Connecticut who is involved in a similar project and she suggested a master plan be drafted. He also discovered that the DEP has funding for recreational trails, river repair and improvements.

Ms. Sesto added the possibility of the transportation funds and suggested finding a grant source to fund the development of a master plan.

Mr. Coyle suggested that master plan be incorporated in the Conservation and Development to pursue a grant.

Ms. Sesto offered to contact SWRPA to see if funding would be available.

Chairman Hapke suggested the possibility of a college class project.

Patrice Gillespie suggested the Yale forestry department might be a possibility.

Chairman Hapke offered to speak with a representative at Gregory & Adams for a letter of support.

Ms. Sesto offered to contact Lee Wilson, owner of a building that adjoins the Norwalk River for a letter of support.

Mr. Coyle offered to contact the DEP and other sources of possible funding.

Ms. Gillespie reported that the Westport Library has librarians that will help research for grant money to be matched with recipients.

Kristen Begor suggested IPARK as a source for supporting letters.

6. Work with other Commissions/Committees

a. Parks and Rec./Allen's Meadows – Young

Nothing to report.

b. Energy Commission

Ms. Gillespie reported that the Commission is working on quantifying the carbon footprint of the Town.

7. Regional Projects

a. Deer Management – Sesto

Ms. Sesto reported that there had been a meeting with the hunters earlier and she pressed the need to increase the harvest to 200 for the season.

b. Water Quality & Quantity – Gillespie

Ms. Gillespie reported that the two river associations are working to encourage towns to implement septic maintenance ordinances.

8. Household Hazardous Waste Day – 10/25/08

Ms. Sesto stated that HHW Day will be held at the Driscoll School and asked for volunteers.

Kristen Begor, Patrice Gillespie and Kate Throckmorton offered their time.

9. Fall Newsletter

Ms. Sesto asked for more articles as previously agreed to.

10. Website – Gillespie

Nothing new to report.

11. Donations

None

12. Other

None

13. Proposed Nominees for Tree Committee

Previously discussed.

14. Other

None

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nothing further to report

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - 9/3/08

Previously approved.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A Motion was made by Kim Young at 9:35p.m., SECONDED by Kristen Begor and carried 6-0-0.

Submitted by

Karen DeSantis
Recording Secretary