

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 5, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL - MEETING ROOM A**

PRESENT: Commissioners; Dave Hapke, Kristen Begor, Kim Young, Patrice Gillespie, and Nick Lee

ABSENT: Christopher Coyle, Kate Throckmorton (noticed of absence)

ALSO

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hapke called the meeting to order @ 7:30 pm.

Chairman Hapke scrambled the agenda.

Ms. Sesto introduced Craig Studer from Studer Design, Ridgefield, agent for the Tony Ramadani, Portofino's. Inland Wetland Application #1856.

Mr. Studer reviewed the proposed planting plan. He expressed his desire to collect information from the Commission to be able to comply with the terms of the riverwalk easement, and the Inland Wetland and Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Kim Young expressed her wishes to make sure that there would be enough width for the riverwalk path when the plantings are installed.

Nick Lee stated that the conceptual path would be approximately 4-5 feet in width.

Patricia Sesto commented that because this area is in the floodplain, any action to create a flat path would have to come from excavating rather than filling. This area is riverward of the Stream Channel Encroachment Line and DEP is aware of the violation but Ms. Sesto doesn't know if there will be any action by them.

Mr. Studer recapped the proposal from the last meeting to pull back the patio to allow pathway access in the conservation easement.

Mr. Studer asked the Commission as to what material the riverwalk path would be.

Mr. Lee responded to Mr. Studer by stating that the material would be stone dust or something similar.

Ms. Sesto added that the surface would not be paved, but defined and continued to say that the client should consider the benefits for his property when considering the mitigation plan.

Kristen Begor asked Mr. Studer if the plan would be to return the patio to the original pervious brick material to replace the cement that is presently there.

Mr. Studer felt that the client would probably prefer to keep the patio cement for practical reasons.

Ms. Sesto reported that the Inland Wetland Commission suggested that the client review the entire complex and offer something elsewhere to compensate for the cement patio.

Mr. Studer and the commission discussed the fence at the rear of the restaurant. The fence is in the easement, it was installed to curb dumping down the river bank, and the client would like to keep it. The commission urged Mr. Studer to propose a means by which the trail could go along the river without interruption by the fence. The commission dismissed the idea of pedestrians using the parking lot rather than a riverside trail to get around the restaurant.

Mr. Studer will look into the possibilities that were reviewed.

II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS –

1. **WET#1872(S) – COUGHLIN** – “corrective action” to restore a cleared upland review area and construction of an addition in an upland area at 102 Kent Road.

Ms. Sesto reviewed the violation and the proposed site and mitigation plans. She pointed out that more trees would be removed with the proposal.

A discussion ensued concerning alternatives that would preserve a greater portion of the Regulated Area.

Mr. Lee stated that since the wetland is not of high quality the addition does not concern him. He expressed more concern over the access due to the tree removal required.

Chairman Hapke conveyed his thoughts that there doesn't seem to be an apparent reason to develop in the Regulated Area.

Ms. Sesto stated that the removal of the trees for the driveway would be a loss for wetland protection. These trees are mature, providing shading and habitat support that the proposed planting plan does not.

The Commission suggested alternative plans be submitted.

III. ONGOING BUSINESS–

1. Parks – All

Ms. Sesto reviewed Mike Conklin’s report to the Commission. She reported that the paving of Sackett Preserve driveway is completed.

Chairman Hapke requested park evaluations from the Commissioners.

2. Open Space Preservation – Sesto

Kim Young MOTIONED to add an Executive Session to the agenda, SECONDED by Chairman Hapke and carried 5-0-0.

At 8:05 p.m. Mr. Hapke MOTIONED to move into Executive Session to discuss negotiations, Seconded by Kim Young and carried 5-0-0.

The public session resumed at 8:15 p.m.

3. Plan of Conservation and Development – Throckmorton

Kristen Begor reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the Cannondale area and Route 7 at a P&Z meeting earlier in October.

A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of the draft Plan of Conservation and Development being put on the Town website with limited access for the Commissioners to review.

~~Ms. Gillespie expressed her desire to ensure that the natural resource inventory be included in the Plan of Conservation and Development.~~

Ms. Gillespie suggested that the Conservation Commission's intention to develop an illustrated Town-wide natural resource inventory be referenced in the forthcoming Plan of Conservation and Development.

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Ms. Sesto described the former Plan of Conservation and Development and it references to other documents that should be considered by reviewing entities.

4. Center Tree Plan – Sesto, Lee, Throckmorton

The members nominated by this commission at the last meeting were appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Sesto stated that a tree had come down in front of the American Legion building and that Jessica Kaplan, Tree Committee member, is pursuing the contact information to discuss the planting of a new tree.

Ms. Sesto stated that the Piersall family, owners of the Village Market building, has not yet responded regarding their willingness to allow the trees to be planted on their property. She mentioned that two of Tree donors have inquired as to when the trees would be planted. She expressed regret that this aspect of the plan is not moving more swiftly.

Mr. Lee stated that the planting can be done as late as the end of November.

Ms. Sesto stated that the Schenk's Island trees will be planted in the spring and the donors have been notified.

5. Recycling

Ms. Begor reported that she and Chairman Hapke had toured the New Canaan recycling center with DPW director Tom Thurkettle, Jennifer Fascitelli, and Selectman Hal Clark. It is thought that was a good model for Wilton. She stated that Tom Thurkettle will put together a plan to present to the Selectmen. It is expected that the plan would be implemented by June 30, 2009.

Chairman Hapke added that there is no plan to recycling any plastics other than #1 and #2.

6. River Walk

Pursuant to commitments at the last meeting, Mr. Hapke spoke with a contact at Gregory and Adams to get a letter of support for the riverwalk. Ms. Sesto drafted the letter for consideration and it has been forwarded to Gregory and Adams by Mr. Hapke.

Ms. Young stated that she had yet to contact Mr. Dix but would seek him out before the next meeting.

Ms. Sesto spoke to Lee Wilson, he would support the master plan. He conveyed comments by members of the Chamber of Commerce that were generally unsupportive. These concerns were raised at a Chamber meeting where Planametrics, the P&Z consultant was in attendance. Comments included concerns regarding liability and usage, with members believing the two sidewalks along Old Ridgefield Road were enough.

The commission discussed the need for a master plan to assess this issue as well as the space constraints.

7. Work with other Commissions/Committees

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

Ms. Young reported that there is \$7,200.00 budgeted to be used for planning for Allen's Meadows and will be on the Board of Selectmen's meeting on December 1, 2008. She said that the Parks and Rec. department had ideas of cleaning up the property.

b. Energy Commission

| [A liaison report will be filed later this month.](#)~~Nothing to report~~

8. Regional Projects

a. Deer Management – Sesto

Ms. Sesto reported that 23 deer, (20) does have been harvested so far. She commented that four had broken legs, likely from car accidents.

b. Water Quality & Quantity – Gillespie

| [Report will be made at the December meeting.](#)~~Nothing to report~~

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

Ms. Sesto stated that the HHW Day was a success and that there was an incident that required the Bomb Squad from Stamford to detonate a substance that was dropped off.

The dumpsters were again an issue, delaying the opening of the event.

The service from Clean Harbors and the lines were much improved over last year.

10. Fall Newsletter

Karen DeSantis reported that the last article was received today and that a draft should be available by the end of the week for review.

11. Website – Gillespie

Ms. Gillespie reported that she will arrange for the Garden Club "Tree Contest" photos to be loaded on to the Town website. She would like to see this idea broadened to allow residents to post scenic views of Wilton's natural resources. She will work with John Savarese.

Ms. Begor suggested that a spot in the newsletter and or a blurb in the local paper informing the public of the Town website should be considered.

Ms. Sesto offered to talk to the reporter.

12. Donations

None

13. Other

None

IV. LIAISON REPORT

Kristen Begor provided a liaison report to the Commission.

V. PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS -

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

2009 Meeting schedule

Nick Lee MOTIONED to approve the 2009 Meeting schedule, SECONDED by Chairman Hapke and carried 5-0-0.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 9/3/08

9/3/08 Minutes were approved at the last meeting. The minutes of 10/1/08 to be submitted for approval at the next meeting.

VIII. DIRECTORS REPORT

Ms. Sesto reviewed her activities.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A Motion was made by Kim Young at 9:20p.m., SECONDED by Nick Lee and carried 5-0-0.

Submitted by

Karen DeSantis
Recording Secretary