

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL - MEETING ROOM "A"

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

NOT PRESENT: (Noticed of absence)

ALSO PRESENT: Patricia Sesto, Director Environmental Affairs; Karen Padowicz, Administrative Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Begor called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

II. VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION – David Francefort

Dave Hapke welcomed and introduced Dave Francefort to the Commission. He described the projects that Mr. Francefort has been working on in the Town Forest and presented an award of appreciation from the Commission.

Mr. Francefort described the organization; New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) and their Trail Ambassador program.

The Commission thanked Mr. Francefort for his efforts and enthusiasm.

III. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS –

- 1. WET#1924(S) – GEITZ** – septic repair and detached garage in a regulated area at 170 Ridgefield Road.

Ms. Sesto reviewed the proposed application. She explained that there are two separate projects associated with the submission. The first project is a septic repair that places the new leaching field equidistance from a wetland and the Comstock Brook. The second portion of the application is a proposed detached garage 25 feet from a wetland and some 60 feet from the brook. Both components require trees to be removed.

The Commission requested that the applicant consider an alternative location outside the regulated area for the detached garage.

IV. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS –
CHZ#09317, Hansen, 19 Cannon Road, Zone change form R-2A to DRB and the Cannon Crossing Overlay District.

Ms. Sesto listed the uses from the Planning & Zoning Regulations for DRB zoning. She pointed out that the property is over an area of the aquifer with high yields projected. Because of the aquifer, some uses would be prohibited and otherwise regulated more stringently. She added that the DRB zone allowed site coverage of up to 80% in contrast to the 12% site coverage allowed in R-2A. "Adaptive uses" were permitted in R-2a which would afford some flexibility in uses .

Mr. Hapke recused himself.

Chairman Begor agreed with Ms. Sesto that an "adaptive use" permit would be more appropriate to protect the aquifer and avoid issues associated with stormwater runoff.

Nick Lee stated that with the available 80% coverage under the DRB zoning would require potential clearing of the wooded areas.

The Commission directed staff to submit a memorandum to P&Z stating the commission's position is not support the requested zone change .

Dave Hapke was reseated.

IV. ONGOING BUSINESS

1. Parks - All

Mike Conklin's staff report dated October 7, 2009 was reviewed by the Commission.

Chairman Begor suggested that the Commissioners visiting their assigned parks to inspect for damage in light of the strong winds earlier in the day.

Mr. Lee reported that the meadow restoration at Harrison Smith Preserve was looking good and he added that a group on youths will be working on a project to upgrade the wetland crossing in the Quarry Head trail below the restored field.

A discussion ensued concerning the dog leash ordinance and the rules of the town parks. It appears that the state installed signs to indicate that dogs must be leashed. Since this is a state-owned park, the state makes the rules and as the park's managers, we cannot supersede their rules. A neighbor apparently received conflicting information from town hall regarding the applicability of the town's leash ordinance as it pertains to Quarry Head.

Ms. Sesto explained that the town parks under this commission's jurisdiction are not governed by the town ordinance, however our park rules do require dogs "be leashed and under control". This rule is rarely enforced, but it is good to have the rule. She offered to speak with Bill Brennan regarding the implications of state ownership and speak with the police to reiterate the limitations of the ordinance.

Ms. Gillespie suggested the rules for the town parks be put on the website.

2. Open Space Preservation – Sesto

Ms. Sesto stated that there was nothing new to report.

3. Plan of Conservation and Development – Throckmorton

Ms. Throckmorton reported that she attended the last scheduled public hearing. She stated that most of the comments were supportive. She did have some concern with the River Walk alternatives and suggested that P&Z reconsider the inclusion of the possibility of a trail on the east side of the river.

4. Center Tree Plan – Sesto, Lee, Throckmorton

Nick Lee stated that there are no plans to plant anymore trees this season and felt the inventory would be less than desirable at this time of year.

5. Recycling – Begor, Hapke

Mr. Hapke reported that the first phase of the Transfer Station overhaul, the revamped recycling area has been functioning since July and the second phase is on hold at this time due to complications concerning the weigh station. He met with Jennifer Fascitelli from DPW and she requested that we allow some time for the town to adjust to the revised recycling program before moving to phase three, which would include improvements and possibly town-issued garbage bags .

Mr. Hapke stated that he had set up a meeting with himself, Jennifer Fascitelli, and Kristen Begor next month to review the progress of the changes and what improvements can be made before moving to phase three.

Chairman Begor commented that there is a limited resource of personnel at the transfer station, which will influence potential changes.

6. River Walk – Hapke, Coyle

Ms. Sesto suggested changing the title to the Norwalk River Valley Trail given the multi-town effort to develop a trail in the Super 7 right-of-way. She updated the Commission on the grant application in coordination with neighboring towns that had been submitted last month.

Ms. Gillespie offered to follow up on promised letters of support from statewide organizations.

7. Work with other Commissions/Committees

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

Kim Young stated that she had nothing to report.

Ms. Sesto reported that she had met with Steve Pierce from Parks and Recs concerning planting of trees in Allens Meadows and that she received positive feedback.

b. Energy Commission

Patrice Gillespie reported that the Energy Commission met today. She stated the Commission is working in conjunction with other organizations to formulate an Energy Action Plan to develop a culture of conservation. She added that Mike Lingberg has offered to finish the green house gas inventory himself.

8. Regional Projects

c. Deer Management – Sesto

Ms. Sesto had nothing to report on the Alliance. She stated that the bow hunting began on the South Norwalk Electric and Water property on October 5th. She added that on Monday October 12th there will be the public meeting for questions and comments.

Ms. Gillespie suggested posting the hunt schedule on the website and Ms. Sesto agreed to do so

d. Water Quality & Quantity – Gillespie

Nothing to report.

9. Website – Gillespie

Nothing to report.

10. Newsletter - Fall

Ms. Padowicz stated that the first draft has been received and hope to have the newsletter at the post office next week.

11. Other

Kim Young announced that the Garden Club will be having a show on November 13th and 14th.

Chairman Begor suggested including that information in the newsletter.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Controlled Hunt 2009/2010

Previously discussed.

VI. LIASON REPORT

The liaison report had been email earlier to each of the Commissioners.

Ms. Sesto reported that 20 Riding Club Road will be denied and that the draft resolution will be reviewed at the Inland Wetland meeting tomorrow night.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Sesto had nothing to add to previous discussions.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 9/2/09

Nick Lee MOTIONED to approve the minute of 9/2/09 seconded by Kristen Begor and carried 7-0-0.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Kristen Begor MOTIONED to adjourn, seconded by Patrice Gillespie and carried 7-0-0, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Padowicz
Recording Secretary