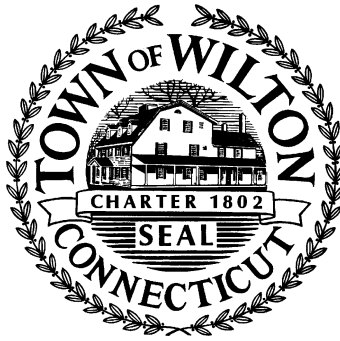


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

## **WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 6, 2010 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL - MEETING ROOM "A"

**PRESENT: Commissioners: Dave Hapke, Nicholas Coyle, Jeff Coppelman, Patrice Gillespie, Kim Young**

**NOT PRESENT: Nick Lee, Kristen Begor (Noticed of intended absences)**

**ALSO PRESENT: Patricia Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

- a. Commissioner Hapke called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.
- b. Mr. Hapke also introduced new commissioner Jeff Coppelman, and gave him a brief orientation to the workings of Commission meetings.

### **II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS –**

- i. None

### **III. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS –**

- i. None

### **IV. ONGOING BUSINESS**

#### **1. Parks - All**

Patricia Sesto indicated that Mike Conklin will email his report to the Commissioners on January 7, 2010.

Ms. Sesto reported that the Bradley Park trail projects are moving forward under the stewardship of Dave Francefort. A substantial pile of landscaping debris was found next to the residential property at Old Farm Road – it will be investigated by Mike Conklin.

Incidences of trespassing at open spaces were noted: a car doing 'donuts' at the Land Trust's Slaughter Fields before Christmas was reported by a neighbor; on January 5, Ms. Sesto witnessed several cars doing 'donuts' at the fields, which she reported to the police. Land Trust intends to press charges.

She also called attention to the Set Aside Assignments; the list from 2007 was adjusted to account

for commissioners having left/joined the commission. She asked if anyone wished to change assignments. Commissioners will look over the list before the next meeting and ask for new assignments if desired.

## 2. Open Space Preservation – Sesto

Ms. Sesto stated that the revised appraisal for a desired parcel is being reviewed by the First Selectman. A later executive session of this commission will discuss negotiations as appropriate.

## 3. Plan of Conservation and Development –

No report.

## 4. Center Tree Plan – Sesto, Lee

Ms. Sesto reported that the Tree Ordinance was approved on January 4, which clears the way for Tree City, USA designation. She also reported that the Tree City USA designation was submitted in December, and the Tree Committee is looking forward to getting approval. Having the Tree City designation will better position the town for grants in the long run.

Ms. Sesto reported that there is currently no backlog of trees to be planted. Mr. Hapke asked about a large maple tree in the corner of Center Street and Old Ridgefield Road that was removed. Ms. Sesto stated that it had been scheduled for removal for several years, due to its being involved in nearby power lines and suffering die-back in the crown.

## 5. Recycling – Begor, Hapke

Mr. Hapke reported that the new recycling procedures were established in July, and a meeting to be held February 3 will start data collection on the first 6 months of the system. They will look at data on tons collected per month and trash versus recycling, in the process of comparing 2008 and 2009 data. The goal is to get a handle on the true cost of handling trash and recycling.

Mr. Hapke also mentioned that Bill Brennan will reconvene the transfer station committee in late February to discuss the next steps of the process. They will discuss working with a for-profit company that helps towns increase recycling. For example, having residents buy trash bags at local markets, as a way to incentivize using fewer bags and reducing waste.

## 6. Norwalk River Valley Trail – Hapke, Coyle

Mr. Coyle reported on ongoing discussion regarding the name of the initiative; there is some dispute on specific regional names, and there are many opinions on what is appropriate. The name is important to help residents feel involved and included; and it must be easy to say and remember for promotion purposes.

Ms. Sesto reported on the meeting she attended in Waterbury regarding the Naugatuck River Greenway on January 5 regarding their trail project, that it was helpful to learn of the similarities and differences between that and the local project.

She also stated that she is optimistic about the \$180,000 grant from the DEP to hire a consultant to develop a routing study. Grants will be awarded in March.

Ms. Gillespie mentioned a workshop to be held on February 6 discussing greenway-type trails. She will distribute specifics to the group after this meeting.

7. Work with other Commissions/Committees

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

No report.

b. Energy Commission

Ms. Gillespie reported on the Go Green Festival which was originally slated to take place at the Wilton High School. The planning committee ultimately decided they were trying to take on too much and that the WHS field house inferred the expectation of a big event. They have scaled back their plans to ensure that they are manageable and have relocated the event to the Library. The festival was originally slated for May 2, it may be moved closer to Mother's Day to coincide with the Garden Club plant sale on the town green- this would allow the library to have a greater role, and encourage coordinating events. The date is yet to be finalized. Alternate sites were also discussed. The festival committee meeting will be reporting to the Energy Committee on January 7.

8. Regional Projects

c. Deer Management – Sesto

Ms. Sesto stated that the Deer Committee had met in December and David Lynch was elected as the new chair. The controlled hunt has ended for the most part; hunting is still allowed at the reservoir, but only 3 hunters have come in for 2010 permits. She reported that 41 deer were harvested in the controlled hunt this year, a very low number. The town's overall numbers are not yet known. 2009 is the second year that the controlled hunt is clearly underperforming, and the Deer Committee is looking at emphasizing private property-hunter connections similar to the Be Safe Redding program. There will be a report later this spring to assess moving forward with deer management, particularly reducing emphasis on the controlled hunt.

Ms. Sesto also reported that she met with the Stamford Land Trust in December, and they are working on promoting a deer management program. She stated it is beneficial for them to have the input and example of other towns with successful programs for building trust with residents.

9. Other

- a. Ms. Gillespie introduced the idea of a renewed "No Idling" campaign. Commissioners were concerned about pollution created by cars idling at banks and schools. It was suggested that signage needs to be created, perhaps having students involved in doing that as in the past. Commissioners also suggested creating a piece for the Spring Newsletter and putting something on the website as well.
- b. Ms. Sesto reported on the Pharmaceuticals Collection project. According to the State Department of Consumer Protection, it is feasible, but there are strict procedures. New Canaan is holding a similar event May 1, which is open to the region. Wilton's project could piggyback from New Canaan's, and actually transport collected materials to their site, or hold a separate event on another date. Pharmacists are needed to participate at the collection to count and collect the materials. The Town needs to partner with Social Services and the Board of Education for promotion of the safety aspect of this project and especially funding; environmental concerns are that these drugs are entering surface water and negatively impacting ecosystems.

The procedure as set out by the Dept. of Consumer Protection is that the Police must be at the collection site; licensed pharmacists will collect and count the drugs

before they are placed into police custody. Eventually, prescription drugs will be incinerated; over the counter drugs do not need to be collected by the police, and will be hauled for incineration by a private company.

Recruitment of pharmacists is the most crucial aspect of the plan; it is hoped that Norwalk Hospital will participate in that regard. Ms. Sesto also asked Commissioners for connections with pharmacists and/or the hospital. Sufficient pharmacists must be in place by February 1 if the event were to take place on or around May 1.

There must be a 3-month lead-in period to coordinate with all of the participating departments. In the meantime, the "Crush, Don't Flush" campaign must be promoted so that residents are not stockpiling drugs in anticipation of the collection date. Leftover drugs should be crushed, mixed with coffee grounds or cat litter, and disposed of in the regular trash, not flushed.

## V. NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Spring Newsletter

Topics for articles mentioned throughout the meeting were:

- Center Tree Plan and tree donations
- Recycling program – highlight on styrofoam
- No idling
- Pharmaceuticals collection
- Composting

Tentative deadline for articles should be March 1.

Target date for mailing should be prior to the Go Green Festival – so the newsletter should be delivered for printing by mid-April, to be mailed to residents at the end of April.

## VI. LIAISON REPORT

No report.

Ms. Sesto brought up the Liaison Schedule for 2010, and changes that need to be made due to membership changes. Ms. Gillespie will take February, and the rest of the assignments will repeat from 2009. New Commissioner Jeff Coppelman will take December.

## VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Sesto had nothing further to add.

## VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 12/2/09

Mr. Hapke MOTIONED to approve the minutes of 12/2/09, seconded by Kim Young and carried 5-0-0.

## IX. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Young MOTIONED to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hapke and carried 5-0-0, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison McConnell  
Acting Recording Secretary