

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING Room 315, Town Hall 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT

Thursday, March 13, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

NOTE: Italicized text below denotes member "action item".

Present: Vice Chair Bruce Conroy, Dianne Saunders, Jim Loughlin, Erik Severson, Jim Pyskaty, and Mike Miller, and Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner - Jeff Borne (arrived 6:06 p.m.)

Absent: Chair Conor Makepeace

Acting Chair Conroy convened Meeting at 6:02.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, Feb. 13, 2025

Acting Chair Conroy called for consideration of the Minutes of Feb. 13, 2025.

MOTION: J. Loughlin: To approve as corrected

SECOND: D. Saunders

VOTE: Yes, D. Saunders, B. Conroy, and J. Loughlin;

Abstained: E. Severson, J. Pyskaty, and M. Miller as they were not present

B. Special Meeting, March 8, 2025

Acting Chair Conroy tabled approval of Minutes.

Commissioner Jeff Borne arrived at 6:06 p.m.

2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A. Outstanding Task List – Excel sheet, C. Makepeace

Acting Chair Conroy tabled this item.

B. 205 Main Street, Yalesville – Special Meeting site walk – discussion

Findings and impressions of site conditions and recommendations from those members who had attended the Special Meeting site walk were discussed. Mr. LeGrande, owner of the abutting property, 213 Main Street, had attended the Special Meeting and had conducted a discussion with the Commission about a possible lease arrangement. The Commission considered to lease the field area – or a portion of it – to Mr. LeGrande who regularly mows a strip of Town land that abuts his land on the south and west sides of his parcel and taps maple trees there and wants to continue both unpermitted activities.

Ms. O'Hare, who was not at the Special Meeting, indicated that about ten years ago the Town had taken Mr. LeGrande to court regarding his claim of adverse possession as he had been using about a ¼-acre of Town land abutting his land for various uses for several years which had resulted in the issuance of a Stipulated Judgement. The terms of the Judgement had been basically complied with soon thereafter however a while later the unpermitted removal of a strip of trees/shrubs about 20 feet wide by 40 feet long occurred on the Town land and the mowing of Town property near his parcel has continued. Mayor Dickenson had

approved installation of fencing by the Public Work Dept., to curb further trespass - which to date has not occurred.

The Commission felt that the lease would be a good way to get some maintenance there. Ms. O'Hare explained that the Water Division has committed to annual mowing the field area as previously reported at the January Commission Meeting.

MOTION: J. Borne: To install fencing along the northern side of 205 Main Street between Town land and abutter's parcel for the purpose of demarcating the line to keep as open space to restrict abutter's use of Town land and to install a parking area for 3 parking spaces edged with a log or telephone pole barrier.

SECOND: D. Saunders

VOTE: Yes: D. Saunders

Commissioner Miller pointed out that fencing will serve the abutter by keeping the public out of his property.

Ms. O'Hare will follow-up on the proposal noting there are wet areas in that vicinity.

C. Other Property Issues

None reported.

3. PUBLIC OUTREACH

A. Proposed events

B. Quinnipiac University student volunteer project – update E. Severson

Commissioner Miller will reach out to the students.

4. PROFESSIONAL NATURAL RESOURCES SERVICES

A. GPS equipment – usage policy

Ms. O'Hare reported that a tablet still needs to be purchased for the GPS unit and that a sign-out process has been established with the Planning Department as there are a few parties who seek to use the GPS unit. *Ms. O'Hare will re-iterate time sensitivity regarding tablet request.*

MOTION: J. Pyskaty: To review the Black Diamond Trail in the field on April 5, 100 p.m. with a rain date April 6, 1:00 p.m. for the purpose of observing this unauthorized trail construction, to convene at Red Trail trailhead, Tamarac Swamp Road.

SECOND: M. Miller

VOTE: Unanimous

Ms. O'Hare will post notice of the Special Meeting.

Acting Chair Conroy will investigate about obtaining QR codes.

B. Contract proposals

Ms. O'Hare reported she obtained permission, as requested, from the Mayor and Kenny Michaels, Director, Parks and Recreation, for a contractor to be retained to remove stunts and jumps, in particular the Black Diamond Trail, and to remove the illegal stone crossing in the Muddy River. *She will follow up on RFQ.*

5. OPEN SPACE PLAN - discussion

Acting Chair Conroy tabled the matter without discussion.

6. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – TYLER MILL PRESERVE

A. Stewards of Tyler Mill, Monthly Report, D. Saunders

Commissioner Saunders reported that the Environmental Conservation group from the Garden Club under Margaret Kitson's leadership meets at Parks & Recreation Dept. and they help with invasive plant control working with the three Stewards. Three of the tupelos are fine and VoAg students will assist her in re-installing deer protection.

D. Saunders will submit a list of tools owned by the Commission

7. REPORTS / CORRESPONDENCE

A. Trails Work Group – TWG Reports & information/matters not discussed above, TWG Coordinator(s)

No one was present to give the report. The Commission discussed that work is apparently being completed on unofficial trails and changes may be being completed prior to obtaining review by the Commission and permission from Kenny Michaels.

Acting Chair Conroy indicated the Chairman was going to speak to mayor and Kenny in that regard. IMs. O'Hare will ask Kenny Michaels to explain the reference in the report to 'vandalism'.

B. CT Bar Assoc. Conference: Connecticut Land Use Law for Municipal Land Use Agencies, Boards, and Commissions – Virtual (Zoom), Mar. 22, 2025, 9- 4:30 p.m.

C. CT Land Conservation Council Conference (CLCC), Wesleyan University, Mar. 22, 2025, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

9. NEXT MEETING – April 10, 2025

10. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Conroy adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner
Acting Recording Secretary