

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Thursday, April 11, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: Chair Mary Heffernon, Carl Arsenault, Jeff Borne, John Lathrop, Dianne Lendler, Jared McQueen, Brad Sammis, Dianne Saunders, Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner, and 2 members of the public.

Absent: Mike Miller.

Chair Heffernon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Borne to approve the Minutes; seconded by Commissioner McQueen and approved unanimously.

2. Property Management

A. Tyler Mill Preserve

1. Lila Colon, who asked to come speak to the Commission about observing mushrooms in Tyler Mill, did not attend the meeting.

2. May 15 storm damage

An administrative meeting determined that Tyler Mill would re-open on May 25th.

Commissioner Saunders reported that a few downed trees remained to be cleared, then the trails would be scouted again and final trimming done to prepare for the re-opening.

3. Administrative meeting

It was also determined at this meeting that there would be new signage worded, "Woods Have Changed – Proceed with Care" placed at the Maltby, Tamarac Swamp and Northford Rd. entrances, at the Vietnam Veterans Park entrance, and on the gates at Woodhouse Ave.

John Gawlak will give Ms. O'Hare 4 tick information signs to be placed in the Preserve, and a sign for the Northford Rd. entrance that explains that permitting is required for organized events taking place in Tyler Mill. The DEEP has done fish stocking at the Northford Rd. bridge and Coyle Field on Woodhouse Ave.

4. Stewards of Tyler Mill

Commissioner Saunders thanked Commissioners Arsenault, Lathrop and Miller for the hours they have spent clearing trees in preparation for the re-opening of Tyler Mill. It is also to be noted that both Commissioners Lendler and Saunders and the Stewards have also gone to great lengths to clean up the Preserve following the microburst.

5. PowerPoint presentation

Commissioner Saunders will present this at the May meeting.

6. Professional services

Budget expenses were discussed.

Fresh Meadows has been mowed by Little K.

Ms. O'Hare said that 2 stewards were reimbursed for their chain saw training.

Ms. O'Hare will revisit the discussion of mowing fields 7E and 7F on Northford Rd. with Nick Kern and Little K in hopes that these fields can be mowed ASAP. She will let the Water Department know of any definitive plans to do the mowing.

Ms. O'Hare will ask Town Engineer Rob Baltramitis to look at the drainage pipe near the former Cuneo driveway on the Fresh Meadows property to see if he has thoughts about how to stop the erosion around it.

At the May meeting Commissioners will discuss work to be done with Michael Klemens.

B. Fresh Meadows

1. Bluebird boxes and trail sign

Commissioner Arsenault installed the replacement trail sign and 2 bluebird boxes.

2. Trees of Heaven eradication

Commissioner Arsenault reported that there are approximately 14 Trees of Heaven at the top of the knoll on Tessa's trail no larger than 2-4" in diameter.

Commissioners Arsenault and Saunders will cut and treat these trees in mid-June.

3. Trail mowing bid proposal

Ms. O'Hare will write the 3-year bid proposal for the trail mowing at Fresh Meadows.

C. Ferguson Woods

Re-blazing was done with enthusiastic assistance of students from Quinnipiac University on April 6th.

D. Mowing

Commissioner Saunders will request names of possible mowers from forester Eric Hansen.

E. Property Monitoring

Commissioner Arsenault reported that there is evidence still of ATV usage on the ridge, and it has loosened a lot of the rock.

Another bridge has been built on Town property at the base of the ridge on Cliffside Dr.

Barriers have been placed at Wisk-Key Wind Rd. and there has been no further trespass.

There are approximately twelve Trees of Heaven on Town property behind #31 and #35 Wisk-Key Wind Rd.

Commissioner Saunders will report these to the CT Agricultural Extension Station since they are not far from Lyman Orchards and may encourage invasive insects.

There is also yard waste behind #31.

Commissioner Saunders reported there are no Town boundary markers at Field 5A on Cooke Rd.

Ms. O'Hare will ask the Engineering Department about the boundary markers.

There is construction debris on the Farm Lane to the right of Daisy La.

Commissioner Heffernon will ask Steve Palermo if Public Works can remove this debris.

The vernal pools are active on this property.

Ms. O'Hare reported that the wetland restoration on Hanover Ave. next to the Quinnipiac River and behind Pragemann Park is underway with the assistance of Roman Mrozinski.

3. Farmland Lease Properties Program

A. Field 18A, 995C East Center St./Tamarac Swamp Rd.

Ms. O'Hare will follow-up on this proposed bid waiver.

B. Proposed bid for Field 8B, Northford Rd

Ms. O'Hare will put the bid out.

C. Review of Leases for Periodic Reporting

Commissioner Saunders will highlight the leases to indicate jobs that need to be done periodically.

D. Farmland Committee

Commissioner Saunders will ask Emily Picard if the Lyman Hall Agricultural students will do the soil testing on Field 4C, Northford Rd.

4. Budget FY 19-20

A. Town Council Public Hearing – Council Chambers, Monday, April 8th, 6:00 p.m.

There were no questions from the public on our budget.

C. Town Council Budget Workshop – Council Chambers, Tuesday, April 16th, 6:30 p.m.

6. Other Topics

A. Open Space User's Group meeting

This meeting will take place at 5:30 on Wednesday, May 15th at the Parks & Recreation Department.

Agenda items for the Commission include Commissioner Saunders PowerPoint presentation, the Big Event at Ferguson Woods, and a report on Fresh Meadows. We may also include discussion on 2 possible hikes in Tyler Mill to explain the changes that have taken place in the Preserve to the public.

B. HB 5254

This proposed legislation to create a new fee in lieu real estate transfer program for the purpose of towns being able to build funds for open space purchases did not make it out of the Environmental Committee.

C. CT Audubon Urban Oases program

Commissioner Heffernon will discuss the plans for the pocket park on Grand St. with John Gawlak to see if this might be a good site for this.

D. Tessa's Trail

Commissioner Arsenault reported that there were trees down and hanging on Tessa's Trail.

Commissioners Lathrop and Heffernon agreed to help Commissioner Arsenault clear these trees.

7. Reports/Correspondence

A. CT Land Conservation Conference

Commissioners McQueen, Saunders and Heffernon spoke of some of the highlights of this year's conference.

B-F. Programs & Newsletters

Programs and newsletters of interest were discussed.

G. QRWA River Clean-up

Commissioner Heffernon noted that she is leading the Wallingford clean-up this year on May 4th from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. behind the Wastewater Treatment Plant on John St. Anyone is invited to help.

H. Ag Student Project

Commissioner Saunders mentioned that Lyman Hall High School Agricultural Science students will be doing geo mapping between the Green and Purple Trails in Tyler Mill through the Natural Resources Conservation Academy program.

5. Executive Session pursuant to CT General Statutes Sections 1-225(f) and 200(6)(D) regarding real estate

Motion by Commissioner Lathrop to move into Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner Sammis and approved unanimously.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Lathrop to move out of Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner Lendler and approved unanimously.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 9:32 p.m.

8. Next Meeting – May 9, 2019

10. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Sammis to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Lendler and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary G. Heffernan