

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES September 6, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Frank, Mr. Conroy,
Via Teleconference: Ms. Payne, Ms. Rawson
MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Stagen
ALTERNATES PRESENT:
ALTERNATES ABSENT: Mr. Horne, Mr. Faison
OTHERS: Ms. Jamieson, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Larson

Ms. Frank called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and seated Ms. Payne, Ms. Rawson, and Mr. Conroy.

Approval of Minutes of July 5, 2023

Motion: To accept the July 5, 2023, meeting minutes by Ms. Rawson,
seconded by Mr. Conroy. Passed 4-0.

Invasive Management– Linda Frank

Ms. Frank informed the Commission that Ashton Hodge, a Shepaug Senior, was present. He was brought to the commissioner table. He presented a map where he has designated certain colors to specific invasion plant species.

Mr. Hodge discussed seeing a lot of cherry trees sprouting at the lower portion of the property. He made a grid pattern of where he was walking to provide a more definitive location of where the plant species are. Mr. Hodge also cut the base of invasive bittersweet that was climbing up trees hoping that it stops its growth.

Ms. Frank discusses how helpful Mr. Hodge was and how the next project is a garden which will be discussed later on. Mr. Conroy asked for a key to be added to the map Mr. Hodge made so it can be passed around to the commission.

New Preston Open Space Management-Phragmites, Ryan Conroy

Mr. Conroy presented updated and older aerial picture of phragmites. At this time Rory Larson joined the meeting (5:13pm). The older photo showed areas in the red showed what was cut. The yellow showed what was cut but cut above the waterline. Mr. Conroy was hoping the second cutting would stunt some growth. A picture from the morning of 9-6-23 it shows areas

of new growth in the areas that were previously cut. No noticeable impact was seen prohibiting the growth of new shoots. The commission continues to look for ways to handle the phragmites without the use of poison.

Pollinator Planting Plan

Ms. Frank and Ms. Stagen met with Kit Lunberg. In order to make the soil to be plant-able it is a big taking. There is heavy machinery needed in order to make a garden that will properly take seeds, grubbing out the area. Recommended that a metal detector be swiped across the land. The undertaking is reflected in the budget and Ms. Frank believes it is a worthy investment. Ms. Rawson has concerns in the choice in location for the size of the project (1,500 sq. ft.). She feels location is too hidden if we are using town funds that it should be in a location where people can be educated on a pollinator garden as well as our towns people can see it. Ms. Payne agrees that this is worthy of consideration. Ms. Frank mentioned current location can be difficult for machinery to access. The commission discussed where on town land they can put the garden and how big do they need to be to be noticeably effective. Mr. Larson said any size is effective and most important step is site prep. Ms. Frank asked members to look for alternate site and come back to next meeting with options.

Tree Regs Progress

No update from Attorney Zizka.

2023 POCD ongoing discussion of items to be included in 2023

No update. Ms. Frank stated that they still have not spoken with Mr. Hileman, Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Revisit guidance re Solar Panel placement

The Commission stated they have not made any progress on this subject but should keep it in their sights. Mr. Conroy stated that he will look into how different towns regulate solar panels.

Recommendations for two Alternate Vacancies

Ms. Frank asked that the Commissioners keep their eyes and ears open for possible alternates.

Other and/or Old Business

No new business

Motion: To adjourn the meeting by Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Payne. Passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Justine Rebillard

Land Use Clerk
Town of Washington
9-6-2023

Minutes are subject to approval

A link to access a recording of this meeting is below.

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