

## WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### MINUTES June 7, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Payne, Ms. Frank, Ms. Rawson, Ms. Stagen  
MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Conroy  
ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Horne, Mr. Faison  
CLERK: Mr. Buell  
OTHERS: Ms. Jamieson

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m. and seated Ms. Payne, Ms. Frank, Ms. Rawson, Ms. Stagen, and Mr. Horne.

#### **Approval of Minutes of May 3, 2023**

Motion: To accept the May 3, 2023 meeting minutes as written by Ms. Stagen, seconded by Ms. Frank. Passed 4-0 with one abstention.

#### **Invasive Management– Linda Frank**

Ms. Frank informed the Commission that she had received a commitment from a Shepaug senior who would work for the Conservation Commission as an intern. She then indicated that this intern would assist the Commission with mapping invasive plant species at the New Preston Open Space. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Frank asked for recommendations of phone apps which may be used to identify invasive plant species. Commission members recommended “Picture This” and “Seek.”

Ms. Rawson indicated that she had noticed cypress spurge, a toxic invasive plant species, around Lake Waramaug. She explained that she felt the Commission should potentially ask their new intern to map these invasive plants and explained that most of the cypress spurge she had observed was on the town of Warren’s side of the lake. Ms. Rawson then offered to provide training for this intern. Ms. Frank suggested reaching out to the Lake Waramaug Taskforce regarding the cypress spurge. Mr. Larson, a representative of the Steep Rock Association, offered to assist in training this intern in invasive species identification and mapping.

Mr. Faison stated that the Highstead Foundation utilizes plots which are monitored to track the spread of invasive plant species. He offered to assist the Commission’s intern with creating these plots at the New Preston Open Space. He then suggested utilizing the 1934 aerial photograph to observe how the area has changed over time.

Ms. Frank suggested creating a pollinator pathway at the New Preston Open Space and asked Mr. Larson if the Steep Rock Association had created pollinator pathways on their properties. Mr. Larson indicated that the Steep Rock Association had planted pollinators, but that no official pollinator pathway had been created. The Commission then discussed work that had been conducted by the Washington Environmental Council regarding pollinator pathways.

#### **New Preston Open Space Management-Phragmites, Ryan Conroy**

Ms. Frank read a email which Mr. Conroy had sent to the Commission earlier in the day regarding the New Preston Open Space. This letter explained the state of the phragmites at the New Preston Open Space and included 3 images which had been taken by drones of the site. Mr. Buell shared his screen with the Commission and displayed these images for the Commission to consider. A brief discussion ensued.

#### **Tree Regs Progress**

Ms. Payne indicated that the proposed regulations have been forwarded to Attorney Zizka, and that they are awaiting his response.

#### **Trees, Loretta Skagen's article**

Commission members indicated that Ms. Stagen's tree article had been published in the town newsletter.

#### **2023 POCD ongoing discussion of items to be included in 2023**

Ms. Payne informed the Commission that a potential alternate member had been found.

#### **Revisit guidance re Solar Panel placement**

The Commission did not discuss this agenda item.

#### **Recommendations for two Alternate Vacancies**

Ms. Frank indicated that she felt that the Commission should wait for the Planning Commission to write a draft of the upcoming update to the POCD before making any additional recommendations. Commission members agreed. Following this, Ms. Frank explained that she felt the town should conduct expanded water testing.

#### **Other and/or Old Business**

Mr. Horne asked which Commissions or organizations are addressing the issue of climate change. Ms. Frank indicated that the Sustainability Committee may be involved with this, and provided a brief description of the Committee's current focus.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 5:57 p.m. by Mr. Horne, seconded by Ms. Stagen. Passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Dennis Buell*

Dennis Buell  
Conservation Commission Clerk  
Town of Washington  
6-13-2023

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

[https://townofwashingtongcc-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/dbuell\\_washingtonct\\_org/EvMTIEJAwIZFmjLWS98jvqIBu\\_wi\\_w9BTLafwkLL5e1K\\_AQ?e=y5Eo9y](https://townofwashingtongcc-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/dbuell_washingtonct_org/EvMTIEJAwIZFmjLWS98jvqIBu_wi_w9BTLafwkLL5e1K_AQ?e=y5Eo9y)