

April 4, 2012

5:00 p.m. Land Use Mtg. Room

Members Present: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Alt., Ann Quachenbos, Alt.

Absent: Phil Markert, Phil Dutton, Diane Dupuis, Betsy Corrigan, Alt

Staff Present: Shelley White

Others: Chris Charles

Chairman Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Payne welcomed Ann Quachenbos as the newest member of the Conservation Commission.

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Alt., Ann Quachenbos, Alt.

Consideration of the Minutes

The Minutes of the March 7, 2012 Conservation Commission Meeting were considered.

Motion:

to accept the March 7, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as submitted,

by Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Payne, passed by 4-0 vote.

2012-2013 Budget

Ms. Payne discussed the current line items in the budget and stated that the Commission rarely spends all of the money that is in their budget. The Commissioners agreed that it would be beneficial to keep their membership with the Connecticut Northwest Conservation District if they could find another Town organization to join so that the expense could be shared. The Commission agreed that everything in the budget could remain the same and that they would like provisions to update maps as well as add a line item for the treatment of Knotweed at the New Preston Open Space, New Preston Falls and along the Shepaug at Washington Primary School. Ms. Payne stated that there is \$332,280.00 in the Open Space Fund as of the end of January 2012 and she would submit a request for a \$10,000.00 budget for the Conservation Commission and request an allocation for the Open Space Fund.

Motion:

to approve the request to increase the Town of Washington Conservation Commission Budget to \$10,000.00,

by Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Bernard, passed by 4-0 vote.

Referrals and New Projects

The Guntery Playing Fields- South Street:

Ms. Payne stated that there would be a Public Hearing at the regularly scheduled Zoning

Commission Meeting on April 23, 2012 at 7:30 pm in the Land Use Meeting Room at Bryan Memorial Town Hall for the proposed athletic fields for the Gunnery on South Street. Sean Hayden of the Northwest Conservation District wrote a letter, dated April 3, 2012, to Susan Payne regarding the Review of the Gunnery Athletic Fields Proposal at 22 South Street (on file in the Land Use Office). In his letter, Mr. Hayden states that the proposal meets the requirements of the 2002 CT Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control as well as the 2004 CT Stormwater Quality Manual and that he recommends "strong project oversight will be required to protect the surrounding resources" during construction. Ms. Payne stated that the proposed plan has received approval from the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Cell Tower Update:

Ms. Payne stated that the Town is currently negotiating with a cell tower siting company and the First Selectman would like to schedule a site visit for a company that has shown interest in the site and is amenable to the Town's conditions. Ms. Payne stated that she emailed Blake Levitt's comments regarding Bill 447 to the Commissioners and that she feels that if this Bill should pass it would allow cell towers to be sited more easily and would decrease the influence that the municipalities and conservation organizations have in the cell tower siting process.

New Preston Open Space:

Ms. Payne stated that some of the Commissioners, First Selectman Lyon and members of the neighborhood committee participated in the two working days to mark and brush hog a walking trail at the New Preston Open Space. She stated that she would like to schedule another work weekend for April 21st and 22nd and that she would contact the neighborhood committee to inform and invite them to participate.

Conservation Commission Goals for 2012:

The Commission discussed the list of suggested goals submitted by the Commissioners and compiled by Ms. Payne. Ms. Frank stated that she would try to get a section of the Town newsletter and submit pictures of a natural forest to educate residents why "natural is better." The Conservation Commission discussed reviewing the Zoning Regulations and meeting with some of the commissioners from the Zoning Commission for discussion. The C.C. discussed ridgelines. It was the consensus of the Conservation Commission that they would compile a list of zoning regulations that relate to conservation that they think should be revised, such as clear cutting and ridgeline protection, protection of waterways, wetland buffers and stewardship.

Other Business

Ms. Payne stated that she has talked to the First Selectmen about the Town doing something to improve the garage site on the corner of River Road and Green Hill (Vinnie's Garage). She stated that the First Selectman stated that he believes there are concerns about liability but he would look in to it.

Ms. Payne stated that more materials have been piled up at the Old Town Garage Site (16 Titus Road). There was a brief discussion regarding the use of this property.

There was a brief discussion regarding Community Day that is scheduled for June 2, 2012.

Ms. Payne stated that the First Selectman suggested that the Conservation Commission work with

the highway department on the knotweed project. She stated that she would be meeting with the First Selectman to discuss the project.

Ms. Frank stated that there are only one or two easements that need monitoring.

Ms. Payne suggested to the Commissioners to check out the workshops offered by the UCONN CLEAR Program on their website.

World Water Day was March 22nd and Ms. Payne stated there is a website www.unwater.org that has very useful information regarding sustainable water management.

132 Calhoun Street Conservation Easement

Mr. Charles submitted the Baseline Documentation Report to the Conservation Commission for the Conservation Easement at 132 Calhoun Street. Ms. Payne asked if Mr. Charles if he could include a narrative and the Bio for the person who did the baseline report. There were some concerns regarding the easement language and the Commission and Mr. Charles agreed to table the subject until the next regular meeting of the Conservation Commission on May 2, 2012 at 5:00 pm.

Adjournment

Motion:

to adjourn at 6:30 pm by Ms. Frank, seconded
by Ms. Payne.

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Submitted subject to approval,
Shelley White, Land Use Clerk