

November 6, 2013

5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Phil Markert, Diane Dupuis,

Absent: Betsy Corrigan, Alt., Ann Quackenbos, Alt., Dirk Sabin, Alt.

Staff Present: Shelley White

Others: Atty. Fisher, Mr. Charles

Ms. Payne, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Phil Markert, Diane Dupuis

Consideration of the Minutes

The Commission considered the regular meeting minutes of the Conservation Commission for October 2, 2013.

Motion:

to accept the October 2, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as submitted,

by Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Markert, passed by 5-0 vote.

Referrals or New Projects

Atty. Fisher was present to represent West Indies, LLC. and to have a preliminary discussion with the Conservation Commission regarding a possible conservation easement in favor of the Town of Washington at 96 Calhoun Street.

The commissioners and Atty. Fisher looked at the map titled "Boundary Survey," prepared for West Indies, LLC, 96 Calhoun Street, dated March 2012 with a revision date of 11-4-13, by T. Michael Alex. Atty. Fisher pointed out the existing conservation easements on the property and stated that his client would like to ease 3.106 acres.

There was a brief discussion regarding reserved rights. Atty. Fisher stated that there would be nothing above ground on the proposed easement.

Atty. Fisher stated that he would write up the easement documents for the Conservation Commission's review.

5:20 pm. Atty. Fisher leaves.

The commissioners looked at the Protected Areas Map and the Water Resources Map. Mr. Bernard stated that he feels it is important that streams and brooks are labeled.

Amending Open Space Ordinance

The Conservation Commission discussed the possibility of being able to amend the Open Space Ordinance.

Mr. Markert stated that he spoke with Atty. Fisher regarding amending the Open Space Ordinance and was told that it would be possible.

Ms. Payne stated that she would like the CC to be in agreement before they move forward and that the decision of amending the ordinance would ultimately be decided by the Town.

The commissioners discussed Section III: Expenditures from Fund-Section A.2 of the Town of Washington Ordinance to Establish An Open Space and Land Acquisition Fund.

The commissioners discussed the use of existing funds.

Ms. Payne would like more input from the entire Commission because she feels that it should be a decision made by the majority of the commissioners.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding legislation.

Solar

Ms. Payne discussed an article from Voices titled "Towns Participating in Solarize Project," published Wednesday, November 6, 2013.

Mr. Markert informed the commissioners about the solar program sponsored by the State of Connecticut.

The commissioners discussed the economics of the program.

Washington's launch will start at 7 p.m. Wednesday, November 20, in Bryan Memorial Town Hall, Washington Depot.

5:47 pm Mr. Charles arrives.

Other Business

Conservation Easements:

Mr. Charles discussed the importance of having critical documents in the Conservation Easement files to insure the owner gets their deduction and there is proper documentation for the IRS. He also recommended that the Conservation Commission consider endowment gifts when accepting an easement.

The commissioners reviewed the Conservation Easement Guidelines and discussed fees for voluntary easements.

Knotweed Eradication:

Ms. Payne stated that the knotweed at the New Preston Open Space is in check, New Preston

Falls has been treated and the work at WPS is progressing.

New Preston Open Space:

Ms. Payne stated that the New Preston Open Space is looking great. She noted that Autumn Olive on the property was removed by the Town.

There was a brief discussion regarding phragmites eradication.

The commissioners briefly discussed planning a workday on the property. Ms. Payne suggested November 23rd or 24th as possible workdays.

Zoning Regulation Recommendations:

Ms. Payne stated that Mr. Sabin has to delay working on the language for ridgeline protection and viewscape development so the Commission will revisit this subject at a later date.

Water Resources Map:

Mr. Bernard reiterated the importance of finding and labeling the names of the streams and smaller waterways on the map.

Miscellaneous:

Ms. Payne stated that she spoke with the person in charge of the property at 132 Calhoun Street in which there is a conservation easement in favor of the Town of Washington. She noted that the stand of evergreens that the Pillows would like to clear is not in the easement area. The property manager said the property owners were going to do a survey and Ms. Payne requested that the easement boundary down the middle of the property be clearly marked for ease of monitoring and to prevent encroachments into the easement area.

Adjournment

Motion:

to adjourn at 6:25 by Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Bernard.

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting.

Submitted subject to approval,
Shelley White, Land Use Clerk