Town of Washington

Bryan Memorial Town Hall

#### Post Office Box 383

Washington Depot, CT 06794

#### Washington Conservation Commission

#### Minutes

**September 3, 2014**

**5:00 p.m**.

**Members Present:** Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Phil Markert, Diane Dupuis, Dirk Sabin, Alt., Betsy Corrigan, Alt., Ann Quackenbos, Alt

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Shelley White

**Others:**

5:00 pm

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

**Seated:** Payne, Frank, Bernard, Markert, Dupuis, Sabin, Alt., Quackenbos, Alt.

**Consideration of the Minutes**

The Commission considered the regular meeting minutes of the Conservation Commission for July 2, 2014.

**Motion:** to accept the July 2, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as submitted, by Ms. Frank, seconded by MS. Payne, passed by 5-0 vote.

Mr. Sabin was unseated for the following conversation:

**96 Calhoun Street – West Indies Property**

Mr. Sabin, Landscape Architect, stated that he is an agent for West Indies, LLC and presented a plan titled “Proposed Site Plan” prepared for West Indies, LLC. 96 Calhoun Street by Brian Neff, with a revision date of 3-15-12.

Mr. Sabin stated that the proposed plan cleans up the overgrown area around the existing stream and would allow the farmer to continue to mow the field. He noted that the Inland Wetland Commission has visited the site and they require permission from the conservation easement holder which, in this case, is the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Sabin stated that he would provide a smaller copy of this plan for CC’s records.

Mr. Sabin recused himself.

The commissioners considered Mr. Sabin’s request and there were no further questions or comments.

**Motion:** to approve the sketched improvements by Mr. Sabin included on the drawing titled “Proposed Site Plan” prepared for West Indies, LLC. - 96 Calhoun Street by Brian Neff, with a revision date of 3-15-12, Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed by 5-0 vote.

Mr. Sabin returns and is seated.

**Viewscape Regulations**

Mr. Sabin stated that he received some feedback.

Ms. Frank stated that she reviewed the Town of Kent’s Horizon Regulations and she talked about the location of some of these zones. She feels that it would be beneficial to find out the criteria that Kent used to designate these areas.

Mr. Sabin feels that this is more of a practical approach to how a view can be achieved without wreaking havoc on the existing natural resources.

The commissioners discussed how they could educate property owners on the philosophy of the Town regarding preserving its natural resources.

The commissioners discussed the process of Inland Wetlands permits and enforcement and the Special Permit process in Zoning.

Mr. Bernard suggested that in order to regulate clear cutting, a property owner would be allowed to remove trees that are in the buildable envelope of the property but outside of that envelope (plus some buffer area), if a property owner would like to create a view through selective removal of trees, the plan must be in conformance with the guidelines to receive a Special Permit.

Mr. Sabin volunteered to work on the language for regulations that refer to the guidelines that he has developed.

##### Cell Tower Update

Ms. Payne stated that the two cell towers on the Washington/Roxbury Routes 47 and 199 borders have been withdrawn.

##### Knotweed Eradication

##### Ms. Payne met with Mr. Gambino and noted that he is still working on the knotweed at the River Walk area.

She noted that the area needs to be mowed and she would remind the Town that it needs to be maintained on a regular basis in order for the eradication to be successful.

It was noted that the New Preston Falls area has knotweed that requires treatment. There was a brief discussion concerning removing the downed trees and cleaning up the area.

##### New Preston Open Space

##### Mr. Markert stated that he has been researching types of viewing platforms on the internet. He feels that a simple walkway across the waterlogged area would be beneficial for the open space for nature enthusiasts and bird watchers. He said that he would investigate into inexpensive, environmentally safe methods of doing this.

The commissioners discussed the possibility of using locust wood and that it is a sustainable material.

Mr. Markert offered to look into a plan and cost it out for the Commission.

##### Town Water Resources Protection

Mr. Bernard informed the CC that the River Subcommittee is looking at Walker Brook at the moment. He said that the plowing of the unpaved road has built a barrier. During heavy rains the water flows down the road, finds a weak spot and deposits road materials buildup into the brook.

The commissioners noted that the road is maintained by both the Town of Washington and New Milford. They discussed cleaning and maintaining the road. The commissioners feel that this is a road maintenance and Inland Wetlands issue.

Mr. Bernard stated that he would draft a letter to both towns Inland Wetlands Commissions.

**POCD**

Ms. White stated that the draft POCD is being sent to the Board of Selectmen and the Northwest Hill Council of Governments and have scheduled the Public Hearing on Thursday November 13, 2014 at 7:00 PM at Bryan Memorial Town Hall in the Main Hall to receive feedback and answer questions from the public regarding the draft POCD.

**Miscellaneous**

Ms. Payne informed the commissioners that Carlos Canal working on a fracking ordinance for the Town.

Seats are still available for the bus for Northwest CT residents and neighbors who want to join the People's Climate March in New York City on September 21st. Seats are just $29 roundtrip and will be departing New Milford at 10am on September 21st and returning that same evening.

**Privilege of the Floor**

###### No one from the public was present.

###### Adjournment

**Motion:** to adjourn at 6:23 by Ms. Frank

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting.

###### Submitted subject to approval,

Shelley White Land Use Clerk 9-10-14