WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES – JULY 11, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Bernard, Linda Frank, Susan Payne

MEMBERS ABSENT: Diane Dupuis, Tyler O’Hazo

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Dirk Sabin

ALTERNATES ABSENT: Catherine Rawson

STAFF: Janice Roberti

OTHERS: Attorney James Kelly

Anne Albritton and Rich Sigg

Monique Gil Rogers

Ms. Payne called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM and seated Dirk Sabin.

Approval of Minutes of June 6, 2018

Members reviewed the June 6, 2018 minutes and there were no corrections.

MOTION: To accept the June 6, 2018 Conservation Commission minutes as written.

By: Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Sabin, passed 3 to 0 (Mr. Bernard not present at the 6/6/18 meeting.)

Resignation of Alternate Katherine Bennett

Alternate Katherine Bennett resigned from the Commission. The Commissioners thanked Ms. Bennett for her service.

Gunnery Eagle Scout Project (2016) reparations

The plantings at the River Walk are not doing very well but the Gunnery School is keeping the area looking nice. Ms. Payne keeps in touch with Steve Bailey of the Gunnery Green Club who is trying to keep the project active.

New Preston Falls Project Update (Site Plan has 5-yr Inland Wetlands permit)

* Arbor Services performed tree and sapling work around the foundations which made the area a little bit more exposed than anticipated.
* At the request of CC Member Catherine Rawson, Betsy Corrigan visited the site to see if there were any endangered plants. Ms. Corrigan stated that the area is very overgrown and to the best of her ability said there are no endangered plants.ne there. A study was done quite a while ago regarding wild flowers but the study was not dated.
* Neighbors Anne Albritton and Rich Sigg attended the meeting to express their concerns and ask questions regarding the project.  Their home overlooks New Preston Falls.

Anne Albritton/Rich Sigg Discussion Points

* They explained the location of their home which abuts a Town owned parcel.
* The large amount of clearing eliminated the screening of their property from public view and access.
* They inquired about installing "No Trespassing" signs or installing a fence around the property.
* They are disappointed that the view no longer exists. The view was the most appealing factor in purchasing this home.
* They are concerned whether more pedestrian traffic will result when the project is complete. They see people climbing the ruins and walls.

CC Discussion Points

* The ruins have been in existence for a long time and the New Preston Waterfall predates European contact.
* Access to the property existed from the road before the enhancement project began and no new access has been created.
* The plans remain in progress and currently include a wall and terrace with plant beds to block access. "No access beyond this point" signs may be considered.
* The vegetation removed was to facilitate the view of the historic structures and to potentially keep the ruins from being damaged.
* Posting "No Trespassing" signs or installing a fence around this historic site would be unfortunate and defeat the purpose of exposing this beautiful natural area that Washington is fortunate to own.

The Commission will schedule a visit to Ms. Albritton and Mr. Sigg’s residence within the next few weeks.

Cricket Valley Power Plant

There is a meeting scheduled for July 18th at 7:00 PM in Kent. Area conservation commissions are invited to attend. Will discuss how to galvanize pressure to secure some really good air monitoring stations in place.

Pending Easements

1. 195/200 Church Hill Rd/3 Lot Subdivision set aside easement on property owned by James Dobson

Attorney Jim Kelly was present at the meeting. He had several questions for the Commission and addressed CC member’s questions and comments.

MOTION: To accept the current form of the easement for the Church Hill LLC/3 Lot Subdivision at 195/200 Church Hill Road subject to the verification of the easements areas and the provision of an accurate Schedule A. The Management Plan for the property will be recorded when the easement is recorded.

By Mr. Sabin, seconded by Ms. Frank, passed 4 to 0.

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MOTION:       To accept the current form of the easement for the Church Hill LLC/3 Lot Subdivision at 195/200 Church Hill Road subject to the verification of the easements areas and the provision of an accurate Schedule A.  The Management Plan for the property will be recorded when the easement is recorded. By Mr. Sabin, seconded by Ms. Frank, passed 4 to 0.

1. Request from Planning to review Lot 3 in the Upper Church Hill LLC (Lot 3 is accessed from

68 Popple Swamp Road)

Ms. Payne had recently reviewed the Upper Church Hill LLC/Lot 3 subdivision at 68 Popple Swamp Road.  The third lot is being developed and Ms. Payne approved the driveway plan that had been marked during construction. There was no impact on the easement.

Phragmites Removal by All Habitat (Permit for 6/29/17 – 12/31/19)

Ms. Frank updated Randy Bernard regarding the situation with neighbor Harold Birch of 94 New Milford Turnpike wherein Mr. Birch indicated that All Habitat was working on his property in 2017. After researching, the result was that Mr. Birch was correct. Ms. Frank and Selectman Lyon visited Mr. Birch and the result was that all parties are satisfied. Ms. Frank will forward the correspondence to Mr. Bernard.

Sustainable CT Initiatives

Ms. Gager is heading this initiative. Susan Payne met with Monique Gil Rogers of the Washington Environmental Council and Sarah Gager of the Washington **Planning Commission Sustainability Committee.** Ms. Payne will represent the Conservation Commission and Ms. Gil Rogers will represent the Washington Environmental Council. The Board of Selectman will be making a resolution on Thursday and then Ms. Gager will put the committee in motion and see where it goes.

Demolition Delay Ordinance - Historic District Commission

The HDC will bring it forward at a public hearing in the Fall at which point the Conservation Commission will provide its comments.

Planning Subdivision Regulations – Review purpose of open space set aside

There hasn’t been a significant amount of movement by the Planning Commission on the subdivision regulations.

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn. By Mr. Sabin, seconded by Ms. Frank.

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:20 PM.

Submitted Subject to Approval,

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Janice Roberti Date