**Town of Washington Conservation Commission**

**Bryan Memorial Town Hall**

**Washington Depot, CT 06794**

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Minutes March 2, 2016

5:00 PM Upper Level Meeting Room

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

Members Absent: Diane Dupuis

Alternates Present: Ann Quackenbos, Betsy Corrigan

Alternates Absent: Dirk Sabin

Staff Present: Janice Roberti

Others: Monte Blaustein, Brendan Vejseli, The Gunnery, Steve Wadleton, Washington Inland Wetlands Commission

Ms. Payne called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**Consideration of the Minutes**

The members considered the regular meeting minutes of the Conservation Commission for February 3, 2016. Ms. Payne indicated she referred to the Plaza Improvement Plan as the Beautification of Bryan Memorial Plaza in the February 3, 2016 minutes. Ms. Payne will refer to it with the project name the town uses.

MOTION: To accept the February 3, 2016 minutes with the Bryan Hall Plaza project name change. By Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Bernard and passed 5 to 0.

**Eagle Scout Project – Gunnery Student, Brendan Vejseli, Gunnery Teacher**

**Monte Blaustein**

Ms. Payne introduced Mr. Monte Blaustein, teacher at The Gunnery and Gunnery student

Mr. Brendan Vejseli. Brendan attended the Conservation meeting to explain his project for community service for the Gunnery and as a volunteer to assist The Town of Washington eradicate invasives around the Shepaug River. This project is geared toward earning an Eagle Scout merit badge. Mr. Vejseli briefed the commissioners on his thought process, the decision to volunteer in Washington assisting in the eradication of invasives around the Shepaug:

* The best location for the project/the best use of his time (visit the Shepaug River to determine an area)
* Remove invasives and plant native species
* The timing for the start and finish of the project
* Equipment needed for the work
* Procedures for the proper cutting and disposal of the invasives

Mr. Stephen Wadleton, commissioner with the Washington Inland Wetlands Commission, was in attendance at this meeting to offer his support and assist in Brendan’s endeavors.

Mr. Wadleton offered to guide Brendan along the way to answer questions and if necessary, help if problems arise. Ms. Payne mentioned that the Commission has funds from The Washington Garden Club which could contribute to the cost of new plants.

**Conservation Site Visit, 110 Calhoun Street – Kleine/Micheleto**

Prior to the meeting, Betsy Corrigan, Linda Frank, Ann Quackenbos, Dirk Sabin and Susan Payne visited 110 Calhoun Street to see the proposed outdoor work in the easement area. Following the site visit, the Commission unanimously approved the proposed woodland path into a wooded area near the brook where invasives will be removed and a small wooden bridge will be rebuilt. The Commission also approved the proposed construction of a small tree house and the stabilization of the tree in which it is to be built. Members said that the natural area will be enhanced by the plan. There will be a follow up site visit when the work is completed.

MOTION: To approve the proposed pathway, repair to the small wooden bridge, invasives management and construction of a modest treehouse at 110 Calhoun Street.

By Mr. Markert, seconded by Ms. Corrigan, passed 5 to 0.

**Town Streetlights Project**

Ms. Frank spoke with Selectman Lyon regarding an update on the town streetlights project. The project is moving ahead. Mr. Lyon received a spreadsheet from Eversource with all the towns and polls listed in the document. Mr. Lyon said he will start to organize the list for review.

Ms. Frank said she would be happy to assist with this and possibly put the data on a map in order to better see where the lights and polls are located.

**Follow-up with Mark Lyon – Town Projects**

DOT broken bridge at New Preston Falls – Susan Payne

Nothing new to report.

Plaza Improvement Plan – Susan Payne

Nothing new to report.

Cell Phone Tower – Susan Payne

Nothing new to report.

**Impaired Water List for Washington CT** – **Ann Quackenbos**

Ms. Quackenbos found some information on the DEEP website but it was a few years old.

Mr. Bernard looked at the data from the 2014 CT Water Quality Report which is a preliminary report by the DEEP. There were really two classifications - bacteria as it relates to recreational use and bacteria related to aquatic life. There were several streams that were impaired, not for aquatic life, but for recreational use: Walker Brook, Aspetuck, Bantam and the Weekeepeemee River. Ms. Payne asked if there was anything that the Commission could do. Mr. Bernard suggested putting the information on a map. Ms. Frank said that another important issue was the protection of head waters. A discussion ensued and members looked at various maps.

**Ingrassia 6-Lot Subdivision - Susan Payne**

Nothing new to report.

**Phragmities Eradication – Randy Bernard**

Mr. Bernard reached out to All Habitat about initiating the phragmities eradication. He obtained the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) for the herbicides that will be applied.

Mr. Bernard requested a revised contract and dates from All Habitat. Conservation should act on its own and decouple from the Steep Rock eradication project so as not to miss the critical window of opportunity for correct timing of this project. The sequence of events explained to Mr. Bernard:

* cutting and mowing
* cutting should be done prior to bird nesting
* initial herbicide application late May to mid-June
* follow up herbicide application mid-July to mid-August

Conservation has to file an Inland Wetlands application prior to the project. There is a 14 day time period prior to Inland Wetlands taking any action. Ms. Frank said she will attend the March 9, 2016 Inland Wetlands Meeting.

**LID Regulations and Horizon Line/Viewshed Protection – Linda Frank, Dirk Sabin**

Nothing new to report.

**Lake environmental issues and continuing concerns – Linda Frank, Ann Quackenbos**

Nothing new to report**.**

**New Preston Open Space Management Plan – Pollinators & Bees - Betsy Corrigan**

Ms. Corrigan continues her research on field management for pollinators. She is waiting for warm weather to visit the area.

**Economic Development – Phil Markert**

Mr. Markert reported on his current visits to local businesses. There are those businesses that have been around for a long time where you would not find items that are sold in the local Walmart. This practice is intentional and items are priced accordingly. Mr. Market expressed his opinion that if there is a merchant that really knows what he or she is going, there will be success. Then there are those businesses around RT 202 that see retirement in the near future and market and price toward that end.

**Town water resources protection – map work, at-risk areas & strategies to protect Washington’s water quality** - Randy Bernard

This agenda item was briefly discussed in another section.

Since there was no further business to discuss. Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Submitted subject to approval,

Janice Roberti, Conservation Commission Clerk