**WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**BRYAN HALL PLAZA**

**WASHINGTON CT**

**MINUTES – April 5, 2017**

**5:00 PM** **UPPER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM**

Members Present: Susan Payne, Randy Bernard, Tyler O’Hazo, Diane Dupuis

Members Absent: Linda Frank

Alternates Present: Dirk Sabin, Carrie Rowe

Alternates Absent: Ann Quackenbos

Staff: Janice Roberti

Visitors: Scott Weaver, Brenda Pape

Mr. Payne opened the meeting at 5:10 PM and seated Dirk Sabin for Linda Frank

Minutes of March. 1, 2017

The commissioners reviewed the March 1, 2017 meeting minutes and there were no corrections.

MOTION: To accept the March 1, 2017 minutes as written. By Mr. Bernard, seconded by Mr. Sabin

passed 5 to 0.

* New Preston Falls Project Update – Dirk Sabin
* Mr. Sabin explained to the group that at this meeting the Commission will be working on a design Charrette as we need to establish a general design as a group. Then the CC will prepare a simple but complete site plan for submission to Inland-Wetlands. Mr. Sabin said that we can likely use this for DOT as well. Mr. Sabin asked if Brian Neff, a DOT engineer or someone else will be going to look at the existing footbridge and provide the CC an assessment of its condition for possible re-use/ renovation/ replacement. He referred to the August 1993 Map entitled *The Town of Washington 5 East Shore Road Village of New Preston Washington, Connecticut T. Michael Alex L.L.S. August, 1993, #15462*.

Mr. Sabin described the area on the map. Discussion topics included:

* parking
* existing fieldstone retaining wall that is collapsing (State of CT project)
* existing patio stays there but there is a hillside. Perhaps use natural rocks, build stairway up with combination of stairs, landing, more stairs etc.
* trail
* necessary to have boardwalk and restore the bridge
* clearing invasives – maybe have a native garden
* remove heavy brush to expose ruins for viewing
* funding
* perhaps place benches, an interpretive sign with some history of the mills

Ms. Payne indicated that she and Ms. Frank are opposed to creating stairs and said that it is a major engineering feat. Mr. Sabin stated that it wasn’t a major project. Ms. Payne also interjected that this area should not be known as a park. Ms. Payne told the members that there was a site visit where trees were tagged.

The next part of the discussion was the proposal submitted by Bill Pollack of Arbor Services of CT for $3000.00. Mr. Pollack provided the town with a 50% discount. Nick Solley, Chair of the Building and Property Committee, will see if his team would be able to apply $1500.00 from the Town Property Budget. There are also funds available in the Open Space Fund which are allowed to be used for stewardship.

MOTION: To engage Bill Pollack of Arbor Tree Services of CT for tree removal which is part of the New Preston Falls Enhancement Project. By Mr. Sabin, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed 5 to 0.

Prior to the meeting Ms. Payne asked the commission members to review a document that she emailed to them entitled *Conservation Commission New Preston Falls Enhancement Project 2017* which listed the proposed action plan and timeline.

* Tree cutting regulations - review Plainville CT LID & Storm Water Management Guidelines – Linda Frank

Ms. Frank was not present at the meeting but the Commission asked Scott Weaver (a lake resident) to provide some input about the impact of tree cutting around the lake. Ms. Payne and all the members in attendance suggested that CC put tree cutting regulations back on the table to pursue. The concern revolves around “clearcutting” for site development, regulating clearing for view sheds, as well as maintaining good soil conservation practices. There are no tree cutting regulations in place under state or federal statutes. This is a problem. An important step would be to educate the public.

* Extension of Woodville Business District Review – Tyler O’Hazo & Dirk Sabin

Mr. O’Hazo informed the members that he provided maps and assessor's cards for several homes within the proposed expansion area. Mr. O’Hazo visited the proposed extension zone and was concerned due to its proximity to the river.

Mr. Sabin then referred to the letter being sent to the Zoning Commission regarding the Woodville zone intensity. The Conservation Commission’s letter states that the CC wants to make sure that potential impacts to the Shepaug River from business development are being fully considered in the current review.

* WEC June 24 Environmental Expo – Update on plans – Carrie Rowe

# Ms. Rowe updated members on the status of plans for the June 24, 2017 Washington Environmental Council Expo called “Future Now”. Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust, Steep Rock Association, Rivers Alliance of CT and The Institute for American Indian Studies are several sponsors. The schedule of events can be viewed at futurenowexpo.org.

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

The Commission is still awaiting a report from Sean Hayden. Ms. Payne mentioned the *Plainville Low Impact Development and Storm Water Management Design Manual* prepared by Planimetrics of Avon CT and by Trinkaus Engineering LLC of Southbury CT. There are copies available by request in the Land Use Office or on line.

* Phragmities Eradication at New Preston Open Space – Randy Bernard

Mr. Bernard recently spoke to All Habitat. The Town paid the $2000.00 deposit and we did get the permit last year (2016) but it was too late for All Habitat to begin the eradication process. The permit was granted at the end of a cycle and which made it valid for one year. Per All Habitat it will not be difficult to renew the permit and should come through relatively quickly. The process All Habitat uses is a combination of chemical and mechanical methods. Timing is important. The first step will be to hit the emerging plants, most likely in May.

* Lake environmental issues – Susan Payne

There is a great deal of activity at the lake. Ms. Payne mentioned that at the upcoming April 20, 2017 ZBA meeting, every agenda item except for one application is about properties along West Shore Road.

Since the current discussion was regarding the lake, Mr. Bernard added that he reviewed the Application by the Lake Waramaug Country Club for the Request for Reauthorization under the General Permit for Diversion of Water for Consumptive Use. Mr. Bernard said there is an annual report that the Country Club is required to submit to the DEEP. His opinion is that Conservation should request a copy from the Country Club and continue this request for several years. Since CC is being asked by DEEP for its comments, it is important that the Commission review the report in order to provide its comments. Ms. Payne will contact the authorized individual at the Club to request a copy of the report.

* Subcommittee Reports & Assignments - No subcommittee reports and assignments for this meeting
* New Preston Open Space - 2017 Management Plan
  + - Consensus to have mowed path up & around hillside
    - Schedule a Workday
* Town water resources protection – map work, at-risk areas (Impaired Waters List) & strategies to protect Washington’s water quality - collaborate with Steep Rock – Randy Bernard
* Cell Tower – Diane Dupuis
* Adjournment

Since there was no further business to discuss, Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM

Submitted subject to approval,

Janice Roberti

Conservation Commission Clerk