Town of Washington

**Bryan Memorial Town Hall**

**Washington Depot, CT 06794**

####  Washington Conservation Commission

**Minutes October 7, 2015**

5:00 PM Upper Level Meeting Room

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

Members Absent: Phil Markert

Alternates Present: Betsy Corrigan

Alternates Absent: Dirk Sabin, Ann Quackenbos

Staff Present: Janice Roberti

Others: Rod Pleasants, McGiver-Morgan, Brian Neff, Engineer

Ms. Payne, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

Consideration of the minutes

The Commission considered the regular meeting minutes of the Conservation Commission for September 2, 2015.

Correction, Page 2, under the section Major Phragmites Infestation, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence clarification regarding Ms. Corrigan’s statement. It should read: The reason Ms. Corrigan did not want to commit to the resolution was that she was unfamiliar with the chemical Imazapyr and she needed to do some research.

MOTION: To accept the September 2, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as amended, by Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed 4 – 0

Rod Pleasants, McGiver-Morgan - 132 Calhoun Street

Ms. Payne invited Mr. Pleasants to the meeting to update the commissioners on the construction work taking place at 132 Calhoun Street and to answer questions.

Stone wall

Mr. Pleasants displayed and explained the McIver-Morgan Inc. Site Plan for the relocation and re-erection of a stone wall on the Pillow property at 132 Calhoun Street. The Washington Historic District approved a COA to complete the work. It was agreed that the wall would be the same as the wall located at the Mills residence on 144 Calhoun Street. There are some stones already there and the remainder of the stones needed will mimic the original stones as closely as possible.

Conservation easement

Ms. Payne mentioned that Chris Charles contacted her regarding the previous owner, Nussbaum. Ms. Payne informed Mr. Pleasants and the Commission that Mr. Charles and the Nussbaums are no longer involved in this. The Nussbaums no longer own the property. Ms. Payne stated that these facts “are for the record”.

Land Clearing

Ms. Payne noticed that the land has been cleared and Mr. Pleasants asked the question about mowing. Ms. Corrigan said that November would be a good time to mow. The Pillows don’t want the open space to look like it’s always freshly mowed. Mr. Pleasants said that he found a pasture mix and clover which would be suitable.

Residence Size

Mr. Pleasants then discussed the barn and told the commissioners that the Pillows have decided to make the residence smaller. Ms. Frank asked if any type of screen is being built to hide the barn. The adjoining neighbor, Brett Wheeler, contacted the Pillows about putting up natural screening such as trees etc. Mr. Pleasants told the Wheelers that they could not plant on eased property.

Ingrassia/292 Bee Brook Road/#IW-15-41/6 Lot Subdivision Feasibility- Brian Neff, Engineer

Referring to the plan, “Site Development Feasibility Plan,” dated 8/24/15 by Mr. Neff, he explained the details involved in the study. He presented his “Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan,” dated 9/1/15. Ms. Payne asked what happened to the open space set aside. The owners would like to pay the fee in lieu of having a conservation easement or a donation of land which is an allowed alternate by the regulations. Mr. Neff spoke about the bridge that comes off of Beebrook that was installed about ten years ago. It is a double wide steel concrete bridge which was built with the idea that it would be the only crossing at Beebrook that goes into the property. Zoning does allow for 3 lots on a shared driveway. Most of the proposed development is far away from Beebrook itself. Mr. Bernard asked if the houses are clustered. They wanted a clustered area on top of the hill which is a difficult thing to do so Mr. Neff clustered the houses on top but drawing a fish hook going right down to the road frontage. In essence it would seem like a clustering but the lot lines themselves would be more traditional in terms of frontage on Beebrook Road. Lots vary in size from 6 acres to 15 acres in size. Ms. Corrigan asked how much clearing would take place and what type of wetlands was the area. Mr. Neff stated that it is a wooded wetlands and there would only be one disturbed area on the entire site for a driveway culvert with a 15”pipe for the crossing.

Lake Environment Issues – Susan Payne

Ms. Payne commented that there is no update on Lake Environmental issues. Ms. Frank said that she spoke to Tony Bedini on October 6 th about the dam. Engineers came out to the dam and they think the dam is in good shape. The valve which lets water out of the lake got stuck. The status is that they are trying to figure out a way to repair this valve which they believe is repairable. Mr. Bernard said currently, the valve is actually working now.

Slopes/Zoning Regulations– Linda Frank

Ms. Frank had a discussion Washington’s Town Zoning Enforcement Officer, Mike Ajello.

Mr. Ajello is knowledgeable in this area and a good source of information. They discussed the topic of a placing a definition in the zoning regulations. There is a section for this purpose. Ms. Frank will stop in to see Mr. Ajello on a regular basis to discuss this.

Walker Brook Update – Randy Bernard

Mr. Bernard met with the New Milford’s town grading crew and the town engineer at Walker Brook. They looked at what they did last year and it worked out well. Another small section will be done this year and going forward the method will be to do a little section at the time. They seemed ok with that and Mr. Bernard said this seems to be a reasonable approach. There is a neighborhood action committee very involved in this. Mr. Bernard spoke to the people who were present that day at the brook about cutting back on salt usage and finding an alternative to the application of salt. They were open to that.

Mr. Bernard looked at a giant culvert which the town of Washington is replacing. The culvert takes Walker Brook under Walker Brook Road at Chapin Road. The culvert is large enough to walk through standing up. It is made of steel and is rusted out on the bottom and has the potential of collapse. The engineering has been done by the Town of Washington. It is being replaced with another culvert. Mr. Bernard said that the preferred replacement is an open bottom box culvert. Normally the best practice from an environmental viewpoint is to have a box and leave the bottom natural. It’s an incredibly sensitive area because the outlet of this culvert is a thermal refuge for trout. Ms. Corrigan asked if we could let the Inland Wetlands Commission know our concerns. Mr. Bernard thinks we should try to open a dialogue with the IWC about this and monitor it as it goes forward. Tony Bedini is the Chair for the IWC and Mr. Bernard thinks we should keep in touch with Mr. Bedini and to make sure that they are paying attention and marking the trees. Hopefully this will help save trees. Ms. Payne added that the CC should follow up when it this through IWC.

Subcommittee Reports

* New Preston Open Space

Invasives Control - Betsy Corrigan

Ms. Corrigan said the work is ongoing. She recently burned the Japanese Stilt grasses but wants to go back and do a little more now that the vegetation is gone. She got it all but wants to be sure she got the seeds as well. A few of the commissioners spoke about the Japanese Stilt grass invasion as well as another invasive called Black Swallow**-**Wort**.** Informational handouts were provided to the commissioners.

2015 Management Plan – Betsy Corrigan

Ms. Corrigan said that it is going to be mowed in November but not the whole area. She will follow up with the crew and let them know the specific areas to be mowed.

New Preston Falls – Randy Bernard

Mr. Bernard mentioned that he spoke to Mr. Bill Seitz about a partnership with New Preston businesses. Ms. Payne said that Phil Markert checked in with Tony Bedini re the economic development aspect. Mr. Markert will go out and canvas everyone, talk about what is there that the town owns that people aren’t even aware of and how we can all work together. Ms. Payne said that the CC should keep reminding Selectman Mark Lyon to get on DOT - ask DOT to give that area to CC so that Conservation and handle the cleanup.

* Phragmites Infestation – All Habitat – Randy Bernard

From conservations with All Habitat, it is apparent that they are committed to the use of best management practices regarding the chemicals they use and All Habitat stated that Imazapyr is the very best technology for this particular application. Mr. Bernard had the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) on Imazapyr and gave it to the clerk to keep on file.

* Cell Tower Committee – Diane Dupuis

Ms. Dupuis’s last update on the when cell service will begin is now the first quarter 2016. There is a variety of dates floating around with March 2016 being the most popular. It’s still nebulous.

Other Business

Sean Hayden Presentation – Susan Payne

 Ms. Payne said that November 17, 2015 is the date that is scheduled for the Sean Hayden

 Presentation on low-impact development (LID) practices for water quality protection.

 Mr. Hayden is a soil scientist with the Northwest Conservation District, State of CT. It is

 scheduled for 7:00 PM at the St. John’s Parish House in Washington.

 As there was no further business to discuss, Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:15 PM.

 FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,

**Janice Roberti**

Janice Roberti, Conservation Commission Clerk